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Setting our boundaries: The role of gender, values, and role salience in work–home boundary permeability

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Abstract

Although women make up nearly half of the U.S. workforce, gender role stereotypes persist, and gender roles may relate to how men and women manage work–home boundaries. In this study, we explore gender differences in how employee values (tradition, achievement) translate into role identity salience, and in turn, boundary management preferences and behaviour. With data collected in two waves from 200 employees, we examined how the personal values of tradition and achievement relate differently by gender to role identity salience and in turn, boundary management. We found that men who more strongly value tradition have higher levels of work identity salience and both prefer and create an impermeable boundary around work to prevent intrusion from home. Men who valued tradition more also preferred and crafted a permeable home boundary to allow work intrusion. In contrast, women with higher tradition values reported higher home identity salience, which was associated with preferring segmentation in both work-to-home and home-to-work directions, and to behaviorally protecting home from work. Contrary to expectations, achievement values did not relate to a boundary management process via role identity salience for either gender. We discuss implications for a more nuanced, values-driven, and gendered perspective on boundary management.

KEYWORDS

gender, boundary management, work and family/work-life issues

Research Question 1: For women, is there a significant indirect effect of achievement on boundary permeability preference and behaviour via (a) work identity salience or (b) home identity salience?

In the past, work and home were generally maintained as “separate spheres” with clear boundaries in terms of the time and place where responsibilities of work and home occurred. Over the past few decades, however, technological innovations (e.g., laptops, smartphones, internet, etc.) and digitalization (Minbaeva, 2021) have blurred boundaries between work and home. Such work–home boundary blurring has been exacerbated by increases in remote work (Dalton & Groen, 2022). From 2020 to 2021, the number of employees working from home increased threefold (U.S. Census Bureau, 2022), and this trend towards remote work has persisted after COVID-19 (Biron et al., 2023; Parker et al., 2022). Such trends make understanding how employees manage work–home boundaries important (Fisher et al., 2020; Kniffin et al., 2021).

Boundary theory (Ashforth et al., 2000) suggests that people seek to simplify their environment by having boundaries around their important roles (i.e., work, home). Boundaries differ in their *permeability* – or the extent to which behavioural and/or psychological components of one role can enter another role (Ashforth et al., 2000; Clark, 2000; Kossek & Lautsch, 2012; Matthews et al., 2010). Boundary permeability is directional in that work can be allowed to interrupt home (work-to-home permeability) and/or home can be allowed to interrupt work (home-to-work permeability). Greater permeability implies more role integration, whereas less permeability implies more segmentation. Although greater boundary permeability can facilitate role transitions, it is related to more inter-role conflict, poorer family functioning, and less relationship satisfaction (Allen et al., 2014; Bulger et al., 2007; Hyland & Prottas, 2017; Jostell & Hemlin, 2018; Russo et al., 2018). Because work and home boundaries are increasingly blurred, it is important to understand factors related to boundary management permeability.

Scholars differentiate boundary management *preference*, or how someone prefers to manage boundaries, from boundary management *behaviour*, the actual boundary management behaviours in which people engage. Preference for managing boundaries is theorized to relate to behaviour, with some research reporting positive relationships (e.g., Powell & Greenhaus, 2010). However, as noted by Kreiner et al. (2009), personal desires may not align with what the environment allows, and research confirms this (Allen et al., 2014). Given mixed findings in studies of boundary management preferences and behaviours, a more comprehensive examination of the link between boundary management preferences and behaviour is warranted.

Person and environment factors are theorized to relate to the extent to which people prefer and enforce permeable boundaries (Kreiner, 2006). Research has predominantly focused on contextual factors such as expectations of role partners at work and home (Allen et al., 2014; Reinke & Gerlach, 2022), with less focus on personal factors. Although Ashforth et al. (2000) theorize the importance of cultural values in boundary management, little research has examined how personal values relate to work–home boundary permeability preference or behaviour. This is an important oversight because, as personal values are beliefs about desirable end-states that guide individuals' selection and evaluation of behaviour (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1990), they likely shape role prioritization, and ultimately, guide preferences for and selection of behaviour in how boundaries are managed.

Another person-characteristic that is likely important to boundary permeability is gender. Recent evidence finds U.S. workers continue to possess gender role stereotypes and enact behaviours congruent with them (Eagly et al., 2020; Eagly & Koenig, 2021). These persistent stereotypes likely affect how men and women prioritize work and home and manage boundaries around these roles. Drawing on

social role theory (Eagly, 1987), we examine the gendered process through which personal values relate to boundary management preferences and behaviour.

This study makes several contributions to the literature. First, we contribute to research on values (Schwartz, 1992, 1994) by exploring the role of gender in translating values into role salience and boundary management preferences and behaviour. This is important given we know very little about how values relate to the boundary management process, despite the fact that they are theorized to play a key role (Ashforth et al., 2000). Specifically, we explore whether values manifest differently due to gender, even when men and women report the same values. This is important given recent findings that, despite some changes in gender stereotypes, gender role prescriptions persist (Eagly et al., 2020). Second, although research has examined the link between role identity salience and boundary permeability *preferences* (Capitano et al., 2017; Capitano & Greenhaus, 2018; Matthews et al., 2010), we extend that research to also focus on boundary management *behaviour*. Focusing on behaviour in addition to preference is important because gender and values likely shape behaviour through boundary management preferences.

Finally, we examine role identity salience and boundary management preferences as serially mediated mechanisms explaining how personal values relate to boundary management behaviour. Including role identity salience and boundary management preferences enables us to shed light on the “black box” that explains why personal values and gender relate to boundary management behaviour (Lawrence, 1997). Finally, we extend the boundary management literature by blending boundary theory (Ashforth et al., 2000; Clark, 2000; Nippert-Eng, 1996) with theory on gender roles (Eagly, 1987; West & Zimmerman, 1987, 2009), responding to calls to use theory blending to develop theoretically grounded work–family research (Matthews et al., 2016).

Next, we discuss theory and research to inform the connection between personal values, role identity salience, and boundary management preferences and behaviours. Our model depicts how values (i.e., tradition and achievement) shape role identity salience differently for men and women, and consequently, relate to distinct boundary permeability preferences and behaviours.

BOUNDARY THEORY AND ROLE IDENTITY

As mentioned, a boundary is permeable when physical, temporal, or mental components from one role can enter another (Clark, 2000). For example, when a person is physically present with family but mentally preoccupied with work, the home boundary is permeable to work-related thoughts (Hall & Richter, 1988). People differ in whether they segment by creating impermeable boundaries or integrate to allow boundary permeations from one role to another (Kossek et al., 2012; Powell & Greenhaus, 2010). Symmetrical boundaries allow or prevent permeability in both directions, but work–home boundaries are often asymmetrically permeable (Clark, 2000; Park et al., 2011; Pleck, 1977). For example, a person may maintain a permeable work boundary that allows home intrusions to enter work (e.g., phone calls from family at work) but an impermeable home boundary to keep work out of home (e.g., avoid work calls at home). As such, it is vital to differentiate work-to-home from home-to-work permeability (Hecht & Allen, 2009; Kossek et al., 2012; Kossek & Lautsch, 2008; Olson-Buchanan & Boswell, 2006).

Boundaries exist around each distinct role identity a person occupies (Stryker, 1987). Role identities are “socially constructed definitions of self in-role (this is who a role occupant is)” (Ashforth et al., 2000, p. 475). Hogg et al. (1995, p. 256) argue that “role identities provide meaning for self, not only because they refer to concrete role-specification but also because they distinguish roles from relevant complementary or counter-roles.” For instance, a woman with unique role identities as a mother, wife, manager, and friend constructs her “self” in each role by defining each role's essential and non-essential features.

Each role identity is distinguished by its salience, or, its subjective importance (Thoits, 1992). Identity theory posits (Stryker, 1987) that role identities are arranged hierarchically based on *salience*. Boundary theory posits that people have stronger (weaker) desires to enact more (less) salient roles, and that more

(less) salient roles are also surrounded by less (more) permeable boundaries to prohibit (enable) intrusions (Ashforth et al., 2000). Some evidence supports this, finding an *enactment effect* where people prefer a permeable boundary to enact salient roles into other roles, and a *protection effect* with an impermeable boundary to protect salient roles from intrusion by other domains (Capitano et al., 2017). Yet, other research has found these effects at home (a permeable boundary when work is salient and an impermeable boundary when home is salient), but not at work (Hecht & Allen, 2009). In sum, boundaries tend to be asymmetrically permeable based on role identity salience, but this effect is not consistently identified in all studies.

A VALUES-DRIVEN AND GENDERED MODEL OF BOUNDARY MANAGEMENT

Cultural values and the work–nonwork interface

Another factor that likely relates to boundary management is values. Although Ashforth et al. (2000) theorize the importance of cultural values to boundary management, scholarly understanding of how values relate to boundary management is not well-developed. Values are enduring beliefs that transcend situations and guide behaviour and interpretation of events (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1990). Values exist at the national cultural level and the personal level. National culture exists when values are shared within a collective like a country or region of the world (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1990). Despite the importance of national cultures, considerable variation in personal values occurs within cultures (Ponizovskiy et al., 2019). Given that values guide perceptions, behaviour, and decision-making, it is surprising that past research has not examined the link between values and boundary management. However, there is some research on how national culture and personal values are linked to work–family conflict, which is relevant to consider given boundary permeability is associated with such conflict (Jostell & Hemlin, 2018; Kossek et al., 2006; Kossek & Lautsch, 2012).

Research has found that cultural values are related to work-to-home (Chernyak-Hai & Tziner, 2016; Cohen, 2009; Masuda et al., 2019) and home-to-work conflict (Cohen, 2009; Masuda et al., 2019). For example, Masuda et al. (2019) examined the relationship between Schwartz's (2006) cultural values at the national level and individual interrole conflict in 19 European countries. They found that people in more embedded societies, which value tradition, experience more interrole conflict than those in autonomous societies that value excitement and freedom. Also, people in more hierarchical societies experienced more interrole conflict than those in more egalitarian societies, and people in more mastery and achievement-oriented societies experienced higher work-to-family conflict than people in harmony-oriented societies. In a cross-national meta-analysis, Allen et al. (2020) examined collectivism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance along with regional cluster configurations (e.g., Eastern Europe, South Asia) as moderators of relationships between work–family conflict and its predictors (work/family hours and work/family demands) and outcomes (job, family, and life satisfaction). Relationships between work–family conflict and satisfaction were weaker in more collectivistic contexts, and relationships differed in strength as a function of regional clusters, highlighting the importance of cultural and personal values. Focusing on personal values, Cohen (2009) found power and dominance were related to more interrole conflict, benevolence was linked to greater work-to-family conflict, and hedonism was linked to less work-to-family conflict. More recently, Chernyak-Hai and Tziner (2016) found that values of hedonism, self-direction, power, and achievement were positively related to greater work-to-family conflict.

Collectively, these studies imply personal and cultural values matter to the work–nonwork interface. While there is some variation across studies, most studies indicate that values focused on tradition, hierarchy, power, achievement, and/or mastery are associated with greater interrole conflict, and collectivism, harmony, and benevolence are associated with less inter-role conflict. We build on this research by examining how personal values are linked to boundary management. As guiding forces, we theorize that personal values shape work and home salience, which shapes boundary management preferences and in turn, behaviours (Kossek & Lautsch, 2012).

Personal values

We use an established taxonomy of values (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1990) to examine how two values – tradition and achievement – relate to boundary management differently for women and men. The Schwartz Value System (SVS-10) categorizes 57 values into ten higher-order value types with similar motivations: power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, self-direction, universalism, benevolence, tradition, conformity, and security, organized into two dimensions (Bilsky & Schwartz, 1994; Schwartz, 1992, 1994). The self-enhancement vs. self-transcendence dimension focuses on individual achievement vs. the welfare of others. The conservation vs. openness to change dimension focuses on safety, accepted customs, and avoiding upsetting others vs. self-satisfaction through action, pleasure, excitement, and challenge.

There is conceptual overlap in Schwartz's values (e.g., self-transcendent values are the opposite of self-enhancement values), such that examining all ten values simultaneously creates excessive multicollinearity (Schwartz, 2009). As such, research typically examines a subset of values (Arthaud-Day et al., 2012; Berson et al., 2008; Chui et al., 2002) that represent (1) conservation versus openness to change and (2) self-enhancement versus self-transcendence.

For conservation versus openness, we selected the value of *tradition* which emphasizes acceptance of customs and cultural norms, given our interest in socially prescribed gender norms. Tradition values are defined as “respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that one's culture or religion impose on the self” (Bilsky & Schwartz, 1994, p. 167). The motivations that comprise tradition include respect for tradition (preservation of time-honoured customs), moderation (avoiding extremes of feeling and action), humility (modest, self-effacing), acceptance of one's portion in life (submitting to life's circumstances), and devotion (holding to religious faith and belief; Bilsky & Schwartz, 1994).

For self-enhancement versus self-transcendence, we chose *achievement* to focus on success and demonstrated competence. People who value achievement care about “personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards” (Bilsky & Schwartz, 1994, p. 167). The motivations that comprise achievement values include being ambitious (hard-working, aspiring), influential (having an impact on people and events), capable (competent, effective, efficient), successful (achieving goals), intelligent (logical, thinking), and self-respectful (belief in one's worth; Bilsky & Schwartz, 1994).

Incorporating the lens of gender with values

We integrate a gender lens with research on personal values to theorize how tradition and achievement intersect with gender to manifest into gendered forms of role salience, which is linked to boundary management preferences and behaviour. Because gender role expectations persist (Eagly et al., 2020; Haines et al., 2016), people often enact prescribed stereotypes or expectations associated with their gender (Eagly & Koenig, 2021; Little et al., 2015). Social role theory (Eagly, 1987) suggests that gender role expectations are internalized and drive behaviour. Men and women are socialized to develop the traits and skills that facilitate performance in gendered social roles. This socialization impacts self-concept in the form of gender role identities and beliefs, which arise because most people internalize cultural meanings associated with their gender (Eagly & Wood, 2016). People draw the standards by which they judge their own behaviour from gender identities and seek to bring their behaviour in line with these standards (Eagly & Wood, 2016). Others' expectations also influence behaviour. People who behave in ways consistent with gender roles are rewarded with approval and continued social interaction, whereas behaviour that diverges from gender roles disrupts social interaction and is punished in overt or subtle ways (Eagly & Wood, 2016). In short, both external pressures and internalized self-expectations encourage men and women to manifest values in gender-congruent ways, with implications for role salience and boundary management preferences and behaviours. Next, we discuss the intersection of gender with the personal values of tradition and achievement.

Tradition values and gender

People high on tradition appreciate compliance with social norms, such as male and female gender roles. Given gender stereotypes prescribe the breadwinner as a “male” role (Eagly, 1987; Eagly et al., 2020), men with high tradition values should be especially likely to affirm their masculine role with a salient work identity. As such, we suggest that for men, the relationship between tradition and boundary management preferences and behaviour occurs through work role identity salience. Drawing on social role (Eagly & Wood, 2016) and boundary theory (Ashforth et al., 2000), we propose that men who value tradition engage in work role enactment and protection effects because of their high work identity salience. That is, men prefer a permeable home boundary so that they can enact the work role while at home (i.e., greater integration), and an impermeable work boundary so they can protect the work role from home role intrusions (i.e., greater segmentation). This preference for managing boundaries functions as a self-standard, which may prompt behaviour that aligns with this standard (Eagly & Wood, 2016). Boundary theory also suggests that people seek to translate their boundary management preferences into actual behaviour (Kreiner, 2006). Empirical associations between boundary management preference and behaviour range from low to moderate (Methot & LePine, 2016; Powell & Greenhaus, 2010), likely due to a mismatch between personal desires and the environment (Kreiner et al., 2009). Nonetheless, based on theory and prior research, we expect a positive relationship between boundary management preferences and behaviour.

In sum, blending social role and boundary theories, we suggest that men with high tradition values have salient work identities, and prefer and enact these identities across roles, fostering work-to-home permeability preference and behaviour (greater integration from work-to-home). Men high on tradition also seek to protect their salient work identity through low home-to-work permeability preference and behaviour (greater segmentation from home-to-work). Based on these enactment and protection effects:

Hypothesis 1. For men, we expect a significant indirect effect of tradition via work identity salience, which (a) positively relates to work-to-home permeability preference and behaviour and (b) negatively relates to home-to-work permeability preference and behaviour.

Given domestic life and caregiving are prescribed gender roles for women (Eagly, 1987; Eagly et al., 2020; West & Zimmerman, 1987, 2009), women with high tradition values should care more about domestic tasks and caregiving, their socially prescribed roles, fostering a salient home identity. Blending social role (Eagly & Wood, 2016) and boundary theory (Ashforth et al., 2000) suggests that women who embrace tradition will have a salient family role, which they prefer to enact and protect. That is, they prefer to enact the home role at work (greater home-to-work permeability or integration) and protect the home role from work (lower work-to-home permeability or segmentation). As noted above, we expect boundary management preference to be linked to boundary management behaviour (Kreiner, 2006).

Hypothesis 2. For women, we expect a significant indirect effect of tradition via home identity salience, which (a) negatively relates to work-to-home permeability preference and behaviour and (b) positively relates to home-to-work permeability preference and behaviour.

Achievement values and gender

People with high achievement values work hard to impress others and attain goals “...according to social standards” (Bilsky & Schwartz, 1994, p. 167). This defining feature of achievement values as reflecting social standards, combined with the persistence of gender role stereotypes (Eagly et al., 2016), suggests the manifestation of achievement values may be gendered. For example, men are conditioned to succeed at work in their prescribed masculine role of breadwinner. Thus, men with high achievement

values should exhibit high work identity salience, which should lead to a desire to enact and protect the work role. Taken together, social role (Eagly & Wood, 2010) and boundary theories (Kreiner, 2006) suggest that men high on achievement values prefer to manage boundaries to enact and protect their gender-congruent salient work role of breadwinner.

Hypothesis 3. For men, we expect a significant indirect effect of achievement via work identity salience, which (a) positively relates to work-to-home permeability preference and behaviour, and (b) negatively relates to home-to-work permeability preference and behaviour.

Theory about gender role socialization (Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Wood, 2016) suggests that women with high achievement values prioritize domestic tasks and family caregiving to succeed in their socially prescribed home role (Cerrato & Cifre, 2018). Because women are conditioned to be good mothers, wives, friends, and community members, women with high achievement values should have a salient home role. In fact, research has found that women identify more with family and home roles than do men (Eagly et al., 2020; Eby et al., 2005; Haines et al., 2016). A gender role socialization perspective (Eagly & Wood, 2016) combined with boundary theory (Kreiner, 2006) suggests that achievement-oriented women will have more salient home identities, which relates to a desire to enact and protect the home role with a permeable home-to-work boundary and an impermeable work-to-home boundary.

In contrast, an alternative perspective recognizes that, despite the power of gender role socialization, the work role, more than the home role, is a place where achievement motives can manifest. Given women with high achievement values care about ambition, having influence, being capable, achieving goals, and being logical (Bilsky & Schwartz, 1994), they may have salient work identities because work enables them to reach motivational goals. When work is salient, women may prefer a permeable work-to-home boundary to enact the work role at home, and an impermeable home-to-work boundary to prevent the home role from entering work.

METHODS

Participants and procedures

Participants were full-time employees, working at least 32 hr per week, who spoke English and lived in the United States. Data were gathered by Qualtrics panels, who contacted participants who met inclusion criteria at time 1 and offered an incentive to participate. At time 1, after providing informed consent, participants completed an online survey measuring tradition and achievement values, work and home identity salience, home-to-work and work-to-home boundary permeability preferences, and demographics. Two weeks later, at time 2, participants were recontacted by Qualtrics panels staff to complete a second online survey assessing home-to-work and work-to-home permeability behaviour. We gathered boundary management behaviours at time 2 to reduce concerns of common method variance. Temporal separation has been found to reduce common method variance in past research (Ostroff et al., 2002), and a two-week time lag has been used by many authors to counter CMV (Babalola et al., 2021; Duan et al., 2023; Gok et al., 2023; Li et al., 2022; Pan et al., 2021).

Of 415 employees who completed the survey at time 1, 210 also completed it at time 2.¹ Participants who failed either of the two attention checks were omitted, resulting in a final sample of 200 employees who completed the survey at time 1 and time 2.

¹Given not all T1 participants responded to the survey at T2, we conducted selective attrition analyses. We used Hotelling's T2, with a binary independent variable comparing participants who responded at T2 to those who did not respond at T2 on the following dependent variables: Gender (male vs. female), race (white vs. nonwhite), age, hours worked, parental status (parent vs. nonparent), marital status (single vs. married), values (tradition and achievement), work and home role identity salience, and boundary permeability preferences (work-to-home and home-to-work). Wilks lambda was not significant ($F(12, 428) = 1.657, p = .074$), indicating that participants who responded at both T1 and T2 did not differ significantly from those responding to only the T1 survey on demographics or model variables that were gathered at T1.

Participants were 43 years old ($SD = 12.64$) on average and worked on average 41.38 hr weekly ($SD = 6.58$). The sample was 42.5% male, 85% White, 5.5% Black, 5% Asian, 3% Latinx, and 1.5% other races. Most participants were married (59.5%) or cohabited with a partner (8.5%), and the rest were single (18.5%), divorced (10%), widowed (2%), or separated (1.5%). Most participants (69.5%) had children, with an average of 1.39 children. Participants were 69.5% white-collar workers and 30.5% blue-collar workers. Their professions were diverse, including management and administration (18%), technology and IT (11.5%), health care (9.5%), finance and accounting (7%), sales and marketing (7.5%), construction and engineering (8.5%), customer service and hospitality (7.5%), manufacturing and operations (6%), education and teaching (6.5%), legal and law enforcement (5%), and other professions (13.5%).

Measures

Unless noted otherwise, participants responded to all items on a 7-point Likert scale assessing agreement (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree).

Tradition and achievement values were measured with the Schwartz Value Survey (Schwartz, 1992, 1994). Following other studies that focus on a subset of values (e.g., Arthaud-Day et al., 2012; Berson et al., 2008; Chui et al., 2002), to avoid multicollinearity (Schwartz, 2009), we focused on achievement and tradition. We used six items for each value. Participants rated the importance of each value on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = not important at all; 7 = of supreme importance). An example item for tradition is *respect for tradition (preservation of time-honoured customs, $\alpha = .81$)*. An example item for achievement is *capable (competent, effective, efficient, $\alpha = .81$)*.

Role identity salience was measured with four items from Hecht and Allen (2009). An example item for work identity salience is *"I consider my work to be very central to my existence"* ($\alpha = .84$). An example item for home identity salience is *"The most important things that happen to me involve my home life"* ($\alpha = .83$).

Work-to-home and home-to-work permeability preferences were assessed with Kreiner's (2006) 4-item measure. As the items were written to endorse a segmentation (low permeability) preference, all items were reverse coded so higher scores indicated a greater preference for permeability (integration). A sample item for work-to-home permeability preference is *"I prefer to keep work life at work"* ($\alpha = .90$). A sample item for home-to-work permeability preference is *"I do not like to have to think about home while I am at work"* ($\alpha = .83$).

Work-to-home and home-to-work permeability behaviour were assessed with Powell and Greenhaus' (2010) adaptation of Kreiner's (2006) 4-item scale. An example item for work-to-home permeability behaviour is *"I don't allow work issues to creep into my home life"* ($\alpha = .94$). A home-to-work permeability behaviour item is *"I leave home behind when I go to work"* ($\alpha = .89$). Items were reverse coded so higher scores indicated greater permeability behaviour (integration).

RESULTS

Descriptive statistics and correlations

Correlations, reliabilities, means, and standard deviations for the full sample are displayed in Table 1. Given we expected the relationships of values to vary by gender, first we discuss separate correlations for men and women as presented in Table 2. Consistent with social role theory, for men, tradition was positively related to work identity salience ($r = .35, p < .01$) but not home identity salience ($r = .18, p > .05$); and for women, tradition was positively related to home identity salience ($r = .31, p < .01$), but unrelated to work identity salience ($r = .02, p > .05$). Among men, achievement values were unrelated to work identity salience ($r = .18, p > .05$) and home identity salience ($r = .14, p > .05$). Achievement was unrelated

TABLE 1 Means, standard deviations, correlations, and scale reliabilities for full sample.

Variable	Mean	SD	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
1. Tradition	5.34	1.05	(.81)									
2. Achievement	5.98	.93	.57**	(-.81)								
3. WRIS	3.78	1.38	.16*	.07	(.84)							
4. HRIS	5.65	.95	.26**	.21**	-.27**	(.83)						
5. H-W permeability preference	2.92	1.13	-.28**	-.24**	-.20**	-.18*	(.83)					
6. W-H permeability preference	2.08	1.04	-.23**	-.20**	.26**	-.41**	.29**	(.90)				
7. H-W permeability behaviour	3.74	1.4	-.08	-.05	-.23**	-.06	.27**	-.10	(.89)			
8. W-H permeability behaviour	3.59	1.58	-.09	.10	.08	-.25**	.07	.19**	.48**	(.94)		
9. Gender	-.15	.99	-.01	-.20**	.17*	-.03	.07	.14*	.04	.04	–	
10. Age	43.09	12.65	.19**	.22**	-.17*	.01	-.01	.05	.04	.10	.02	–
11. Hours worked	41.38	6.58	-.01	.07	-.05	-.13	.03	.05	.04	.15*	.16*	.16*

Note: N = 200. Alphas are presented on the diagonal. All variables were measured in the T1 survey except work-to-home and home-to-work permeability behaviour measured in the T2 survey. Gender coded as -1 = female and 1 = male.

Abbreviations: HRIS, home role identity salience; H-W, home-to-work; W-H, work-to-home; WRIS, work role identity salience.

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

TABLE 2 Means, standard deviations, and correlations for men and women.

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Tradition	–	.50**	.02	.31**	-.32**	-.28**	-.15	-.25**	.19*	-.18
2. Achievement	.68**	–	.04	.29**	-.33**	-.19*	-.19*	-.02	.22*	.03
3. WRIS	.35**	.18	–	-.36**	-.18	.38**	-.25**	.06	-.08	.05
4. HRIS	.18	.14	-.15	–	-.27**	-.45**	.07	-.17	.00	-.17
5. H-W permeability preference	-.24*	-.14	-.27*	-.06	–	.16	.40**	.12	-.06	.01
6. W-H permeability preference	-.18	-.16	.09	-.38**	.42**	–	-.11	.22*	.04	.16
7. H-W permeability behaviour	.02	.09	-.24*	-.22*	.12	-.11	–	.33**	-.06	-.11
8. W-H permeability behaviour	.13	.23*	.09	-.35**	.01	.15	.66**	–	.02	.23*
9. Age	.19	.26*	-.33**	.03	.07	.06	.18	.22*	–	.08
10. Hours worked	.24*	.18	-.24*	-.06	.04	-.12	.23*	.04	.27*	–
Mean										
Men	5.32	5.77	4.05	5.62	3.02	2.26	3.8	3.66	43.38	42.53
Women	5.34	6.14	3.58	5.67	2.85	1.95	3.69	3.54	42.88	40.54
SD										
Men	1.03	1.06	1.39	.96	1.16	1.17	1.45	1.63	11.76	6.43
Women	1.07	.79	1.35	.94	1.11	.92	1.36	1.54	13.31	6.58

N/6: N (men) = 85, N (women) = 115. Correlations for men are shown below the diagonal and correlations for women are shown above the diagonal. All variables were measured in the T1 survey except work-to-home and home-to-work permeability behaviour measured in the T2 survey.

Abbreviations: HRIS, home role identity salience; H-W, home-to-work; W-H, work-to-home; WRIS, work role identity salience.

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

to work salience among women ($r = .04, p > .05$), but it was positively related to home identity salience ($r = .29, p < .01$).

As the relationships between the endogenous variables were not expected to vary based on gender, we examined these relationships for the full sample (see Table 1). As anticipated, work identity salience was negatively correlated with home-to-work permeability preference ($r = -.20, p < .01$) and positively correlated with work-to-home permeability preference ($r = .26, p < .01$). Also as expected, home identity salience was negatively correlated with work-to-home permeability preference ($r = -.41, p < .01$), but contrary to our predictions, negatively correlated with home-to-work permeability preference ($r = -.18, p < .05$). Finally, as expected, home-to-work permeability preference was positively related to home-to-work permeability behaviour ($r = .27, p < .01$), as was work-to-home permeability preference with work-to-home permeability behaviour ($r = .19, p < .01$).

Measurement model

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted using Mplus version 8.7 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998–2017). Following Hu and Bentler (1999), we considered the comparative fit index (CFI) and Tucker–Lewis index (TLI) values of .90 or higher, a root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) value of .08 or lower, and a standardized root mean squared residual (SRMR) value of .08 or lower as indicative of good model fit.

CFA results (see Table 3) revealed that the hypothesized 8-factor model (model 1) including achievement, tradition, work and home role identity salience, home-to-work and work-to-home permeability preference, and home-to-work and work-to-home permeability behaviour exhibited marginal fit ($\chi^2(566) = 1059.49, p < .01, RMSEA = .07, CFI = .88, TLI = .87, SRMR = .07$). Following Anderson and Gerbing (1988), we omitted problematic items to improve fit of the measurement model. Four items with standardized factor loadings less than .6 (“influential”, “ambitious”, and “successful” for achievement and “devout” for tradition) were dropped to improve model fit. The final shortened scale included 3 items for achievement and 5 items for tradition. Confirmatory factor analysis with the shortened scale (model 2) exhibited acceptable fit ($\chi^2(436) = 744.66, p < .01, RMSEA = .06, CFI = .92, TLI = .91, SRMR = .06$).

TABLE 3 Model fit results for confirmatory factor analysis.

Models	χ^2	Df	$\Delta\chi^2$ (Δ df)	RMSEA	CFI	TLI	SRMR
Model 1 (hypothesized eight-factor model)	1059.49	566		.07	.88	.87	.07
Model 2 (hypothesized eight-factor model with shortened scale)	744.66	436		.06	.92	.91	.06
Model 3 (constraining the correlation between achievement and tradition values to 1.0)	826.89	443	82.23 (7)***	.07	.90	.88	.06
Model 4 (constraining the correlation between home and work role identity salience to 1.0)	1028.16	443	283.5 (7)***	.08	.84	.82	.09
Model 5 (constraining the correlation between H-W and W-H permeability preference to 1.0)	1034.04	443	289.38 (7)***	.08	.84	.82	.09
Model 6 (constraining the correlation between H-W and W-H permeability behaviour to 1.0)	1131.70	443	387.04 (7)***	.09	.81	.79	.09

Note: All alternative models were compared to Model 2 (hypothesized model with shortened scale). All χ^2 differences are significant at $p < .001$. Abbreviations: CFI, comparative fit index; H-W, home-to-work; RMSEA, root mean squared error of approximation; SRMR, standardized root mean square residual; TLI, Tucker–Lewis index; W-H, work-to-home.

Next, we compared the revised 8-factor measurement model with other models where we constrained the correlation between different factors to 1.0 (see Table 3). We compared the 8-factor model (model 2) to model 3, constraining the correlation between tradition and achievement values to 1.0 ($\chi^2(443) = 826.89, p < .001, RMSEA = .07, CFI = .90, TLI = .88, SRMR = .06$), to model 4 by constraining the correlation between home and work identity salience to 1.0 ($\chi^2(443) = 1028.16, p < .001, RMSEA = .08, CFI = .84, TLI = .82, SRMR = .09$), to model 5 by constraining the correlation between home-to-work and work-to-home permeability preference to 1.0 ($\chi^2(443) = 1034.04, p < .001, RMSEA = .08, CFI = .84, TLI = .82, SRMR = .09$), and to model 6 by constraining the correlation between home-to-work and work-to-home permeability behaviour to 1.0 ($\chi^2(443) = 1131.70, p < .001, RMSEA = .09, CFI = .81, TLI = .79, SRMR = .09$). All chi-square difference tests were significant, indicating that the final 8-factor measurement model (model 2) exhibited a significant increment in fit relative to all alternative 7-factor measurement models.

Hypothesis testing

To test the hypotheses, we conducted path analysis in Mplus version 8.7 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998–2017), using maximum likelihood estimation. Following Preacher and Hayes (2008), we used 5000 empirical bootstrapping samples to estimate the bias-corrected 95% confidence intervals (CIs) around conditional indirect effects to test the proposed indirect effects for men and women. In our analyses, we also controlled for two theoretically relevant variables: hours worked and age. We controlled for hours worked given its relationship with gender (Landivar, 2015) and work identity salience (Ng & Feldman, 2008). Because younger people hold more egalitarian gender beliefs than those from older generations (Scarborough et al., 2019), we also controlled for age. We examined the robustness without control variables, and the results were similar. We present results without the covariates in Data S1.

Table 4 presents path coefficients in the hypothesized model, after controlling for age and number of hours worked. The fit of the model was adequate ($\chi^2(14) = 18.909, p > .05, RMSEA = .042, SRMR = .034, CFI = .981, TLI = .924$) and R^2 values for endogenous variables were significant and ranged from 10% to 24%. Path coefficients were consistent with expectations, with one exception: Home identity salience had a significant negative relationship with home-to-work permeability preference ($b = -.21, p < .05$). Path coefficients are also shown in Figure 1.

The interaction of tradition and gender on work identity salience was significant ($b = .30, p < .01$). Specifically, for *men*, tradition was positively related to work identity salience ($b = .60, p < .05$); however, for *women*, tradition was unrelated to work identity salience ($b = -.00, p > .05$). Gender did not moderate the relationship of tradition with home identity salience ($b = -.00, p > .05$), nor the relationship of achievement with work identity salience ($b = -.13, p > .05$), nor the relationship of achievement with home identity salience ($b = -.10, p > .05$). Because our hypotheses do not specify moderation, and we hypothesized effects among just men (H1, H3) and/or just women (H2, RQ1), we calculated simple slopes for men and women to aid in our interpretation of findings. Although an interaction would provide evidence of differential effects by gender, as our hypotheses specified effects within a gender, rather than being comparative across gender, a significant interaction effect was not necessary to support hypotheses. The results of the simple slope analysis suggested that for *men*, tradition was not significantly related to home identity salience ($b = .17, p > .05$), but for *women*, there was a positive significant relationship between tradition and home identity salience ($b = .18, p < .05$). Furthermore, the relationship of achievement with work identity salience was not significant for *men* ($b = -.09, p > .05$) or for *women* ($b = .16, p > .05$). Finally, for *men*, achievement was not significantly related to home identity salience ($b = .04, p > .05$), but this relationship was significant for women ($b = .24, p < .05$).

Table 5 presents the indirect effects of tradition on work-to-home and home-to-work permeability behaviour through work and home identity salience and work-to-home and home-to-work permeability preference for men and women, as specified in hypotheses 1 and 2. Results indicated that for *men*, the indirect effect of tradition on work-to-home permeability behaviour through work identity

TABLE 4 Path coefficients for hypothesized model.

Variable	WRIS	HRIS	H-W permeability preference	W-H permeability preference	H-W permeability behaviour	W-H permeability behaviour
Tradition	.30** (.11)	.17* (.08)	-.16 (.10)	-.17* (.08)	.05 (.11)	-.21 (.13)
Simple slopes (men/women)	.60*/-.00	.17/.18*				
Achievement	.04 (.13)	.14 (.09)	-.13 (.10)	-.10 (.09)	.03 (.12)	.39** (.14)
Simple slopes (men/women)	-.09/.16	.04/.24*				
WRIS			-.17** (.06)	.18*** (.05)	-.22** (.08)	.00 (.09)
HRIS			-.21* (.09)	-.31*** (.08)	-.14 (.11)	-.28* (.13)
H-W permeability preference					.29*** (.08)	
W-H permeability preference						.31** (.10)
Gender	.27** (.11)	.01 (.07)				
Tradition × Gender	.30** (.12)	-.00 (.08)				
Achievement × Gender	-.13 (.13)	-.10 (.09)				
Age	-.02** (.01)	.00 (.01)	.00 (.01)	.01* (.01)	.00 (.01)	.01 (.01)
Hours worked	-.02 (.02)	-.02 (.01)	.00 (.01)	.00 (.01)	.00 (.02)	.02 (.02)
R ²	.14**	.10*	.14**	.24***	.12**	.15**

Note: N = 200. Coefficients are unstandardized and numbers in parentheses are standard errors. All variables were measured in the T1 survey except work-to-home permeability behaviour and home-to-work permeability behaviour measured in the T2 survey. Gender coded as -1 = female and 1 = male.

Abbreviations: HRIS, home role identity salience; H-W, home-to-work; W-H, work-to-home; WRIS, work role identity salience.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

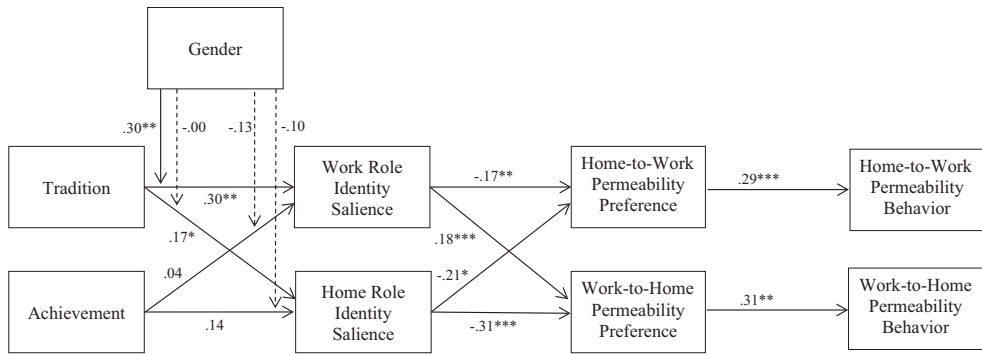


FIGURE 1 Hypothesized model. $N=200$. Path estimates are unstandardized coefficients. The non-significant moderation effects of gender in the first stage are shown with dashed lines and the significant one is shown with a solid line. The path coefficients shown in the figure are for the whole sample. Simple slope analysis suggested the following estimates: tradition to work role identity salience = $.60^*$ (men), $-.00$ (women); tradition to home role identity salience = $.17$ (men), $.18^*$ (women); achievement to work role identity salience = $-.09$ (men), $.16$ (women); achievement to home role identity salience = $.04$ (men), $.24^*$ (women). We allowed the following variables to covary: achievement, tradition, gender, age, and hours worked; work role identity salience and home role identity salience; work-to-home and home-to-work permeability preference; work-to-home, and home-to-work permeability behaviour. Control variables: age and number of hours worked. $^*p < .05$. $^{**}p < .01$. $^{***}p < .001$.

TABLE 5 Conditional indirect effects of tradition on work-to-home and home-to-work permeability behaviour.

Indirect effect	Men		Women	
	Estimate	95% CI	Estimate	95% CI
Tradition → WRIS → W-H permeability preference → W-H permeability behaviour	.033	[.008, .090]	.000	[-.018, .018]
Tradition → WRIS → H-W permeability preference → H-W permeability behaviour	-.030	[-.086, -.007]	.000	[-.016, .017]
Tradition → HRIS → W-H permeability preference → W-H permeability behaviour	-.016	[-.070, .006]	-.017	[-.049, -.002]
Tradition → HRIS → H-W permeability preference → H-W permeability behaviour	-.010	[-.047, .002]	-.010	[-.040, .000]

Note: $N=200$. Unstandardized indirect effects are reported with 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals (CIs). All CIs are based on 5000 empirical bootstrap samples. Indirect effects are significant when the CI does not include zero.

Abbreviations: HRIS, home role identity salience; H-W, home-to-work; W-H, work-to-home; WRIS, work role identity salience.

salience and work-to-home permeability preference was positive and significant (estimate = $.033$, 95% CI = $[.008, .090]$), supporting H1a. Also, as predicted in H1b, for *men*, the indirect effect of tradition on home-to-work permeability behaviour via work identity salience and home-to-work permeability preference was negative and significant (estimate = $-.030$, 95% CI = $[-.086, -.007]$). Therefore, H1a and H1b were both supported.

For *women*, consistent with H2a (see Table 5), the indirect effect of tradition on work-to-home permeability behaviour through home identity salience and work-to-home permeability preference was significant and negative (estimate = $-.017$, 95% CI = $[-.049, -.002]$). For *women*, the indirect effect of tradition on home-to-work permeability behaviour through home identity salience and home-to-work permeability preference was not significant (estimate = $-.010$, 95% CI = $[-.040, .000]$), so H2b was not supported.

TABLE 6 Conditional indirect effects of achievement on work-to-home and home-to-work permeability behaviour.

Indirect effect	Men		Women	
	Estimate	95% CI	Estimate	95% CI
Achievement → WRIS → W-H permeability preference → W-H permeability behaviour	-.005	[-.042, .019]	.009	[-.009, .044]
Achievement → WRIS → H-W permeability preference → H-W permeability behaviour	.004	[-.014, .043]	-.008	[-.042, .007]
Achievement → HRIS → W-H permeability preference → W-H permeability behaviour	-.004	[-.042, .023]	-.023	[-.075, .000]
Achievement → HRIS → H-W permeability preference → H-W permeability behaviour	-.002	[-.034, .012]	-.014	[-.058, .000]

Note: $N = 200$. Unstandardized indirect effects are reported with 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals (CIs). All CIs are based on 5000 empirical bootstrap samples. Indirect effects are significant when the CI does not include zero.

Abbreviations: HRIS, home role identity salience; H-W, home-to-work; W-H, work-to-home; WRIS, work role identity salience.

Table 6 presents the indirect effects of achievement on work-to-home and home-to-work permeability behaviour through work and home role identity salience, as well as work-to-home and home-to-work permeability preference for men (as predicted in H3) and women (as explored in research question 1). Findings showed that for *men*, the indirect effect of achievement on work-to-home permeability behaviour through work identity salience and work-to-home permeability preference was non-significant (estimate = $-.005$, 95% CI = $[-.042, .019]$), as was the indirect effect of achievement on home-to-work permeability behaviour through work identity salience and home-to-work permeability preference (estimate = $.004$, 95% CI = $[-.014, .043]$). So, H3a and H3b were not supported.

Finally, research question 1 explored whether, for *women*, there was a significant indirect effect of achievement on boundary permeability behaviour via (a) home identity salience or (b) work identity salience and boundary permeability preference (see Table 6). For *women*, the indirect effects of achievement on work-to-home permeability behaviour through work identity salience and work-to-home permeability preference was non-significant (estimate = $.009$, 95% CI = $[-.009, .044]$), as was the indirect effect on home-to-work permeability behaviour through work identity salience and home-to-work permeability preference (effect = $-.008$, 95% CI = $[-.042, .007]$). Also, for *women*, the indirect effect of achievement on work-to-home permeability behaviour through home identity salience and work-to-home permeability preference was not significant (estimate = $-.023$, 95% CI = $[-.075, .000]$), nor was the indirect effect of achievement on home-to-work permeability behaviour via home identity salience and home-to-work permeability preference (estimate = $-.014$, 95% CI = $[-.058, .000]$). A summary of hypotheses and findings (both with and without control variables) is found in Table 7.

DISCUSSION

We blend boundary theory (Ashforth et al., 2000; Clark, 2000; Nippert-Eng, 1996) and theory on gender role socialization (Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Wood, 2016) to propose a gendered relationship of values with work and home boundary permeability behaviour via role identity salience and boundary permeability preference. We found that tradition values related to identity salience and boundary management in a gendered way. For men, higher tradition values were associated with greater work identity salience which in turn, related to a preference for enacting the salient work role at home (greater work-to-home permeability preference/integration) and protecting it from home intrusions (lower home-to-work permeability preference/segmentation). These preferences were linked to the behaviours men used to

TABLE 7 Summary of hypotheses and findings.

Hypothesis	Results	
	With control variables	Without control variables
H1a. For <i>men</i> , we expect a significant indirect effect of tradition via work identity salience, which positively relates to work-to-home permeability preference and behaviour.	Supported	Supported
H1b. For <i>men</i> , we expect a significant indirect effect of tradition via work identity salience, which negatively relates to home-to-work permeability preference and behaviour.	Supported	Supported
H2a. For <i>women</i> , we expect a significant indirect effect of tradition via home identity salience which negatively relates to work-to-home permeability preference and behaviour	Supported	Supported
H2b. For <i>women</i> , we expect a significant indirect effect of tradition via home identity salience, which positively relates to home-to-work permeability preference and behaviour.	Not supported	Not supported
H3a. For <i>men</i> , we expect a significant indirect effect of achievement via work identity salience, which positively relates to work-to-home permeability preference and behaviour	Not supported	Not supported
H3b. For <i>men</i> , we expect a significant indirect effect of achievement via work identity salience, which negatively relates to home-to-work permeability preference and behaviour.	Not supported	Not supported
Research Question 1: For women, is there a significant indirect effect of achievement on boundary permeability preference and behaviour via (a) work identity salience or (b) home identity salience? Findings for the research question: For <i>women</i> , there was not any significant indirect effect of achievement on boundary permeability preference and behaviour via (a) work identity salience or (b) home identity salience. Results were the same with and without control variables.		

Note: Control variables: age and number of hours worked.

manage work–home boundaries (i.e., greater work-to-home and lower home-to-work permeability behaviour, respectively). For women, higher tradition values were related to greater home identity salience and, in turn, to protecting a salient home role from work (lower work-to-home permeability preference/segmentation), but not to enacting the home role at work (greater home-to-work permeability preference). Women's preferences for protecting the home role were also associated with boundary management behaviours in a predictable way (lower work-to-home permeability behaviour). In short, having higher tradition values was associated with greater work identity salience for men and home identity salience for women, as suggested by social role theory (Eagly, 1987). Furthermore, men exhibited both protection and enactment effects around their salient work role, whereas women exhibited only protective effects around their salient home role.

Results related to achievement did not support our expectations. Contrary to hypotheses, we did not find evidence that the self-enhancement value of achievement was related to work and/or home identity salience and/or the boundary management process for men. Although achievement was unrelated to role salience and permeability preference among men, the correlations revealed that more

achievement-focused men were more likely to allow work to permeate the home boundary. This suggests that, although achievement-focused men do not necessarily see work as a more central part of their identity, they still respond behaviorally to the gendered work role and allow work to enter home as needed to ensure high work performance. This suggests that individual values may relate to boundary management behaviour, but not through role salience or boundary management preferences.

Although correlations suggest achievement values were positively associated with home identity salience for women, the relationship of achievement with home identity salience was not significant in the path analysis, so the hypothesized indirect effects with boundary management were not significant, indicating no unique effect of achievement when tested within our path model. Examination of the correlations suggests that, among women, greater achievement values were related to a preference for greater segmentation in both directions. Though explanations are merely speculative, these findings may reflect the social roles women occupy. Women may be more likely to struggle to manage work and family given they do most of the home domain labour (Shockley et al., 2021). As achievement-focused women may expect high performance of themselves in all roles, regardless of role salience, they may prefer to focus on one role at a time. However, preferences for managing boundaries do not always translate into behaviour. Although correlations suggest more achievement-oriented women were less inclined to allow home to intrude into work, valuing achievement was unrelated to whether work permeated the home boundary. The findings for men and women together suggest that, regardless of whether achievement relates to role salience or preferences for managing boundaries, achievement-focused men showed an enactment effect with work permeating home, and achievement-focused women showed a protection effect, with work impermeable to home intrusions.

Theoretical implications

The gender differences found in the current study align with recent findings that gender role stereotypes and expectations continue to have a powerful impact on human behaviour (Eagly et al., 2020). Gender roles appear to be especially powerful in driving role salience and boundary management preferences and behaviour among men and women with higher tradition values. Among men, tradition values were associated with greater work identity salience. In contrast, among women, tradition values were related to higher home identity salience. Consistent with our gendered theoretical perspective, tradition values translated into men and women reporting high salience for the prescribed role for their gender (work for men, home for women). Another critical observation is that personal values have distinct implications for men's and women's identities. The correlations suggest that greater tradition and achievement values related to greater home identity salience for women, whereas for men, only tradition-predicted work role salience and achievement did not matter. This research suggests the need for future research examining how a wide range of values relate to role identities differently for men and women.

Both men and women responded to high role salience by protecting the salient role from outside intrusions. Those with high tradition values appear to immerse themselves in a gender-prescribed salient role and carefully protect it from intrusion from the other domain. Men high on tradition also enacted their salient work identity at home by allowing work to permeate home, but women high on tradition did not enact their salient home identity at work. These gender differences in enactment effects may relate to the leeway people are afforded in work and home roles. That is, men may receive more latitude from home role partners to engage with their work at home, whereas there may be more limits to the flexibility a workplace will provide women who try to enact a home role at work.

In summary, our findings suggest a slight refinement to our values-based, gendered theory of boundary management. As posited, we found that role salience and boundary permeability preferences are important linking mechanisms that can explain the relationship of tradition values with boundary permeability behaviours for both men and women. As our perspective suggests, however, which role is salient differs for men and women who value tradition. Values and role salience are linked to protection

effects in terms of boundary permeability behaviour (for men and women) and enactment effects (for men only).

Consistent with past research (Matthews et al., 2010; Powell & Greenhaus, 2010), both women and men exhibited protection effects – that is, they protected their salient (and gendered) roles from intrusions originating outside that role. However, our findings regarding enactment effects were not as robust. Although we consistently found enactment effects among men, among women we did not identify significant enactment effects when control variables were included in our model (although this effect did become significant when control variables were removed). Our results are similar to Hecht and Allen (2009) who found consistent protection effects for both home-to-work and work-to-home boundary permeability behaviour, but less consistent enactment effects which were found only for work-to-home permeability behaviour. However, Winkel and Clayton (2010) found enactment effects for both home-to-work and work-to-home boundary permeability behaviour. In a more recent study, Capitano et al. (2017) examined boundary management preference only in the work-to-home direction and found both enactment and protection effects, with high work-to-home permeability preference when work salience was high (enactment), and low work-to-home permeability preference when home role salience was high (protection). However, the enactment effect was nearly seven times stronger than the protection effect. In contrast, Capitano and Greenhaus (2018), who examined both boundary management preference and behaviour in the work-to-home direction, found protection effects with low work-to-home permeability behaviour when home salience was high, but no enactment effects, as work was not allowed to intrude into home when work salience was high. Our study extends Capitano and Greenhaus (2018) by examining boundary management preference and behaviour in both the work-to-home and the home-to-work direction. Moreover, we highlight the importance of gender as a factor that may relate to boundary management, as protection effects were consistent across both men and women, whereas only men showed robust enactment effects when controlling for age and hours worked. Finally, our study shows that boundary management preferences and behaviours, while positively related as expected, are only moderately correlated. Clearly, given divergent findings in the literature on role salience and boundary management, these questions should continue to be explored in future research.

These gender differences in how tradition values manifest suggest differences in the ways men and women perceive expectations about acceptable behaviour from their multiple, immediate domains. The gendered boundary management choices people make may reflect their felt needs to engage in impression management to project an image as a professional (Little et al., 2015) and/or a work–family image of their competence as a family member and worker (Ladge & Little, 2019). A person's comfort with their work–family image has been theorized to reflect the degree to which they meet the expectations of work–family norms around them, which are linked to gendered social roles (Ladge & Little, 2019). Men's work–family norms to be a successful “breadwinner” (Eagly, 1987) could translate into high work role salience, protecting work from home intrusions, and letting work intrude into home. The expectations of coworkers may weigh more heavily into a man's boundary management choices than the expectations of family and friends, given his work–family image as a “breadwinner.” In fact, coworker expectations for availability are associated with allowing more work-to-nonwork permeations (Reinke & Gerlach, 2022). Men's behaviour may also be affected by vicarious learning via observed role models (i.e., their male supervisor) from their work environment (Ladge & Little, 2019).

Working women often face more challenges in balancing work and family, as they are the primary bearers of home responsibilities (Molla, 2021). Given the expectations women face for excellence in the home role (Eagly, 1987), the positive correlation between home identity salience and tradition value is not surprising. Social norms may pressure employed mothers to amplify their home role image at work, in essence, sacrificing their career goals to project a good mother image (Ladge & Little, 2019). Such pressures may result in women who value tradition having a salient home identity, which is associated with their efforts to protect the home domain from work intrusions. As such, traditional female employees who have high home identity salience may take cues from other employed women. Notably, Reinke and Gerlach (2022) found that the expectations of nonwork role partners were associated with creating a nonwork boundary that is impermeable to work. For women with strong home identity salience, these

nonwork role partners may be friends, family, and mothers of their children's classmates. The high home identity salience of traditional women may also reflect their greater home responsibilities. This was evident during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 when women did the heavy lifting related to child-care (Shockley et al., 2021). Women's heavier workload at home includes not only physical caregiving tasks but also the managerial, cognitive, and emotional tasks involved in caring for one's family (Wayne et al., 2023). Given the great mental demands many women face in their home roles, women may not have the mental capacity to exhibit high work salience and allow work-to-home permeability.

As mentioned, consistent with some prior research, we found a positive relationship between boundary management preference and behaviour. Given the magnitude of this relationship is moderate, boundary management preferences may not always translate into behaviour due to norms and/or expectations at work (e.g., supervisor) and home (e.g., spouse, children, and parents) which may be gendered. Further examination of correlations by gender suggested that for women, each direction of boundary management preference is positively related to boundary management behaviour (.40 and .22), but that boundary management preference and behaviour were not significantly related for men (.12 and .15). The results related to achievement, discussed earlier, further support the idea that boundary management preferences are not closely linked to actual behaviour among men. These findings revealed that achievement values were related to boundary management behaviour but not boundary management preferences. Notably, past studies that examined the relationship between boundary management preferences and behaviour (Capitano & Greenhaus, 2018; Kim & Hollensbe, 2017; Powell & Greenhaus, 2010; Reinke & Gerlach, 2022) did not examine the relationship as a function of gender. Ours is the first to do so, revealing that the boundary management preference-behaviour link is stronger for women, especially in the home-to-work direction. Future research could further explore the reasons behind these gender differences.

Practical implications

Practically, managing boundaries between work and home is important, particularly in today's increasingly remote working environment. Our findings, combined with prior work, suggest potentially important implications of boundary management and how they might differ for men and women. Reinke and Gerlach (2022) found that protecting home from work intrusions was positively related to life balance, but protecting work from home was negatively related to life balance. In turn, greater life balance was associated with less exhaustion and more life satisfaction. In our study, women were more likely to protect home from work intrusions, and men were more likely to protect work from home intrusions. Also, men were more prone to enact their work roles at home. If our findings and those of Reinke and Gerlach are extrapolated, it tentatively suggests that men may be at risk for lower life balance and satisfaction and greater exhaustion compared to women due to their greater protection of the work boundary and enacting the work role at home. While at first glance, this possibility (that men have lower balance than women) may seem surprising, it makes sense when considered within the gendered perspective we offer. That is, because of socially prescribed gender roles, men and women prioritize different roles and, in turn, engage in different boundary management behaviours and protecting the home domain (as women tend to do) may be beneficial. As such, men may need to be educated on the benefits of protecting the home role to foster greater balance and satisfaction.

These findings highlight the practical importance of our findings for organizational leaders, given the link between work-to-home permeations and employee well-being (Reinke & Gerlach, 2022). First, our findings, which establish a connection between personal values and boundary management behaviour, suggest employers could potentially promote employee well-being by adopting organizational values that make it possible for people to protect their salient roles and to realize this may differ for men and women. For example, women may prefer to protect a salient home role, whereas men may prefer to protect a salient work role. Organizations could provide training on setting boundaries, such as how to establish them effectively and emphasize the importance of protecting role(s) that

matter most by preventing intrusions. Second, given the importance of protecting the home role for well-being, organizational expectations about work interruptions at home could be decreased to reduce those interruptions to the extent possible. Something as simple as refraining from sending non-urgent emails after hours can be an effective way to minimize work-to-home interruptions (Butts et al., 2015). At the same time, the culture of the organization can minimize expectations for employee availability during nonwork hours.

Limitations and directions for future research

The findings of this study should be interpreted in the context of its limitations. First, due to a single source of data, results may be biased due to common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). This concern was reduced by collecting predictor and criterion data at two points in time (two weeks apart) and by using validated measures (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Furthermore, true causality cannot be determined from our study design. For this reason, longitudinal cross-lagged studies are required to assess temporal precedence from personal values to work and home identity salience and subsequently to work and home permeability behaviour. As this study used only full-time employees in the United States who spoke English, results must be interpreted with the understanding that part-time employees or those living outside the United States may differ in home and work permeability behaviour. For future research, it is fruitful to focus on gender role orientation rather than gender, as suggested by studies on gender and the work–family interface (e.g., Livingston & Judge, 2008). Also, as previous research shows variations in preferences and experiences among different generations in the work–family interface (Beutell, 2013; Beutell & Wittig-Berman, 2008), future studies can explore these differences further and examine them in the context of gender as well.

CONCLUSION

Merging theorizing about gender with boundary theory, the current study finds that personal values, gender, and role identity salience account for when people protect home and work boundaries. Regarding gender differences, men with high tradition values had strong work identity salience, which was associated with preferences and actions to protect and enact the work role. In contrast, women with these values exhibited strong home identity salience, which was associated with preferences for and actions to protect the home role. Our results make a strong case that gender role expectations continue to play an important role in how people manage the work–family interface, and we encourage future research on boundary management to take a values-based, gendered perspective.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Faezeh Amirkamali: Conceptualization; methodology; writing – original draft; data curation; software; project administration. **Wendy J. Casper:** Conceptualization; methodology; writing – review and editing; supervision; writing – original draft; project administration. **Shelia A. Hyde:** Writing – original draft; writing – review and editing. **Julie Holliday Wayne:** Writing – review and editing. **Hoda Vaziri:** Software; formal analysis.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

There are no conflicts of interest associated with this article.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

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SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Additional supporting information can be found online in the Supporting Information section at the end of this article.

Data S1.

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