

COMBINING WORK AND VACATION: WORKATION AS AN ATTRACTIVE WORK ARRANGEMENT

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Abstract:

Purpose: The fulfilling blend of work and leisure experienced by digital nomads has inspired some organizations to offer “workation” (work-vacation) as a new fringe benefit, allowing employees to work remotely from international locations while simultaneously engaging in travel and leisure activities. This study seeks to understand to what extent and under what conditions this workation arrangement is attractive to candidates compared to other work arrangements.

Design/methodology/approach: The research employs two vignette experiments that manipulate work arrangements, involving a total sample of 351 participants. The data and results were analyzed using multilevel regressions, moderation tests, and simple slope tests.

Findings: The results indicate that job offerings featuring workation demonstrate significantly higher organizational attractiveness compared to those featuring other work arrangements. The appeal of workations is especially pronounced and attractive among candidates with previous international experience and positive attitudes towards such experiences, contingent upon their degree of community embeddedness.

Originality/value: Within the evolving landscape of changing work arrangements, this study contributes to the literature by distinguishing workation as an innovative and attractive work option. Additionally, the findings offer insights for HR practices by identifying the specific reasons that make workation particularly enticing for certain candidates.

Keywords: Applicant attraction, organizational attractiveness, telework, workation, expatriation, digital nomadism.

1. INTRODUCTION

The saying goes, ‘Work is something you do, not a place you go’. This saying doubtless resonates in the minds of many domestic remote workers who feel cramped in their home-offices and crave a blend of work and leisure abroad (Batala and Slevitch, 2024; Shin et al., 2023). Increasingly, various forms of remote work are already offered to employees, formally through partial telework (1-3 days a week) or full telework arrangements (Gajendran and Harrison, 2007). Despite the diversity of workspaces in which remote work can be conducted (Messenger and Gschwind, 2016), legal issues related to employment regulations, taxation regimes, and social security obligations often prevent working remotely from abroad for an extended period (Deloitte, 2022).

A recent phenomenon that has gained traction in human resource (HR) management and tourism research is ‘workation’. Originally coined as ‘workcation’ in the business press, it describes a one-off, exceptional, and time-limited ad-hoc arrangement requested by employees who want to combine work and vacation (Silverman, 2015). In some cases, employees apply for extending their stay to continue working from their vacation spot – when personal reasons are the main purpose of travel (Voll et al., 2023) or ask for extending their business trip to engage in leisure activities – i.e., ‘bleisure’ (Lichy and McLeay, 2018). In some others, employees simply decide to work from vacation spots without their employers’ knowledge and consent (Bassyouny and Wilkesmann, 2023).

We focus our study on the attractiveness of a formal, employer-endorsed form of workation that offers employees the opportunity to perform their professional duties in tandem with recreational activities in an international setting abroad, for an extended duration (exceeding three months) and within existing legal frameworks. Under this formal, employer-led workation perk, employees use digital technology to continue performing their usual, regular duties from a foreign location for a temporary period, where they can also simultaneously engage in travel and leisure activities without compromising their job responsibilities and keeping their jobs.

In our study, we compare how job offers advertising such formal workation arrangement differ in attractiveness from those advertising various forms of remote work and international travel. Accordingly, our research question is:

To what extent and under what conditions is a formal arrangement allowing employees to work remotely abroad for an extended period attractive to job candidates, compared to other forms of remote work and international travel?

At this point, it is worth also distinguishing workation from other digitally enabled work arrangements that involve remote work and international travel. Firstly, workation does not fit the boundary conditions of other current forms of remote work (Messenger and Gschwind, 2016). Workation is conducted neither from home nor while on the move. Furthermore, workation only targets employed individuals and is bound both temporally and geographically, unlike digital nomads, who typically work as freelancers and thus do not have contractual vacations. Secondly,

3 - Workation as an Attractive Work Arrangement

workation does not fit the boundary conditions of current forms of expatriation either (McNulty and Brewster, 2017). Accordingly, it is neither an assigned expatriation (since workationers chose it as a perk) nor flexpatriation (frequent international business trips). These comparisons are summarized in Table 1, using new ways of working as a framework to contrast the ability to decide where to work, when to work, and how to work (Stich, 2021).

Table 1. Comparing and contrasting different forms of remote work and international travel.

Forms of remote work and international travel	Where? (Place)	When? (Time)	How? (Mode)
Workation	In a coworking space located in one foreign touristic country	Full-time work conducted abroad for a temporary period	Employment
Partial telework	At home and in the office	Full-time work	Employment
Full telework	At home or from a coworking space in the same country	Full-time work	Employment
Flexpatriation	In the office and on the move during business travel	Full-time work sometimes conducted abroad during frequent but short business trips	Employment
Expatriation	In an office located in a foreign country	Full-time work conducted abroad permanently	Employment

Source: Authors.

To answer our research question, we employed two repeated-measures vignette experiments (Kröll et al., 2021; Wörtler et al., 2021) with a total of 351 participants. In the first experiment, job offers featured either workation, flexpatriation, expatriation, or no international travel (4 experimental conditions). The second experiment focused on offers advertising either workation, partial telework (1-3 days a week), full telework, or no telework (4 experimental conditions). After reviewing these job offers, participants were asked to report and assess the extent to which they perceived the company as an attractive place for employment – i.e., organizational attractiveness (Highhouse et al., 2003; Kröll et al., 2021; Wörtler et al., 2021).

Our findings demonstrate that organizational attractiveness is significantly higher for job offers that advertise workation compared to those offering no telework, partial telework, and full telework. This effect is particularly pronounced among candidates with prior international experiences and positive attitudes towards such experiences (Caligiuri et al., 2000). These results contribute to ongoing debates on new ways of working (Alfes et al., 2022; Aroles et al., 2019; Gerards et al., 2018) and their attractiveness and appeal (Stich, 2021) by revealing the profiles, motivations, interests, and experiences of candidates attracted to workations. Furthermore, our

research delineates specific boundary conditions of workation in comparison to other work arrangements that involve international travel.

We structure this paper in the following way. In the next section, we review previous studies on the attractiveness of various forms of remote work and international travel and hypothesize to what extent and under what conditions workation can be more attractive. In the third section, we present the procedures, instruments, and results of two experimental studies centered on various forms of remote work and international travel, including workation. Finally, in the fourth section, we summarize the results of the two studies and discuss their theoretical and practical implications.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

In this section, we formulate our study's hypotheses based on the relevant literature and provide an overview of our conceptual model.

2.1. The attractiveness of workation compared to other forms of international travel

Individuals who have already had or who are open to international experiences (Caligiuri et al., 2000; Froese et al., 2013) are generally attracted to organizations offering travel abroad as part of the job (Phillips et al., 2014). The most common forms of international experience offered to employees are flexpatriation and expatriation. 'Flexpatriates' travel abroad sent on short international assignments or business travels, for instance, to attend business fairs or meet international clients (McNulty and Brewster, 2017). Even though they travel for business purposes, they often seize the opportunity to have fun, enjoy different cultures, and enrich their social lives with culturally fecund foreign encounters (Demel and Mayrhofer, 2010), in a way that is not unlike tourism. Expatriates travel abroad for a longer period, either as part of a mandated long-term international assignment or a self-initiated assignment to pursue their own career goals (Kraimer et al., 2016). Assigned expatriates relocate abroad to implement their employers' initiatives or professional tasks (e.g., being involved in a subsidiary, acquiring or transferring skills), often accompanied by their families (Kraimer et al., 2016). Even though their work demands also generate stress, assigned expatriates often seize the opportunity to explore different cultures and set out for new adventures with their families (Selmer, 2001). Self-initiated expatriates are mainly driven by personal reasons (e.g., life change, career development) and thus seize the opportunity to fulfil their pursuits (Despotovic et al., 2022). Similar to tourists, flexpatriates and expatriates often seek travel, adventure, and discovery of new cultures (Thorn, 2009), thus demonstrating a certain level of openness to experience (Caligiuri et al., 2009). International travel may also provide a break or escape from usual routines (Doherty, 2013; Thorn, 2009). Furthermore, traveling and expatriating create opportunities to explore new professional and personal identities (Shen and Hall, 2009).

Correspondingly, organizations offering international travel (including workations) attract individuals who have favorable attitudes towards experiences abroad, are

fascinated by other cultures, or are willing to capitalize on what they perceive as a promising opportunity (Bassiyouny and Wilkesmann, 2023; Caligiuri et al., 2000; Froese et al., 2013). Possibilities to work abroad may also be particularly attractive to individuals who have already had international experiences and/or who speak other languages (Froese et al., 2013; Selmer, 2001). We therefore frame the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1a: When individuals have positive attitudes towards international experiences, job offers advertising workation, flexpatriation or expatriation will lead to significantly higher organizational attractiveness than job offers advertising no international travel.

Hypothesis 1b: When individuals have past international experiences, job offers advertising workation, flexpatriation or expatriation will lead to significantly higher organizational attractiveness than job offers advertising no international travel.

However, international travel in the form of flexpatriation or expatriation can make it difficult for employees to maintain their roots in their home countries and communities and to re-settle back home if they decide to return (Demel and Mayrhofer, 2010). This challenge has been at the core of embeddedness theories (Lee et al., 2014; Mitchell et al., 2001). Embeddedness theories explain that work-related and nonwork-related forces bind individuals to their current employers and communities, thereby making it harder for them to leave their jobs and homes (Mitchell et al., 2001). In the context of international travel, embeddedness theories explain intentions to repatriate because of a lack of roots in the host country, or intentions to stay abroad because of the roots built in the host country (Tharenou and Caulfield, 2010). Embeddedness is composed of a work dimension and a community dimension (Mitchell et al., 2001). Work and community embeddedness keep employees tied to their jobs because of the fit they experience and the links they have built at the given place, and the sacrifices they would have to make if they were to leave (Mitchell et al., 2001; Ng and Feldman, 2012).

In the context of workation and other forms of international travel, employees' work embeddedness is untouched because employees remain employed and rooted in their organizations. However, community embeddedness is more likely to be affected because travel disrupts their involvement in their local communities (Demel and Mayrhofer, 2010). Community embeddedness consists of both feeling in congruence with one's community environment (community fit) and having ties and benefits that make it difficult to leave (community links and sacrifice) (Mitchell et al., 2001; Ng and Feldman, 2012).

Community fit relates to thinking of the community where one lives as home and as a good match – e.g., place and weather (Ng and Feldman, 2012). Community links and sacrifice relate to the difficulty of leaving the community because of the many links and roots established there – e.g., family roots and friendships (Ng and Feldman, 2012). Community embeddedness is an important predictor of individuals' intention to stay in their communities and jobs (Lee et al., 2014). In the context of

international travel, lower levels of embeddedness can push individuals to expatriate, just as a lack of community embeddedness in their host country can push expatriates to return home (Doherty, 2013; Tharenou and Caulfield, 2010).

However, an ambivalent situation may emerge in this context. On the one hand, due to the hindrances of frequent travels abroad, flexpatriates face difficulties relating to their friends and families and getting involved in their home communities, as these activities tend to be typically concentrated on weekends (Demel and Mayrhofer, 2010). On the other hand, expatriates leave their home communities for good in the hope of starting a new life abroad and finding a new, more fitting community (Despotovic et al., 2022; Tharenou and Caulfield, 2010), while digital technologies allow them to remain connected to home, family, and friends while abroad (Howard and Küpers, 2014).

By contrast, workation is a flexible work stint abroad (unlike expatriation) that is not meant to be reproduced frequently or regularly (unlike flexpatriation) (Bassyouny and Wilkesmann, 2023; Shin et al., 2023). Given that ‘workationers’ intend to return home, just like tourists do (Wu and Xu, 2024), they do not leave their communities for good or on a too frequent basis. Thus, individuals who do not find their communities fitting or comfortable (i.e., low community fit) may be less attracted to organizations offering workation than to organizations offering expatriation or flexpatriation. This is even more plausible as workations demand them to return home, whereas they can escape for good (Doherty, 2013) by expatriating, or frequently enough by flexpatriating (Demel and Mayrhofer, 2010). Conversely, individuals who feel in congruence with their communities may prefer to return after a few months, which is exactly the kind of option that is available through workations. Therefore, we frame this hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2a: When community fit is high, job offers advertising workation will lead to significantly higher organizational attractiveness than job offers advertising flexpatriation or expatriation.

Similarly, given that ‘workationers’ still work for their employers and expect to return after their experience abroad, they do not have to sacrifice their ties to their home communities. In contrast, expatriates sacrifice their home communities by going abroad for good, and flexpatriates sacrifice their home communities to some extent by not having sufficient time and energy to remain closely involved (Demel and Mayrhofer, 2010). This is why expatriation and flexpatriation are more difficult and less likely for individuals with strong family commitments (e.g., parents of young children) and personal ties (e.g., lovers in a sentimental relationship) than those with weaker attachments (Lo et al., 2012; de Loryn, 2022; Shaffer et al., 2012).

However, ‘workationers’ do not leave their home communities frequently or permanently and therefore are less likely to be in danger of weakening, losing, or breaking family roots, friendships, or community connections. Given the temporary nature of their stay abroad and ongoing maintenance of connections, they may find it relatively easy to recreate ties and revive relationships when they return, unlike expatriates when they repatriate (Shen and Hall, 2009). Their friends, neighbors, and

family members know they will return and can easily remain in touch digitally (Howard and Küpers, 2014). Their geographically situated and socially rooted ‘home base’ is not sacrificed. Therefore, and according to embeddedness theory, when individuals feel they would have too much to sacrifice by leaving their communities, workation appears as a desirable and sought-after work and living arrangement, compared to expatriation or flexpatriation. Accordingly, we propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2b: When community sacrifices are high, job offers advertising workation will lead to significantly higher organizational attractiveness than job offers advertising flexpatriation or expatriation.

2.2. The distinctive attractiveness of workation compared to other forms of remote work

Arrangements that allow employees to decide where to work are considered highly attractive (Kröll et al., 2021; Stich, 2021; Thompson and Aspinwall, 2009). Remote work has been associated with job satisfaction and autonomy (Fonner and Roloff, 2010; Gajendran and Harrison, 2007; Moens et al., 2022). It can also be a way to ‘escape’ the office and the exhaustion of its social interactions (Windeler et al., 2017), politics, and interruptions (Fonner and Roloff, 2010). Accordingly, remote work is often perceived as an employee benefit (Gajendran and Harrison, 2007; Thompson and Aspinwall, 2009). Although partial telework (e.g., 1-3 days a week) differs from the ‘full remote’ version (Gajendran and Harrison, 2007), telework is considered attractive regardless of its intensity (Moens et al., 2022). More generally, organizations are considered more attractive when they offer the ability to work anywhere or away from the office (Stich, 2021; Wörtler et al., 2021).

We propose that employees perceive workation as a benefit or an “innovative perk” (Renaud et al., 2016, p. 1). Thus, workation increases organizational attractiveness, given that its voluntary ‘full remote’ nature is deemed to provide satisfaction and autonomy, as well as an alternative to very demanding face-to-face office interactions. Workation also resembles some elements of digital nomadism (Aroles et al., 2020), given its increased autonomy, and is considered an attractive work arrangement to many professionals (Reichenberger, 2018). Thus, workation can be qualified as a new way of working (Gerards et al., 2018; Stich, 2021), given its transformative nature and unique configuration of work and personal space, time, relations, and organization, impacting employees’ experiences in terms of attitudes, performance, and wellbeing (Alfes et al., 2022). Its hedonic nature is also likely to make it pleasant and desirable (Shin et al., 2023).

However, contrary to remote work often conducted from home (i.e., homework), workation entails making a journey and staying at a destination outside one’s home environment. In contrast to the “lifestyle mobility” of digital nomads (Cohen et al., 2015, p. 156), workation is arranged differently. It is organized as finite and involves remaining in continuous contact with the workplace and intending to return home. Due to the fiscal and legal constraints of employment, workation is bound to certain countries and is thus not entirely location-independent. Furthermore, it is also more

‘touristic’ in nature than flexpatriation because of the relatively extended period in a destination beyond clearly defined work-related actions (Cohen et al., 2015; Shin et al., 2023).

The temporary mobility of workation and the lifestyle mobility of digital nomadism both imply a combination of work and leisure complementing each other (Rainoldi et al., 2022; Reichenberger, 2018; Shin et al., 2023). Workation may thus appeal more to individuals who are dissatisfied or unfulfilled by the locations in which they work or telework, and who seek leisure-driven experiences abroad, and/or experience an urge to travel like digital nomads (Makimoto and Manners, 1997). Thus, organizations offering international travel as part of the job are attractive to individuals open to experiences abroad (Caligiuri et al., 2000; Froese et al., 2013; Phillips et al., 2014). In stark contrast, telework offers limited or no opportunities to travel abroad despite the remote work option that technology affords. Individuals who want to travel and are interested in other cultures find international assignments particularly appealing and may express intentions to expatriate or travel (Froese et al., 2013). Thus, we hypothesize that organizations offering workation are attractive to individuals with positive attitudes towards international experiences:

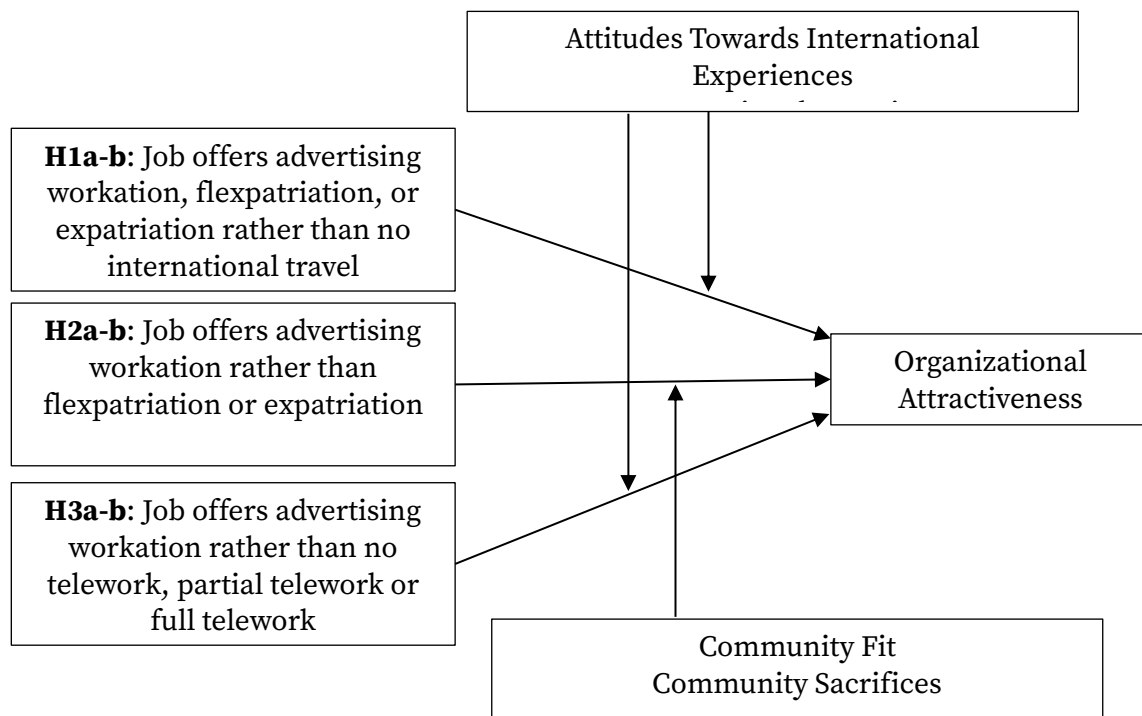
Hypothesis 3a: When attitudes towards international experiences are positive, job offers advertising workation will lead to significantly higher organizational attractiveness than job offers advertising no telework, partial telework, or full telework.

Similarly, individuals with past international experiences tend to find organizations offering international travel as part of the job attractive (Caligiuri et al., 2000). Traveling can, however, be stressful because of the cultural adjustments required (Selmer, 2001), such as language, customary habits, etc. Thus, individuals may face doubts regarding their ability to travel abroad often or for long periods. However, these doubts tend to be reduced when individuals have had past experiences abroad (Caligiuri et al., 2009). Having spent time abroad or being able to communicate in another language helps to face the cultural adjustments required by international travel (Caligiuri et al., 2009). Thus, we hypothesize that organizations offering workations are more attractive to individuals with past international experiences:

Hypothesis 3b: When individuals have past international experiences, job offers advertising workation will lead to significantly higher organizational attractiveness than job offers advertising no telework, partial telework, or full telework.

We summarize our hypotheses in the conceptual model in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Conceptual Model



Source: Authors.

3. METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

We test hypotheses 1a, 1b, 2a and 2b in study 1, a vignette experiment (Aguinis and Bradley, 2014; Kröll et al., 2021; Wörtler et al., 2021) manipulating job offers advertising either no international travel, expatriation, flexpatriation, or workation. We test hypotheses 3a and 3b in study 2, a vignette experiment manipulating job offers advertising either no telework, partial telework, full telework, or workation. Next, we present the sampling procedures, instruments, and results of these studies.

3.1. Sampling procedures

We collected data from samples of 351 full-time employees working in IT, finance, and HR jobs in different industries in France with specific demographics as outlined in Table 2. Participants were recruited by a panel company, a legitimate data source (Lowry et al., 2016). Two studies were conducted.

Study 1 was a within-subject (repeated measures) vignette experiment (Aguinis and Bradley, 2014; Kröll et al., 2021; Wörtler et al., 2021) with 153 participants. The within-subject design allowed them to compare all conditions, just as they would do during an actual job search (Aguinis and Bradley, 2014; Wörtler et al., 2021), making them pay more attention to the subtle changes in benefits. Participants had to answer certain questions about themselves and then read four job offers (in French) advertising either no international travel, flexpatriation, expatriation, or workation (see Appendices 1 and 2). Workation was advertised with a description rather than the term: “You would have the opportunity to telework abroad for a period of 3 to 12 months. A coworking space and customized support would be made available to you abroad, and to your family if necessary.” The study employed four vignettes (job

offers), as only one variable with four levels was manipulated. Thus, all participants read all four vignettes. The vignettes, written in French, depicted a generic project manager job. Some elements of the position description were customized to fit the respondents' qualifications and areas of expertise (see Appendix 1). In terms of benefits, all job descriptions advertised 'a competitive salary,' 'opportunities for promotion,' and 'bonuses based on performance,' as done in similar studies (Wörtler et al., 2021). Out of the 153 responses, six were rejected because these participants failed the attention check in the pre-vignette questionnaire. Thus, 147 responses were retained (3.9% rejection rate).

Study 2 used a within-subject design (like Study 1) with 234 other participants. They first answered certain questions about themselves, then read four different job offers and answered a few questions after reading each one (see Appendices 1 and 3). The job offers, written in French, advertised either no telework, partial telework, full telework, or workation. They were all presented to participants in a random order. Out of the 234 responses, 30 were rejected because these participants failed the attention check in the pre-vignette questionnaire ("please respond 'completely disagree' for this item"). Thus, 204 responses were retained (12.8% rejection rate).

In both studies, all job offers were presented to all participants, but they were presented in a random order (block randomization resulting in 24 different orders). The effect of this random order of presentation on outcomes was tested with ANOVA tests and found to be non-significant.

Table 2: Demographics for Studies 1 and 2 (Percentages)

Demographics		Study 1	Study 2
Age	Under 25y	2.0	2.9
	25-39y	36.7	41.7
	40-49y	29.9	24.0
	50-54y	10.2	12.3
	55y and over	21.1	19.1
Gender	Male	36.1	44.6
	Female	63.9	50.5
	Unknown	0.0	4.9
Education	High school level or below	48.9	50.0
	Bachelor level	25.2	22.1
	Master level or above	25.9	27.9
In a relationship	No	24.5	27.9
	Yes	75.5	72.1
Children	0	44.2	46.6
	1	23.8	21.6
	2	27.2	23.5
	3	4.1	7.8
	4+	0.7	0.5
Children under 6	No	83.0	79.4
	Yes	17.0	20.6
Employment	Permanent contract	94.6	91.2

	Fixed-term contract	0.7	2.5
	Self-employed	2.7	1.0
	Apprentice	1.4	0.5
	Temporary work	0.7	1.5
Industry	IT	28.6	33.8
	Finance/Accounting	34.0	33.3
	HR	36.1	30.9
	Other	1.4	2.0

Source: Authors.

3.2. Instruments

In the pre-vignette questionnaire of both studies, we measured attitudes towards international experiences and past international experiences (Caligiuri et al., 2000) using validated 5-point Likert scales developed to contextualize the Big 5 openness to experience trait to international experiences (Caligiuri et al., 2000). Example items include “A year-long assignment abroad would be a fantastic opportunity for me and/or my family,” “Traveling the world is a priority in my life” (attitudes towards international experiences), “I have spent time abroad,” and “I have moved or been relocated substantial distances (e.g., state to state, abroad)” (Caligiuri et al., 2000). In Study 1 additionally, we used 5-point Likert scales to measure the community embeddedness fit with items such as, “I really love the place where I live” and “I think of the community where I live as home,” and community embeddedness sacrifices with items such as “People respect me a lot in my community” and “My family roots are in the community where I live” (Mignonac, 2008; Mitchell et al., 2001) (see Appendices 2 and 3 for the list of items, their mean scores and standard deviations)¹.

In the post-vignette questionnaire of both studies, we measured organizational attractiveness on a 5-point Likert scale with items such as “For me, this company would be a good place to work,” and “A job at this company is very appealing to me” (Highhouse et al., 2003) (see Appendices 2 and 3 for the list of items, their mean scores, and standard deviations). Additionally, we incorporated the following demographic characteristics as control variables: age, gender, education, relationship status, number of children, presence of children under six years old, employment status, and industry² (see Table 2). These demographic characteristics could affect our results – e.g., having young children or being in a relationship may increase embeddedness (Mignonac, 2008).

In addition to manipulation checks and attention checks to make sure panel

¹ Compared to the full job embeddedness instrument (Mitchell et al., 2001), the items for the organization fit, links and sacrifices constructs were left out as the focus was on community embeddedness. The items for the community links construct were left out as these items are not aligned with the 5-point Likert scales that were used throughout the questionnaire, which would have increased participant fatigue.

² Gender, employment and industry were coded as separate dummies because of their categorical nature.

participants had paid due attention to the experiments, we included a marker variable (“Music is important in my life”) to check for common method bias and found it to be uncorrelated to any of our outcome variables (Simmering et al., 2015).

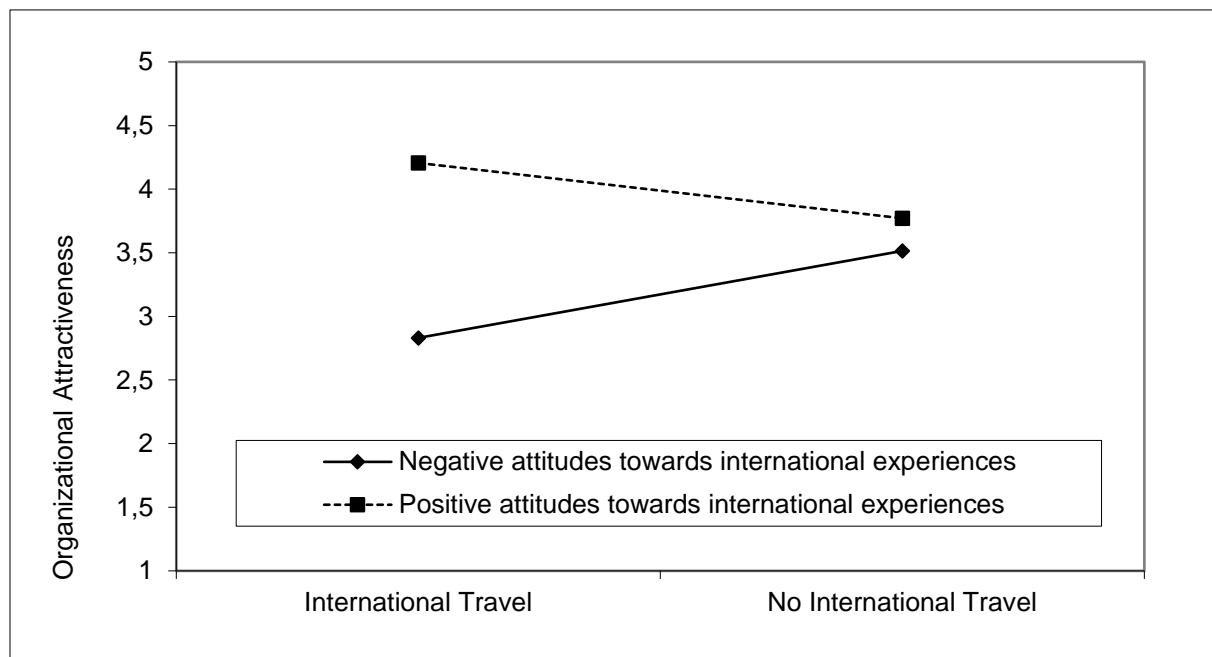
3.3. RESULTS

Hypotheses 1a and 1b

We hypothesized that organizational attractiveness would be significantly higher for job offers advertising international travel (flexpatriation, expatriation, and workation) than for job offers advertising none, when individuals have positive attitudes towards international experiences (hypothesis 1a) and past international experiences (hypothesis 1b).

To test these hypotheses, we conducted multilevel regression analyses and moderation tests on R (using nlme package) with standardized predictors on sample 1. We found support for an interaction effect on organizational attractiveness between attitudes towards international experiences and travel conditions ($\beta = -.28$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = .48$). Among the control variables, organizational attractiveness was negatively related to age. Simple slope tests further revealed that among the travel conditions, organizational attractiveness was significantly higher when attitudes towards international experiences were positive ($t = 9.576$, $p < .001$), and significantly lower when attitudes towards international experiences were negative ($t = -6.007$, $p < .001$) – see Figure 2. Therefore, hypothesis 1a was supported.

Figure 2. Interaction of Travel Conditions and Attitudes Towards International Experiences on Organizational Attractiveness – Hypothesis 1a (Sample 1, N=147).

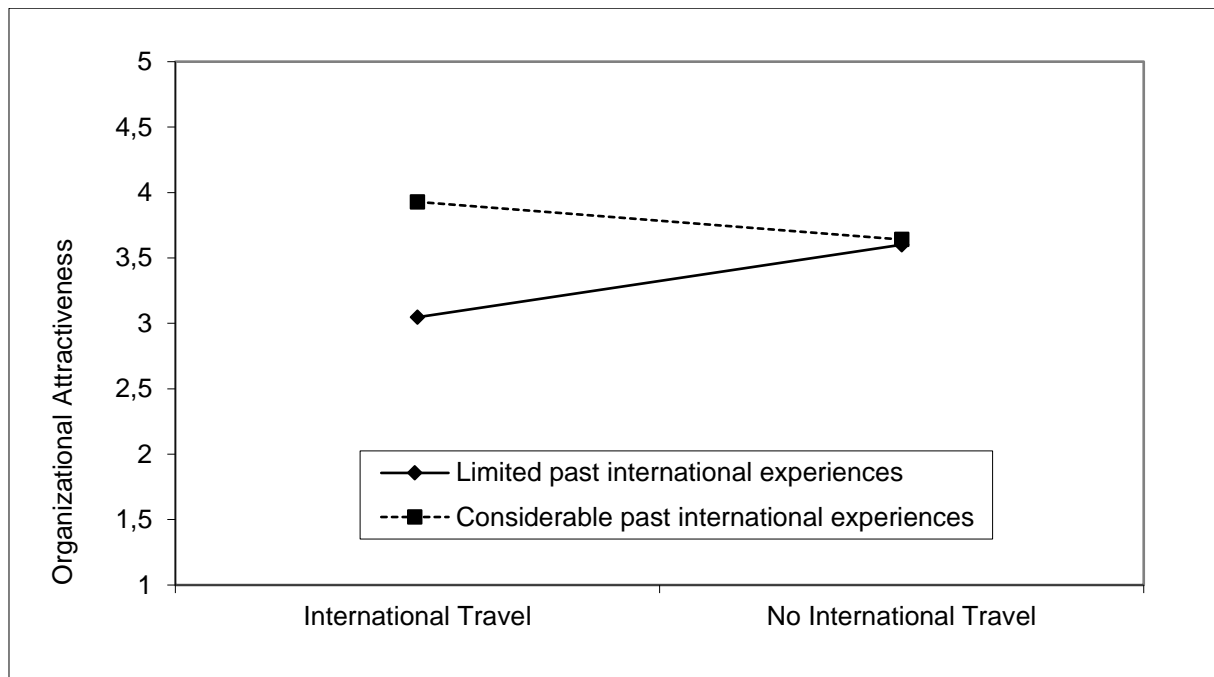


Source: Authors.

We found support for an interaction effect on organizational attractiveness between past international experiences and travel conditions ($\beta = -.21$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = .37$).

Simple slope tests further revealed that among the travel conditions, organizational attractiveness was significantly higher when individuals had past international experiences ($t = 7.31$, $p < .001$), and significantly lower when past international experiences were limited ($t = -3.80$, $p < .001$) – see Figure 3. Thus, hypothesis 1b was also supported.

Figure 3. Interaction of Travel Conditions and Attitudes Towards International Experiences on Organizational Attractiveness – Hypothesis 1b (Sample 1, N=147).



Source: Authors.

Hypotheses 2a and 2b

We then hypothesized that organizational attractiveness would be significantly higher for job offers advertising workation than for those advertising expatriation or flexpatriation, when community fit (hypothesis 2a) and community sacrifices (hypothesis 2b) were high.

We again conducted multilevel regression analyses and moderation tests on R (using the nlme package) with standardized predictors in sample 1. However, we found no support for hypotheses 2a and 2b, given that the interaction terms were not significant.

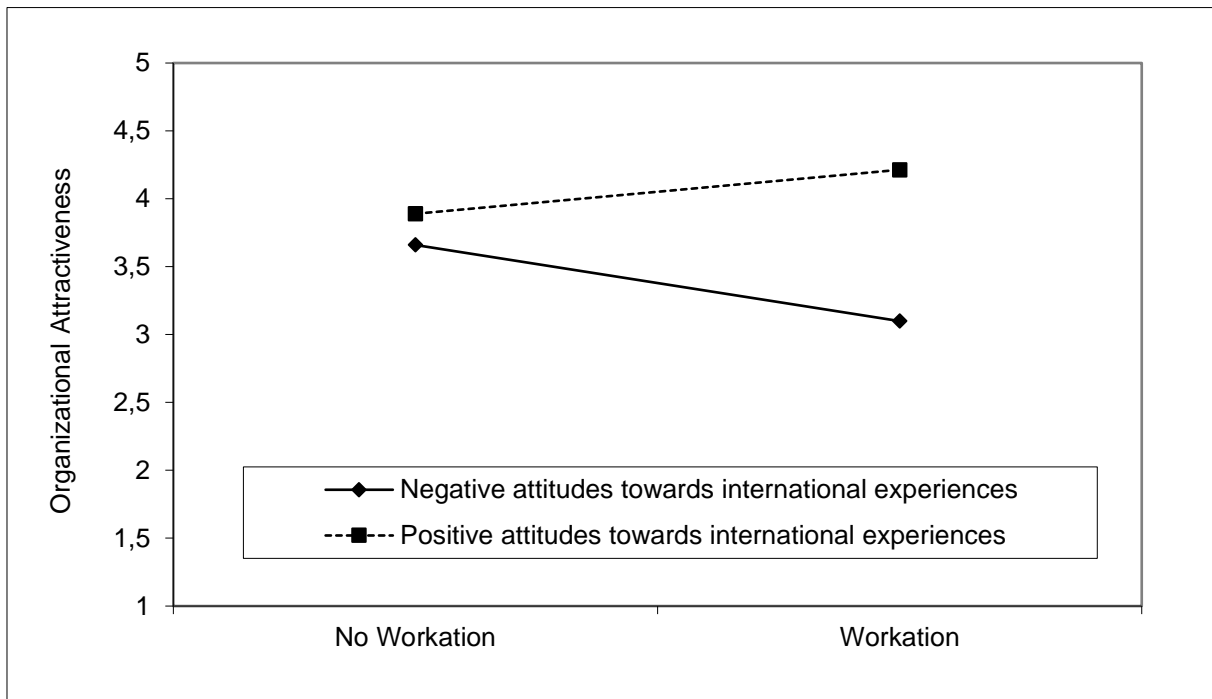
Hypotheses 3a and 3b

We then hypothesized that organizational attractiveness would be significantly higher for job offers advertising workation than for those advertising no telework, partial telework, or full telework, when candidates have positive attitudes towards international experiences (hypothesis 3a) and when they have past international experiences (hypothesis 3b).

In sample 2 (repeated-measures, $N = 204$), we conducted multilevel regression analyses and moderation tests on R (using nlme package) with standardized

predictors. We found support for an interaction effect between attitudes towards international experiences and workation on organizational attractiveness ($\beta = .22$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = .24$). Among the control variables, organizational attractiveness was negatively related to age. Simple slope tests further revealed that in the workation condition, organizational attractiveness was significantly higher when attitudes towards international experiences were positive ($t = 3.72$, $p < .001$), and significantly lower when attitudes towards international experiences were negative ($t = -6.58$, $p < .001$) (see Figure 4). Thus, hypothesis 3a was supported.

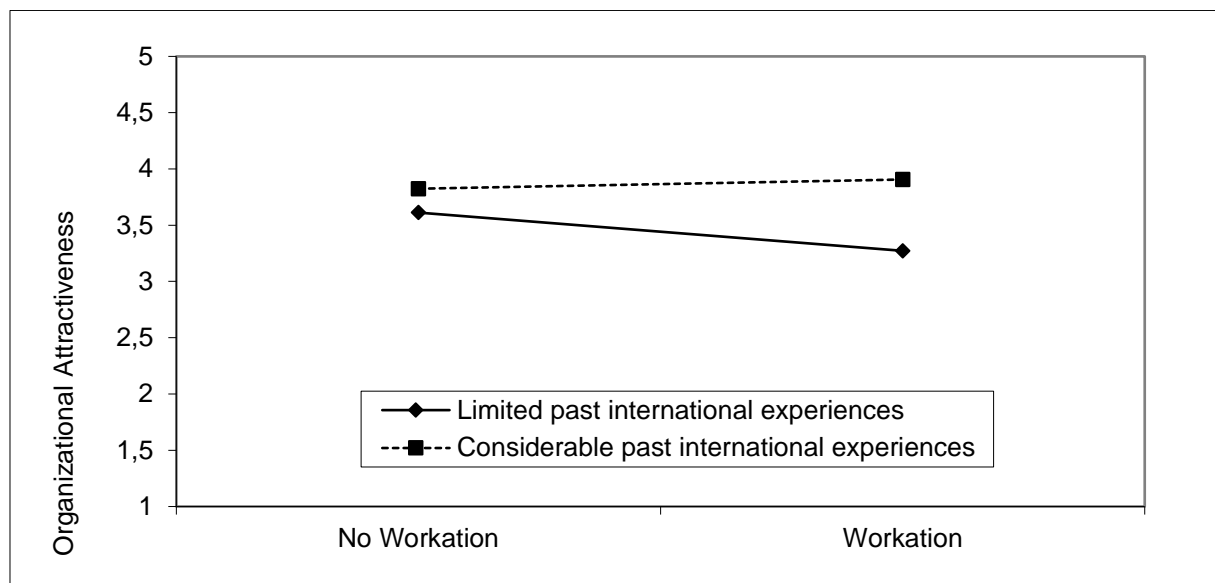
Figure 4. Interaction of Workation and Attitudes Towards International Experiences on Organizational Attractiveness – Hypothesis 3a (Sample 2, N=204).



Source: Authors.

We also found support for an interaction effect between past international experiences and workation on organizational attractiveness ($\beta = .11$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = .18$). Simple slope tests further revealed that in the workation condition, organizational attractiveness was significantly lower when past international experiences were limited ($t = -3.81$, $p < .001$) – see Figure 5. The simple slope for positive past international experiences was not significant. Thus, hypothesis 3b was partially supported, only when past international experiences were limited.

Figure 5. Interaction of Workation and Past International Experiences on Organizational Attractiveness – Hypothesis 3b (Sample 2, N=204).



Source: Authors.

Post-hoc analyses

Despite a lack of support for hypotheses 2a and 2b, we found a significant three-way interaction between workation, community fit, and community sacrifices ($\beta = -.10$, $p < 0.01$, $R^2 = .29$). Simple slope tests revealed that in the workation condition, organizational attractiveness was significantly higher when the fit was low and sacrifices were high ($t = 2.87$, $p < .01$). This result suggests that workation may be particularly attractive to individuals who do not feel they fit in their local communities (e.g., they do not enjoy living there) but cannot permanently leave, as they would have to sacrifice too much (e.g., sell the house they own, relocate away from their families). This configuration is an interesting finding because neither expatriation nor flexpatriation can fulfill this need to escape the community without sacrificing the local ties. The other slopes were not significant. For the other hypotheses, we found no significant three-way interaction.

Age was the only control variable and demographic variable found relevant in some hypothesis tests. In our post-hoc analyses, we indeed found a significant interaction effect between age and workation on organizational attractiveness, but only on sample 1. In this sample, workation was more attractive for younger people than it was for older ones. This result aligns with previous findings that international travel is particularly attractive to young graduates, as a way to blend work, travel, and tourism (Despotovic et al., 2022).

Additionally, we explored if organizational attractiveness was higher for job offers advertising the various forms of remote work (workation included) compared to no telework. In sample 2 (repeated-measures, $N = 204$), we conducted a repeated-measures ANOVA with a simple contrast on IBM SPSS. Organizational attractiveness was significantly higher for job offers advertising partial telework ($M = 3.74$, $SE = .91$), full telework ($M = 3.67$, $SE = 1.04$), and workation ($M = 3.28$, $SE = 1.19$) than for job offers advertising no telework ($M = 2.89$, $SE = 1.06$), $F(2.56, 520.47) = 46.26$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .20$. Post hoc tests revealed significant differences between the job offers

advertising no telework and the job offers advertising partial telework ($d = .85$, $p < .001$), full telework ($d = .78$, $p < .001$), or workation ($d = .39$, $p < .001$). Thus, organizational attractiveness was found to be similar for job offers advertising workation, partial telework, and full telework, when no other characteristic was considered (e.g., attitudes towards international experiences or past international experiences).

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Overall, the evidence suggests that organizational attractiveness is higher for job offers advertising workation when candidates have past international experiences and positive attitudes towards such experiences. Similarly, job offers advertising workation are associated with organizational attractiveness when both community fit is low and community sacrifices are high (post-hoc test). Organizational attractiveness is also higher for job offers that advertise various forms of remote work (partial, full, workation) compared to no telework, and for job offers that advertise various forms of international travel (flexpatriation, expatriation, workation), compared to none, when attitudes towards international experiences are positive and past international experiences are considerable.

In summary, the evidence suggests that the arrangement we labeled workation attracts candidates differently compared to traditional forms of remote work, especially due to the international experiences it can provide. It may thus resemble digital nomadism in that it can appeal to young individuals seeking leisure-driven experiences abroad and fulfillment of longings or urges to travel (Makimoto and Manners, 1997), not realizable by the sedentariness and routine of traditional remote work. However, notwithstanding the post-hoc results, workation seems to resemble flexpatriation and expatriation, with no significant differences in terms of community embeddedness.

4.1. Theoretical implications and future research

Our results contribute to the HR literature on various forms of expatriation (Doherty, 2013; Kraimer et al., 2016; Shaffer et al., 2012) and on diverse forms of remote work and new ways of working (Gajendran and Harrison, 2007; Messenger and Gschwind, 2016; Stich, 2021). We shed light on a new work-leisure arrangement seen in practice but not sufficiently investigated in academia yet.

Firstly, we contribute to the literature on different forms of expatriation by showing that workation is a new form of international travel that does not conceptually fit the boundary conditions of expatriation and flexpatriation (Kraimer et al., 2016; McNulty and Brewster, 2017) but sparks a similar organizational attractiveness (hypotheses 1a and 1b). Future research could further explore the extent to which the organizational attractiveness of workation differs from other, more niche-like forms of international travel, such as digital nomadism or cross-border commuting. We further show that workation is not necessarily an unauthorized vacation that employees take without their managers' knowledge, as Bassiouny and Wilkesmann (2023) consider as a form of workation among many others; it can also be a

formalized employee benefit. In France, some companies have begun offering such a benefit under the name “holiwork” (Caulier, 2022). Further research could also explore temporal and geographical variations in the workation arrangement (shorter or longer, domestic or international), and investigate whether the results we established in this paper on French candidates attracted to workations abroad also apply to other nationalities and countries. Given the limited cultural scope of our study and the need to validate our findings across diverse national and organizational contexts, future research work is called to explore how cultural differences influence the variables and relationships examined in our work.

Secondly, we contribute to the literature on various forms of remote work and new ways of working (Alfes et al., 2022; Gerards et al., 2018; Stich, 2021) by showing the potential of workation to attract certain candidates, compared to other forms of telework (hypotheses 3a and 3b). This new experience, which is distinct from other forms of telework, warrants more study. Other factors of attractiveness could be investigated such as personality traits or characteristics of current jobs. The attractiveness of workation could also be further investigated by looking at the salary employees may be willing to sacrifice in order to benefit from this new way of working. Future research could also explore the workation arrangement using qualitative methods such as phenomenological inquiries – e.g., experienced meanings of being mobile and relationally placed (Howard and Küpers, 2014). The consequences of workations on employees also remain to be studied – e.g., in terms of actual retention, job satisfaction, work-life integration, and professional identity or coping with stress or conflicts.

Additionally, although our hypotheses exploring workation in the context of embeddedness theories were not supported, our post-hoc analysis suggests that embeddedness might indeed uniquely influence the attractiveness of organizations advertising temporary work from abroad in their job offers. Further research could apply embeddedness theories to understand temporally bound work and travel experiences (e.g., workation, flexpatriation, sabbaticals). Currently, embeddedness theories mainly consider turnover or expatriation as an end result of a lack of embeddedness. However, in a current world of fragmented and highly dynamic careers, employees may decide to quit only for a time (before returning) to take a little break from their organizations or communities.

4.2. Practical implications

The results of our experiments show that workation can be seen as a valuable and innovative employee benefit that appeals to particular types of candidates, especially those with positive past and keen attitudes towards international experiences, and potentially younger candidates. Addressing individuals with such a profile by offering the opportunity to workation and advertising it in job offers is important as this benefit can make them want to join a company or even increase their loyalty, rather than opting to expatriate, quit (Lo et al., 2012), or become digital nomads (Reichenberger, 2018). Accordingly, organizations can offer specifically interested employees a unique, fulfilling experience (Davidson et al., 2010) that blends work

and leisure while not endangering, jeopardizing or abandoning their relationships to work-base and home permanently.

Offering the opportunity to do a workation can thus be beneficial in an economic and business context where organizational attractiveness is crucial to attract, gain and retain talent and where the nature of tasks can allow employees to work remotely for a relatively extended period. However, advertising workation opportunities in job offers requires organizations to be ready and well-prepared to offer such an arrangement. They would thus need to define the legal, social, and organizational prerequisites, delineate its conditions, and prepare for potential implications. These may include matters related to social security, support for expatriation and repatriation, or remote management and work with colleagues and managers or subordinates, possibly with the help of external, specialized companies.

4.3. Limitations and conclusion

Several limitations should, however, be kept in mind. Firstly, all experiments were conducted in France, and the results may thus not apply to other countries and cultures as different work legislation, tax regimes, purchasing power, and cultural orientations may prevent workation arrangements. Secondly, study 2 did not differentiate between self-initiated expatriation and assigned expatriation (McNulty and Brewster, 2017). Thirdly, both studies relied on self-reported cross-sectional data based on fictional vignettes, which limited the realism of the conditions and the ability to verify whether organizational attractiveness would lead to actual job acceptance. Given that few organizations currently offer workation opportunities and that organizations offering such opportunities may label them differently, using real job offers was not possible at this stage. Fourthly, the pre- and post-vignette questionnaires were intentionally somewhat short of making the experimental manipulation manageable, which limits the analysis of other potential conditioning variables (e.g., salary, other perks, etc.). Additionally, the pre-vignette questionnaire may have primed respondents about the purpose of our study. Fifthly, even though more than four vignettes could have been used in each study in order to increase reliability (Aguinis and Bradley, 2014), we decided to keep the number of vignettes aligned to our experimental conditions to prevent the risk of participant attrition due to fatigue by information overload (Aguinis and Bradley, 2014). Notwithstanding these limitations, workation fundamentally raises the question of whether work and leisure should be integrated or separated, for whom, and for what results (Rainoldi et al., 2022). As this study demonstrates, it represents in the minds of candidates a growing need and emergent form of reconfiguring the nexus of work and leisure in a globalized world. As such, it can be offered as part of an evolved corporate ethos that embraces global mobility to foster both professional and personal development in symbiotic ways and attract globally minded talents, which opens up opportunities for HRM research and practice to be explored further.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Vignettes for Studies 1 and 2

Thank you for considering a new job. Please read the following job description carefully. You will then be asked to answer a few questions.

Position: Project Manager [IT / Finance, Accounting / Human Resources]

Industry	As part of the Digital Transformation Department, you will be in charge of one or more areas and subjects related to IT: Information Systems / Infrastructure / Cybersecurity / Development / AI / Cloud / etc.
	As part of the Finance Transformation Department, you will be in charge of one or more areas and subjects related to finance: Accounting / Treasury / Tax / Finance / etc.
	As part of the HR Transformation Department, you will be in charge of one or more areas and subjects related to human resources: Recruitment / Skills / Compensation / QWL / HRIS / etc.
Condition (Study 1)	This position is based in France, close to where you live. No business travel is expected.
	Business trips abroad would be offered regularly. They would be optional and of short duration.
	You would have the possibility to expatriate abroad to one of our branches for at least one year.
	You would have the opportunity to telework abroad for a period of 3 to 12 months. A coworking space and customized support would be made available to you abroad, and to your family if necessary. ¹
Condition (Study 2)	This position does not offer telework.
	You would be able to telework up to three days a week from anywhere in France.
	You would be able to telework full time (full remote) from anywhere in France.
	You would have the opportunity to telework abroad for a period of 3 to 12 months. A coworking space and customized support would be made available to you abroad, and to your family if necessary. ¹

Note 1: This condition corresponds to the workation arrangement. This label was, however, not presented to participants.

Source: Authors.

Appendix 2: Instrument for Study 1 with Means and Standard Deviations per Vignette

Item descriptions	No travel	Flex- patriation	Ex- patriation	Workation
<i>Global Openness – Attitudes¹ ($\alpha = .87$)</i>		3.14 (1.09)		
A year long assignment abroad would be a fantastic opportunity for me and/or my family.		2.88 (1.38)		
Traveling the world is a priority in my life.		3.07 (1.30)		
I hope the company I work for, (or will work for), will send me on an assignment abroad.		2.72 (1.37)		
Other cultures fascinate me.		3.90 (1.07)		
<i>Global Openness – Past Experiences¹ ($\alpha = .74$)</i>		3.05 (1.01)		
I have spent time abroad.		3.13 (1.48)		
I was abroad before the age of 18.		3.17 (1.55)		
I am fluent in another language.		2.84 (1.40)		
I have moved or been relocated substantial distances (e.g., state to state, abroad).		2.18 (1.54)		
I have studied a foreign language.		3.92 (1.22)		
<i>Community Embeddedness – Fit¹ ($\alpha = .85$)</i>		3.88 (0.75)		
I really love the place where I live.		3.94 (0.94)		
The weather where I live is suitable for me.		3.61 (1.08)		
This community I live in is as good a match for me.		4.08 (0.82)		
I think of the community where I live as home.		3.99 (1)		
The area where I live offers the leisure activities that I like.		3.78 (0.91)		
<i>Community Embeddedness – Sacrifices¹ ($\alpha = .71$)</i>		3.64 (0.82)		
Leaving this community would be very hard.		3.31 (1.26)		
People respect me a lot in my community.		3.84 (0.87)		
My neighborhood is safe.		3.85 (0.96)		
My family roots are in the community where I live.		3.56 (1.31)		
<i>Organizational Attractiveness² ($\alpha = .86; .88; .91; .93$)</i>	3.66 (0.77)	3.6 (0.93)	3.37 (1.04)	3.55 (1.09)
For me, this company would be a good place to work.	3.59 (0.87)	3.43 (1.05)	3.3 (1.08)	3.41 (1.15)
This company is attractive to me as a place for employment.	3.56 (0.86)	3.56 (0.97)	3.37 (1.1)	3.58 (1.14)
I am interested in learning more about this company.	3.82 (0.88)	3.8 (1.08)	3.45 (1.23)	3.67 (1.2)

Note 1: this scale was assessed in the pre-vignette questionnaire.

Note 2: this scale was assessed in the post-vignette questionnaire.

Source: Authors.

Appendix 3: Instrument for Study 2 with Means and Standard Deviations per Vignette

Item descriptions	No telework	Partial telework	Full telework	Workation
<i>Global Openness – Attitudes¹ ($\alpha = .84$)</i>		2.93 (1.08)		
A year long assignment abroad would be a fantastic opportunity for me and/or my family.		2.66 (1.44)		
Traveling the world is a priority in my life.		2.79 (1.31)		
I hope the company I work for, (or will work for), will send me on an assignment abroad.		2.59 (1.39)		
Other cultures fascinate me.		3.67 (1.10)		
<i>Global Openness – Past Experiences¹ ($\alpha = .75$)</i>		2.85 (1.02)		
I have spent time abroad.		2.91 (1.51)		
I was abroad before the age of 18.		2.97 (1.61)		
I am fluent in another language.		2.65 (1.41)		
I have moved or been relocated substantial distances (e.g., state to state, abroad).		1.89 (1.40)		
I have studied a foreign language.		3.82 (1.22)		
<i>Organizational Attractiveness² ($\alpha = .89; .87; .90; .91$)</i>	2.89 (1.06)	3.74 (0.91)	3.67 (1.04)	3.28 (1.2)
For me, this company would be a good place to work.	2.78 (1.03)	3.61 (0.99)	3.55 (1.09)	3.16 (1.26)
This company is attractive to me as a place for employment.	2.72 (1.13)	3.69 (0.95)	3.61 (1.11)	3.29 (1.22)
I am interested in learning more about this company.	3.16 (1.33)	3.92 (1.10)	3.84 (1.19)	3.4 (1.39)

Note 1: this scale was assessed in the pre-vignette questionnaire.

Note 2: this scale was assessed in the post-vignette questionnaire.

Source: Authors.