

THINKING LOCAL, ACTING GLOBAL*Issues of Identity and Related Tensions in Global Software Organizations in India*

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Abstract: In the past two decades, global outsourcing of software development, primarily from North America to developing countries like India, has catalyzed the IT revolution in these countries. This revolution has created a new breed of knowledge workers, who constantly straddle both global and local experiences and events. In this process the identity of the knowledge worker assumes a key role at the level of the self, organization, market and society. Using a narrative, I review the significance of identity in the context of an Indian IT company doing global projects. Two common tensions in IT organizations with respect to questions of identity are discussed. These include family orientation versus individualism and standardization versus customisation. I believe identity is a critical construct that overlays both the local and global arenas in this professional group, and suggest an interpretative approach to further study these linkages. The theoretical and practical implications of this research are also discussed.

Keywords: Global, local, information technology, identity, knowledge worker, outsourcing

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