Host Country National Willingness to Help Expatriates: The Role of Social Categorization and Exchange

Arup Varma
Institute of Human Resources & Employment Relations
Loyola University Chicago
1 East Pearson Street, #406
Chicago, IL 60611 U.S.A
312-915-6664
avarma@luc.edu

Shaun Pichler
School of Labor and Industrial Relations
4th Floor, South Kedzie Hall
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI 48824 U.S.A.
pichlers@msu.edu
1-517-410-6046

Pawan Budhwar
South Wing 712 (OB & HRM)
Aston Business School
Aston University
Birmingham B4 7ET U.K.
+44-3593611 ext. 5092
p.s.budhwar@aston.ac.uk
Host Country National Willingness to Help Expatriates: The Role of Social Categorization and Exchange

ABSTRACT

Using data from 493 host country nationals in the United Kingdom, we investigated relationships between expatriate gender, national origin, and job level and HCN willingness to help expatriates. First, HCNs from the U.K. tended to categorize expatriates as in-group or out-group members based on perceived values similarity, ethnocentrism, and collectivism. Next, this categorization was significantly related to HCN willingness to provide role information and social support to expatriates. Lastly, we found that HCNs were more likely to provide role-related information to subordinates and co-workers than supervisors, and were more likely to provide social support to male co-workers regardless of their nationality (i.e., U.S. vs. India).
INTRODUCTION

The increase in expatriate assignments has resulted in many authors proposing that HCNs’ attitudes and behaviors toward the expatriate can go a long way in defining whether or not the expatriate succeeds on his/her assignment (e.g., Black, 1991; Toh & DeNisi, 2003). However, HCN willingness to help expatriates is not a given, and indeed, depending on how HCNs feel about the expatriate, they may often withhold relevant information and treat the expatriate as an “outsider” (Florkowski & Fogel, 1999). From information about the workplace and the way things get done there, to information about the community (e.g., places for living, shopping, eating, etc.), the HCN can offer numerous pieces of very useful information to the expatriate that would assist him/her in adjusting to the new location.

Clearly, HCNs can play a very important role in helping expatriates succeed on their assignments. Perhaps more important than work-related information is the assistance that HCNs can provide in terms of social adjustment. Specifically, Toh, Varma, and DeNisi (2004) have argued that HCNs use a process of social categorization, whereby they may categorize expatriate co-workers as “in-group” or “out-group” members. Those expatriates categorized as in-group are more likely to be offered role information and social support by HCNs, than those who are categorized as out-group. Clearly, this is a topic worthy of critical investigation as understanding the factors that guide HCNs’ reactions to expatriates will help organizations better prepare expatriates for their assignments.

Furthermore, the few known studies (e.g., Varma, Toh, & Budhwar, 2005) that have studied HCN reactions to expatriates, have limited themselves to presenting the
expatriate as a co-worker. In addition to categorizing the expatriate based on his/her
country of origin, etc., we believe that HCN reactions to expatriates will also be
significantly different, based on whether the expatriate is likely to be the HCN’s
colleague, supervisor, or subordinate. In other words, while HCNs of any country are
likely to offer differential levels of assistance to expatriates, based on the degree to which
they categorize the expatriate as in-group or out-group, the workplace working
relationship with the expatriate is likely to add an additional dimension to the willingness
to help expatriates. As an example, while an HCN may be willing to provide role
information to a co-worker, s/he may not feel very comfortable offering similar
information to an expatriate who is his/her supervisor.

As such, this study was designed to study the impact of HCN categorization based
on expatriates’ country of origin, gender, and potential working relationship with HCN.
We specifically included the United States and India as the two countries for expatriate
country manipulation, given their long ties to the U.K., which have resulted in continuous
people exchange. In addition, India’s leading business house, the Tata Corporation, has
recently purchased Tetley Tea, and Jaguar and Land Rover, in the U.K., which will result
in an increase in the outflow of Indian expatriates being sent to the U.K.

In the following sections, we present a review of the relevant literature, followed
by the hypotheses developed and tested for this investigation.

Literature Review

Research on social support in organizations (Caplan et al., 1980) indicates that
when supervisors develop a quality relationship with their subordinates, they are more
likely to provide the subordinate with role-related information as to develop his or her job
competencies and performance. Supervisors are also more likely to provide subordinates with social support as to help them balance work and family demands (Kossek, Pichler, Hammer & Bodner, 2007). This line of research also indicates that coworkers with high quality relationships are likely to provide each other with role information and social support (Caplan et al., 1980).

Role information and social support may be dependent not only on relationship quality, but also the job level of the persons in a particular relationship. For instance, it is expected that supervisors should be most likely to provide subordinates (as compared to coworkers and subordinates) with role-related information given that this is required by their job. That said, the basic tenet of social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) is that valuable resources are shared between persons based on a norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960), such that each partner in an exchange relationship can expect the other to reciprocate. In this connection, HCNs may be most likely to provide expatriates with social support, which is generally an extra-role behavior, based on their expected exchange or value of this exchange.

As applied to the current study, we expect that HCNs from the U.K. might be most likely to provide social support to subordinates when they are from India since, given the cultural differences between the U.K. and India, social support may be a more valuable resource to them as compared to subordinates from the U.S. When subordinates are from India, HCNs may be particularly likely to provide social support to them since given their responsibility for the expatriate’s assignment success. The expected exchange, then, is that the HCN is rewarded for integrating the expatriate into the organizational culture.
On the other hand, when the expatriate is from the U.S., we expect that HCNs would be more likely to provide social support to those whom can reciprocate similar resources, perhaps coworkers or even supervisors. They may be more interested in developing a social exchange relationship with coworkers or supervisors since the expected resource exchange in this case could be resources related to career advancement or social networking. Moreover, since the cultural differences between the U.K. and the U.S. are lower as compared to India, U.K. HCNs may feel that it is less necessary to provide social support to coworkers.

_HCN Categorization of Expatriates_

Research has shown that individuals often tend to categorize themselves and others, as categorization helps them understand how they should behave in specific social contexts (Hogg & Terry, 2001). Studies (e.g., Toh, et al., 2004) have reported that individuals use these categorizations to assign in-group or out-group status to others, and that this assignment guides their behavior towards others. As such, individuals would be more likely to demonstrate positive behaviors towards those deemed to be in their in-group (or similar in some way), and negative behaviors towards those assigned to the out-group (e.g., Reynolds, Turner, & Haslam, 2000). Clearly, those expatriates that are categorized as in-group are more likely to receive social support from HCNs than those that are categorized as out-group.

_Ethnocentrism_

One key factor that is mostly missing from the literature on HCN reactions to expatriates is the notion of ethnocentrism (Zeira, 1979), which leads to certain specific expectations that HCNs have of foreigners (i.e., expatriates). In other words, perceived
dissimilarity on a salient attribute by the focal person relative to the target individual increases the likelihood that the target is classified as part of the out-group (McGuire, McGuire, Child, & Fujioka, 1978). In general, greater perceived dissimilarity has been linked to lower interpersonal affect, group attachment (Tsui, Egan, & O Reilly, 1992).

As Zeira (1979) argued in his study of ethnocentrism in European organizations, HCNs have certain expectations of expatriates, and their attitudes and behavior towards the expatriates are often guided by the extent to which the expatriate might fulfill those expectations.

**Perceived Values Similarity & Collectivism**

One advantage of associating with those that are similar is that it allows individuals to reinforce their own belief systems and attitudes. Thus, individuals who are high on dogmatism (e.g., Chattopadhyay, 2003) are likely to feel ill at ease while interacting with people who do not conform to their values, beliefs, and attitudes. It is difficult for a dogmatic person to leave the confines of his/her social boundaries and explore new and uncharted territories. Here, we argue that open-minded individuals are keen to intermingle with those who are different from themselves. These individuals are likely to be eager to try out new ideas, see new places, and seek out novel activities. For open-minded individuals, interacting continuously with people who are similar to them is likely to stifle their spirit of discovery. On the other hand, individuals who are not so open-minded are likely to seek out others who are similar to themselves, thus breeding collectivism.

According to Hofstede (2001), collectivistic societies are characterized by a powerful sense of group membership. In such societies, people distinguish between in-
group and out-group members. They believe that they can totally depend upon their in-group members in exchange for absolute devotion to them. In collectivist societies, group interests overrule individual concerns (Hofstede, 1996). Thus, we argue that collectivist individuals are more likely to be ethnocentric, whereby they are less likely to accept others, including people from foreign cultures, who might be different in some way.

**Role Information & Social Support**

As we note above, HCNs’ can offer two types of HCN behavior – providing role information, and social support, both of which are crucial to an expatriate’s success. As Louis (1980) has noted, role information is usually available with HCNs, and critical to expatriate success. HCNs are privy to information regarding the job, the organization, and appropriate behaviors in the workplace and the community. If HCNs share this information with expatriates, it would go a long way in helping the expatriate succeed on the assignment, by overcoming obstacles and learning the ropes faster. Indeed, role information may be an important construct to explain success on international assignments since it serves as a mode of orienting the expatriate with the organization’s culture as well as the social culture within which business operates. Furthermore, this induction process may facilitate the expatriates’ adjustment at the workplace, which in turn, may enhance his/her in-role performance. However, as Toh, Varma, & DeNisi (2004) have noted, HCNs are only likely to provide this information to those expatriates that they categorize as in-group.

While categorization of expatriate co-workers itself may not create a problem, it is the resultant behaviors that could have a significant impact on the expatriate’s adjustment and assignment success. In this connection, Toh et al., (2004) argue that
ingroup-outgroup social categorization by HCNs can influence the willingness of HCNs to offer social support to expatriates (Hogg & Terry, 2001).

The social support provided by HCNs to expatriates can go a long way in helping them adjust to the new job, new surroundings, and the new country. This would allow the expatriate to concentrate on his/her assignment, and not spend the majority of his/her time worrying about finding the local supermarket or locating the department of motor vehicles. Socialization would mean that HCNs would offer friendships to the expatriate that help him/her deal with new situations (Fisher, 1985). Further, positive social support from HCNs would make expatriates feel welcome to the new surroundings, and feel as if they are part of a group, receiving emotional support (Kirmeyer & Lin, 1987). Given that moving to a new country can cause a lot of stress, any social support (e.g., having someone to talk to; to ask questions about local customs) received from HCNs is bound to go a long way in easing the expatriate’s concerns or fears, and help him/her adjust to the new assignment through interactions with co-workers. Next, we discuss the experience of women as expatriates, and how this might affect HCN reactions to female expatriates.

*Female Expatriates*

Over the years, numerous authors (e.g., Adler, 1984; Tung, 2004; Tye & Chen, 2005) have noted that the number of female expatriates continues to be artificially low (recent estimates hover around 14%), often due to a mistaken belief on the part of decision-makers, that women were either not interested, or not likely to be successful on expatriate assignments (Adler, 1993). However, research has consistently shown that women are equally interested in, and equally successful on expatriate assignments (Adler,
1998; Caligiuri & Tung, 1999), even in countries that are often thought to have male-dominated cultures (e.g., Japan, Turkey, Vietnam). Indeed, Varma, et al., (2006) found that Indian host country nationals (HCNs) preferred to work with female, rather than male, expatriates from the United States, confirming that female expatriates can succeed even in male-dominated societies. Given that the culture of the U.K. is much more similar to that of the U.S. than India, and both U.S., and U.K. are known for high levels of gender-equity, we believe that female expatriates would be provided more social support than men, perhaps especially when they are subordinates or coworkers, since they have are widely known to have less experience as expatriates. This might also be more pronounced when the female expatriates are from India, given the differences in culture, and the resultant need for significantly higher levels of acculturation and socialization. On the other hand,, since role information, is a more structured activity, whereby superiors might instruct HCNs to help an expatriate provide relevant information to expatriates. we believe that HCNs would provide this equally to all expatriates, as directed by the organization.

**RESEARCH HYPOTHESES**

Given the limited empirical research on HCN reactions to expatriates (Varma et al., 2006 being the only published study), and the resultant exploratory nature of our investigation, we predict and test the following hypotheses:

Hypotheses 1a-1c: Ethnocentricism will be positively related to a) role information, b) social support and c) categorization.

Hypotheses 2a-2c: Collectivism will be positively related to a) role information b) social support and c) Categorization.
Hypotheses 3a-3c: Values similarity will be positively related to a) role information and b) social support, but negatively related to c) categorization.

Hypotheses 4a-4b: Categorization will be negatively related to a) role information and b) social support.

Hypotheses 5a-5c: The relationship between role information and a) ethnocentricism, b) collectivism and c) values similarity will be mediated by categorization.

Hypotheses 6a-6c: The relationship between social support and a) ethnocentrism b) collectivism and c) support will be mediated by categorization.

Hypothesis 7: Participants are likely to provide significantly different levels of information and support depending on the expatriates’ country of origin.

Hypothesis 8: Participants are likely to provide significantly different levels of role information and support depending on whether the expatriate is likely to be their supervisor, subordinate, or co-worker.

Hypothesis 9: Female expatriates are likely to be provided significantly higher levels of social support than male expatriates, especially when they are co-workers or subordinates, especially when they are from India. No differences are expected in the level of role information provided.

**METHOD**

This study was designed as 2X3X2 between-subjects factorial design. For purposes of the current study, we collected data from 493 HCNs in the U.K. The participants were through contacts at a leading British university, and 80% of the distributed surveys were returned completed to us. Fifty percent of the respondents were graduate students, while the others were administrative staff. Sixty-four percent of the
respondents were female, while 36% were male. The average work experience of the respondents was 4 years and their average age was 26 years.

Participants were given a questionnaire that provided them basic biographical information about an expatriate, such as the expatriate’s age, gender, race/ethnic origin, educational qualifications, work experience, and job title. This information was placed prominently on the cover sheet, following the introduction and instructions. This was done to ensure that the respondents read the information before answering the questions that started only on the next sheet. Participants were given one of four different versions of the survey instrument – i.e., the expatriate was either from the U.S., or from India. In each case, the expatriate was either male or female. For the second level of manipulation, we created three different versions of the survey. Of the total 493 respondents, 156 were given a version of the survey which asked them to think of the expatriate as a potential coworker, while 170 responded to a version that asked them to think of the expatriate as their potential supervisor. Finally, one hundred and sixty-seven participants were given a version that asked them to think of the expatriate as a potential subordinate. All other information on the surveys was kept constant. The participants were asked keep the potential expatriate in mind, as they responded to the questions on measures of perceived values similarity, ethnocentrism, collectivism, extent of categorization, and their willingness to provide role information and social support.

Measures

Values similarity was measured with a 5-item measure created for this study, based on the literature (e.g., Orbe, 1988). Respondents indicated, on a scale from “1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree”, the extent to which they perceived themselves to
be similar to the expatriate in terms of their personal, and work, values. The Cronbach alpha for this scale was .67 for the entire sample.

**Ethnocentrism.** The measure of foreigner expectation was a 5-item scale drawn from Zeira’s (1979) scale on ethnocentrism. The questions in the survey were intended to approximate the extent to which the participants in the study expected their “foreigner” or expatriate colleague to be familiar with the culture, and history of the country, for example. The questionnaire items were presented on a 7-point Likert type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The Cronbach alpha for this scale was .74.

**Collectivism** was measured with a 5-item measure adapted from Cugston, Howell, and Dorfman (2000). Respondents indicated, on a scale from “1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree”, the extent to which they perceived the importance of group welfare against individual benefits and gains. The Cronbach alpha for this scale was .81 for the entire sample.

**Categorization** was measured through a 5-item measure drawn from Greenland and Brown (1999). The questions were intended to estimate the extent to which the participants considered the potential co-worker as someone “akin” to them, or belonging to their own “group”. The Cronbach alpha for this scale was .70.

**Role Information** was measured through a 5-item measure rated on a 7-point scale, regarding the extent to which HCNs were willing to provide HCNs with information on the behaviors and attitudes valued and expected by the organization (Morrison, 1993). The items were measured on a scale of 1 to 7 (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree). Cronbach’s alpha estimate for the reliability of the ratings was .87.
Social support was measured through a 4-item measure developed by Caplan et al. (1980) appraising the extent to which the respondents were (1) willing to make worklife easier for the expatriate, (2) easy to talk to (3) willing to help when things get tough, and (4) willing to listen to personal problems. The questionnaire items were based on a 7-point Likert type scale (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree). Internal consistency reliability of the measure was found to be .73 in our study.

RESULTS

Analyses

Hypotheses 1a through 6c were tested through latent variable structural equation modeling using Lisrel 8 (Joreskog & Sorbom, 1993). Before any structural models were tested, we first used confirmatory factor analysis to assess the fit of a full measurement model which used individual variables as indicators of each latent construct. We compared the fit of this model to an alternative, less restrictive, model in order to establish the discriminant validity of the constructs. Before testing structural models, we also regressed social support and role information on participant demographic variables to determine if any of these variables were systematically related to both dependent variables. Since none were, they were not included in any structural models. Next, the proposed mediational model was tested. Finally, we tested the fit of a model that included direct effects from the antecedents to the two outcome variables to compare its fit with the proposed model based on a chi-square difference test.

We report several fit indices for the measurement model as well as the structural models. While there are no absolute rules for acceptable model fit, a significant chi-square indicates poor model fit, but is highly sensitive to sample size; fit indices of .90 or
greater for the Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) and the comparative fit index (CFI) represent
good model fit (Hoyle, 1995); an RMSEA of .08 to .10 indicates acceptable fit, and a
value less than .05 indicates good fit (MacCallum et al., 1996).

Hypotheses 7 through 9 were tested using analysis of variance (ANOVA) with
target job level, nationality and sex as between-subjects factors in a full factorial design.

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Table 1 provides descriptive statistics and correlations for all study variables.
Ethnocentricism was positively related to role information ($r = .11$, $p < .05$) and
categorization ($r = .17$, $p < .01$), supporting hypotheses 1a and 1c, respectively.
Ethnocentricism was not significantly related to social support, however, failing to
support hypothesis 1b. Collectivism was positively related to role information ($r = .18$,
$p < .01$) and social support ($r = .16$, $p < .01$), supporting hypotheses 2a and 2c, respectively.
Collectivism was not significantly related to categorization, however, failing to support
hypothesis 2b. As predicted, values similarity was positively related to role information
($r = .13$, $p < .01$) and social support ($r = .27$, $p < .01$), but negatively related to categorization
($r = -.27$, $p < .01$), supporting hypotheses 3a through 3c. As predicted, categorization was
negatively related to both role information ($r = -.11$, $p < .05$) and social support ($r = -.25$,
$p < .01$).

__________________________
Insert Tables 1 and 2 about here

__________________________

Measurement Model (Confirmatory Factor Analysis)
Our measurement model specified six correlated latent factors and twenty-four observed variables. As was expected based on theory and previous research, the confirmatory factor analysis for the full measurement model indicated that the model fit the data well. The fit statistics for the full measurement model are as follows: $\chi^2 (658.08, df = 237)$, RMSEA = .05, NNFI = .92, IFI = .90, GFI = .90, CFI = .94. We compared the fit of the proposed measurement model to an alternative, less restrictive, model with items representing role information and social support loading on a single support factor, and the items representing ethnocentricism and collectivism loading on a single cultural values factor. The fit of this model was poor: $\chi^2 (1345.03, df = 245)$, RMSEA = .11, NNFI = .81, GFI = .78, IFI = .83, CFI = .83. The change in chi-square between the two models was also significant ($\Delta \chi^2 = 689.95$, $\Delta df = 8$). These results support the proposed factor structure of the constructs used in this study as well as their discriminant validity.

**Structural Equation Modeling**

First, we tested the fit of the proposed mediational model. Since collectivism was not significantly related to categorization, only direct paths between collectivism and role information and social support were measured given that a basic prerequisite for mediation was not established (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Only indirect effects from values similarity and ethnocentrism were measured. The fit indices indicated that the model fit the data well $\chi^2 (808.53, df = 240)$, RMSEA = .068, NNFI = .90, GFI = .88, IFI = .90, CFI = .91.

While these results indicate that a model with only fully mediated effects between values similarity and ethnocentrism and the outcome measures fit the data well, we tested a second model that included direct paths from the antecedents to the outcome
variables. Note that since ethnocentricism was not significantly related to social support, a direct path between these constructs was not estimated. Fit indices for this second, partially mediated, model indicate that this model also fit the data well $\chi^2 (790.91, df = 243)$, RMSEA = .067, NNFI = .90, GFI = .89, IFI = .92, CFI = .91. The fit indices are very similar across models, however. Since the first (mediator) model was nested within the second (direct effects) model, we conducted a chi-square difference test to determine if the model with direct effects fit the data significantly better (Bentler, 1995), which it did not ($\Delta \chi^2 = 17.62, \Delta df = 3$). These results indicate that categorization fully mediated the relationships between values similarity and ethnocentricism and the outcome measures.

Tests of Manipulations

Results indicate that job level significantly affected how likely raters were to provide role-related information to a particular target $[F (2, 481) = 8.49, p<.01]$. See Table 3 for cell means for different job levels. Results from post-hoc tests indicate that participants were more likely to provide role-related information to coworkers than supervisors ($p < .01$) and subordinates than supervisors ($p < .01$). Participants were also more likely to provide role-related information to subordinates than coworkers ($p < .01$). National origin and sex of expatriate were unrelated to HCN willingness to provide role information.

Insert Tables 3 and 4 about here

Results pertaining to social support were more complex. That is, a significant three-way interaction between target job level, nationality and sex $[F (2, 481), =4.20,$
p<.05] indicated that participants provided social support to targets based on a complex combination of target status and background (see Table 4 for cell means organized according to each of these independent variables). Participants provided different amounts of social support according to job level and nationality for male expatriates (p < .05), but not female expatriates. More specifically, when an expatriate was male and from the U.S., supervisors received the most social support. When an expatriate was male and from India, subordinates received the most social support.

DISCUSSION

Expatriate assignments play a critical role in multinational organizations, yet the factors that might help determine the level of success on these assignments continue to baffle and bother practitioners and researchers. As the number of MNEs establishing and/or expanding their operations in other countries grows, the need for expatriate assignments will also continue to grow.

While several organizational and individual level factors potentially contributing to expatriate success have been investigated, one important aspect of the expatriate assignment process, namely, the role played by HCNs, has gone mostly unexplored. Barring a few exceptions (e.g., Black, 1988; Florkowski and Fogel, 1999), research on expatriate issues seems to have been based on the belief that the home organization and the expatriate control most, if not all, of the factors affecting the expatriate’s experience on assignment. While there is no doubt that better pre-assignment planning, selection, and training can help organizations find individuals who are better suited to expatriate assignments, there is another rather important variable that needs to be studied – the role of HCNs.
Our study adds to the existing literature on expatriate assignments, by exploring the role of perceived values similarity, ethnocentrism, collectivism, HCN categorization of expatriates, and their willingness to provide role information and social support to. Further, we also include HCN-expatriate working relationship (i.e., supervisor, subordinate, or co-worker) as an important variable in the investigation.

Our results point to some interesting findings. First, HCNs in the U.K. tend to categorize expatriate co-workers based on the perceived values similarity, ethnocentrism, and collectivism. Next, and more importantly, categorization has a significant impact on HCN willingness to provide role information and/or social support to expatriates. Some very interesting results deserve special mention: first, participants were more likely to provide role-related information to coworkers and supervisors than subordinates, and that participants were more likely to provide role-related information to supervisors than coworkers. This is an interesting finding, and warrants further discussion. The willingness of participants to provide role-related information to supervisors, more than co-workers or subordinates perhaps reveals a desire to ingratiate themselves to supervisors, since the supervisor is the one who would assign HCN’s work and also evaluate them. Next the possibility that HCNs would provide role-related information more often to co-workers than subordinates, perhaps reveals a concern with having to deal with issues related to working with expatriate subordinates, or, an expectation that someone being sent on an assignment at a low level must really be highly qualified and competent. Clearly, these are issues that need to be investigated by future research.

Next, participants were more likely to provide social support to male coworkers regardless of their nationality, whereas participants were more likely to provide social
support to male supervisors only when they were American. However, participants were more likely to provide support to male subordinates when they were Indian; in contrast, participants were more likely to provide social support to female as opposed to male subordinates from the United States. The finding, here, that participants were more likely to provide social support only to American supervisors, and not Indian supervisors, might reveal a hidden concern with having an Indian executive as a supervisor. It should be noted here that providing social support is more of a voluntary activity, that is not usually directed by the organization. This finding, combined with the finding that participants were more willing to provide social support to Indian male subordinates, perhaps speaks to participants’ higher levels of experience and comfort with male subordinates, given the low number of female expatriates on international assignments.

These findings have important implications for multinational organizations sending expatriates to the U.K. Organizations might consider modifying the pre-departure expatriate training programs to educate the expatriate on the history, culture, language, and social characteristics of the host country (in this case, the U.K.). They might also consider training the HCNs, such that they are more open to dealing with expatriates with different backgrounds.

The finding that participants did differentiate between gender of expatriate and their national origin in terms of providing social support means that, organizations may have to offer different levels of pre-departure and on-the-assignment support for male and female expatriates from different countries. Needless to say, our findings reveal some interesting dynamics, and are worthy of continued empirical investigations.

Limitations
While we believe our study offers several new insights into the expatriate experience, as it relates to HCN interaction, we should point out certain limitations. First, all our data were collected at the same point in time, so our ability to make causal references is limited, especially given the high collinearity between our variables of interest. Next, we used the tried and tested paper-person model of research to conduct our investigation. Clearly, this limits our ability to generalize beyond a point. Future studies should investigate HCN categorization and willingness to help expatriates by (i) using videos of potential expatriate co-workers, or (ii) investigating this phenomena by studying actual experiences of expatriates (i.e., the degree to which they were helped in their transition by HCNs).
REFERENCES


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Work</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>5.33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Gender</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.032</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Age</td>
<td>26.33</td>
<td>5.92</td>
<td>.823**</td>
<td>-.006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Work</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>-.157**</td>
<td>.076</td>
<td>-.166**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Values</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td></td>
<td>.076</td>
<td>.011</td>
<td>.018</td>
<td>-.082</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>similarity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Ethnocentricism</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>-.025</td>
<td>-.019</td>
<td>-.023</td>
<td>-.036</td>
<td>.062</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Collectivism</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>-.066</td>
<td>-.058</td>
<td>-.051</td>
<td>.102*</td>
<td>.119**</td>
<td>.242**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Categorization</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>-.186**</td>
<td>-.046</td>
<td>-.101*</td>
<td>.161**</td>
<td>-.268**</td>
<td>.173**</td>
<td>.040</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Role</td>
<td>4.96</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>-.006</td>
<td>.047</td>
<td>.069</td>
<td>-.077</td>
<td>.131**</td>
<td>.107*</td>
<td>.175**</td>
<td>-.106*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Social support</td>
<td>5.15</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>.101*</td>
<td>.027</td>
<td>.109*</td>
<td>-.110*</td>
<td>.268**</td>
<td>.078</td>
<td>.157**</td>
<td>-.254**</td>
<td>.598**</td>
<td>(.73)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = p < .05
** = p < .01
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fit Indices</th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>RMSEA</th>
<th>NNFI</th>
<th>GFI</th>
<th>IFI</th>
<th>CFI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Measurement Model</strong></td>
<td>658.08</td>
<td>.050</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structural Model -Full Mediation</strong></td>
<td>808.53</td>
<td>.068</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structural Model -Partial Mediation</strong></td>
<td>790.91</td>
<td>.067</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 3
Cell Means for Role Information by Job Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Level</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Co-worker</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>4.850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>4.784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subordinate</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>5.243</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 4
Cell Means for Social Support - Three-Way Interaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Level</th>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Co-worker</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>5.175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4.849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IND</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>5.242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>5.098</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>5.243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>5.020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IND</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5.103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>5.151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subordinate</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>4.990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>5.286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IND</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5.503</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>5.089</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FIGURE 1
Results from Structural Equation Modeling

Values Similarity

-0.47*

Categorization

-0.23*

Role Information

-0.23*

Ethnocentrism

-0.27*

.23*

Collectivism

.28*

.40**

Social Support

Note: Indicators of latent factors are omitted for clarity

* = p < .05, ** = p < .01