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Setting up home: The role of domestic materiality in extended family identity formation[☆]

Prabash Edirisingha [a,*], Robert Aitken [b], Shelagh Ferguson [c]

[a] Room 233, Newcastle Business School, Northumbria University, Newcastle upon Tyne, United Kingdom
[b] 4.08, Otago Business School, University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand
[c] Room 4.33, Otago Business School, University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	This paper examines the role of domestic materiality in the construction of extended family identity. It investigates how extended family members experience tensions during new family formation and the ways in which materiality contributes to the resolution of these tensions and the construction of a new family identity. Our findings suggest that the intersubjectivities centred on domestic material objects cause tensions in relationships. However, it is through a process of negotiation stimulated by these intersubjectivities that a new extended family identity emerges. We identify four materiality capacities in this process of negotiation: catalysing, associating, disassociating, and bridging. We posit that these negotiations are an essential part of the process of identity formation given that they motivate a new understanding of competing family discourses, changes to individual and collective status, and a restructuring of family, especially family structure, character, and intergenerational orientation.

1. Introduction

Materiality is a complex interrelationship between consumption objects and the different meanings and levels of significance that people ascribe to them (Miller, 2008; Borgerson, 2009). Such material-human interrelations play a central role in the process of constructing family identity (Epp & Price, 2010). This is particularly important as nuclear families become extended and negotiate new identities through marriage. In the process of extended family identity formation, materiality can provide the site around which relationship tensions can be addressed and their resolution provide a sense of stability (Mehta & Belk, 1991), normalcy (Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton, 1981), continuity (Curasi, Price, & Arnould, 2004) and kinship (Holmes, 2019). Prior literature also indicates that materiality is a key component of family assemblages helping families navigate tensions when addressing family duties (Epp & Velagaleti, 2014; Huff & Cotte, 2016; Barnhart, Huff & Cotte, 2014; Bettany, Kerrane, & Hogg, 2014) and the recreation, for example, of domestic meal practices which are deeply entwined with family materiality (Epp & Price, 2018; Pirani, Cappellini & Harman, 2018). Furthermore, material intersubjectivities are (Miller, 2008) instrumental in developing coping mechanisms to navigate family

illness (Ellis, 2018) and separation (Walker, 2020). Singularising material objects builds meaningful relations with those objects (Epp & Price, 2010) and such meanings anchor new family practices, restructure the roles of family members (Marchant & O'Donohoe, 2014), and memorialise family history and traditions (Marcoux, 2001). Therefore, materiality is essential to negotiating family membership (Fernandez et al., 2011), position and roles, and power relations (Chitakunye & Maclaran, 2014).

Much of the research to date focuses on understanding nuclear families (Vogt, 2020) and how they negotiate identity through material objects (Lien, Westberg, Stavros, & Robinson, 2018). Even when investigating alternative family permutations, the focus remains on interactions between individual family members within conventional nuclear structures (Mehta & Belk, 1991; Barnhart et al., 2014; Dean et al., 2014; Huff & Cotte, 2016; Fernandez et al., 2011). As Dean et al. (2014, p. 1705) argue, though the nuclear family provides the basis for apprehending family decision-making and consumption practices, ongoing and layered interplays of family identity are far more complex in extended families. The presence of one (or more) intergenerational layer(s) brings further complexity by introducing new patterns of relational and collective interplays and conflict resolution mechanisms

(Edirisingha, Aitken, & Ferguson, 2018). For example, the merging of different identity priorities, commitments, rituals, practices, and narratives that are central to nuclear families (Epp & Price, 2008) can create exponentially complex and challenging circumstances in extended families (Cong & Silverstein, 2012; Baker, Silverstein, & Putney, 2008; Jæger, 2012). Such as how do the strong filial bonds between parents and children influence the position and power of new family members and their ability to transition from 'outsiders' to 'insiders' (Edirisingha, Aitken, & Ferguson, 2015)? Also, how do extended family members commit differently to the introduction of new traditions that re-define the trajectory of their family identity and how such multigenerational negotiations stimulated by intersubjective materialities re-shape pride, prestige and status across generations of extended family? Surprisingly, little is known about the role and nature of materiality within extended families (Huff & Cotte, 2016) and the part it plays in mediating extended family identity construction. Consequently, current family consumption research falls short of responding to these questions.

The extant emphasis on nuclear families also neglects the increasing prevalence of both vertically and horizontally expanded extended family structures (Vogt, 2020). During the last two decades in the UK, for example, the number of multigenerational families has increased significantly (Burgess & Muir, 2020; ONS, 2017; 2019), resulting in over 1.8 million multigenerational extended families (Burgess et al., 2017). Similarly, Canada has seen a 38% rise in mutigenerational households, the fastest growing change to family structure in the country (Statistics Canada, 2019). And 64 million Americans now live with multiple generations under one roof (Martin, 2017). Furthermore, extended families are widespread around the world, particularly in South and East Asia (Fletcher, 2020) and in South America (Esteve & Florez-Paredez, 2018). There is also increasing evidence that extended family members such as grandparents, uncles, aunts, and stepparents are becoming more important to, and involved in, family socialisation processes (Ganong, Coleman, & Jamison, 2011; Becher, 2008). Relational and collective level family decisions in extended families include family members across multiple generations (Fernandez, Veer, & Lastovicka, 2011), therefore, making decision-making in extended families a more complex process replete with tensions. Accordingly, there is benefit for marketing and consumer behaviour researchers, as well as practitioners, from understanding how extended families and their material affiliations lead to extended family identity construction. Yet, minimal research addresses this (Dean et al., 2014; Yang et al., 2020).

Building on family identity (Epp & Price, 2008) and materiality theories (Miller, 2008; Borgerson, 2009), we address this lack of understanding with a longitudinal study that explores the role of domestic materiality in the formation of family identity of ten extended Sri Lankan families. Extended families, traditionally formed through marriage with multiple generations of members living together, are typical in Sri Lanka (Abeykoon & Ruwanthi, 2008). In addition, the giving and receiving of dowry, and its attendant negotiation of material intersubjectivities, is a tradition that typifies the right of passage preceding new family formation in Sri Lanka (Pathirana, 2012). Thus our context provides an appropriate setting within which to examine negotiations around material objects and their role in the construction of new family identity in extended families. We investigate two research questions. Firstly, what intermediating capacities of domestic materiality facilitate negotiations of extended family identity? Secondly, how do these domestic materiality capacities contribute to extended family identity negotiations? To address these questions, we explore multiple symbolic, experiential, and mundane capacities of domestic materiality in mediating emerging tensions in new families. By considering individual and collective relationships to material possessions, such as to favourite furniture items and clothes, as well as to family heirlooms, photographs, and artefacts, we investigate the meanings and significance of these material objects and the role that they play in the dynamic and complex process of extended family identity construction. The following section reviews existing literature on family transitions,

family identity, and domestic materiality to ground our empirical study.

2. Literature review

2.1. Family identity and the extended family

Family is considered an ideal site to theorise consumption (Epp & Price, 2008; 2010; Miller, 2008). Family consumption may include sharing between family members (Belk, 2010), gift-giving practices (Sherry, 1983), and mundane acts of reciprocity (Arnould & Rose, 2016), which are deeply enmeshed in everyday enactments of family identity (Epp & Price, 2010; Wallendorf bennet & Arnould, 1991). There are references to family identity across disciplines such as in sociology (Bennett, Wolin & McAvity, 1988; Bielby & Bielby, 1989), psychology (Fiese, Foley, & Spagnola, 2006), and in consumer research (Schau, Gilly, & Wolfinbarger, 2009). These studies conceptualise family identity as both a cognitive and experiential construct comprising family structure, character, and generational orientation (Bennett et al., 1988). Building on cross disciplinary literature, Epp and Price's seminal research (2008) conceptualises family identity as a layered framework negotiated through symbolic (Wallendorf & Arnould, 1991) and mundane (Coupland, 2005) interactions, persisting within a web of interplays between individual, relational, and collective layers of experience. Consequently, various family members may form relational interactions around family routines indicating their relationship intimacy (Cappellini & Parsons, 2012) and collective levels of family bonding (Chitakunye & Maclaran, 2014). Such family identity enactments often draw from consumption symbols and practices for the reinforcement and continuity of family identity (Epp & Price, 2008). For example, family rituals (Bonsu & Belk 2003; Baxter et al., 2002), intergenerational transfers (Curasi et al., 2004), and mundane activities (Coupland, 2005) often involve material objects that signify family membership, role responsibilities, and power relationships to its members as well as to outsiders (Epp, Schau & Price, 2014).

Additionally, Epp and Price (2008) explain family identity as a fluid and evolving construct in response to multiple moderators, such as the levels of agreement and commitment between family members, the synergy and discord of individual, relational, and collective identity discourses, and family's identity needs. Therefore, analysing the underpinning dynamics of disagreements, frustrations, compromises, and tensions (Epp and Price, 2010; Ganong et al., 2011; Wallendorf & Arnould, 1991) is critical when theorising family identity negotiations and their link to consumption (Cross & Gilly, 2014; Pavia & Mason, 2012). Initial research indicates that the ways in which family identity is negotiated and enacted is exponentially complex in collectivistic extended families, yet this has received limited scholarly attention (Deanhu et al., 2014; Huff & Cotte, 2016; Lien et al., 2018).

The term "extended family" simplistically refers to a large group of family members related by blood or marriage that co-reside and share their resources (Harris, 1989). However, adopting Epp and Price's (2008) conceptualisation of family as a social organism replete with interplaying bundles of identities, presents an opportunity for a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of extended family identity construction. Extended families usually include members across multiple generations, such as aging parents, older siblings, grandparents, grandchildren, uncles, aunts, and cousins, participating in everyday enactments of family identity (Sarkisian & Gerstel, 2012; Huff and Cotte, 2016; Barnhart et al., 2014). In such families, there are longer continuities between generations and "multigenerational bonds are becoming more important" to the well-being and socialisation of individuals (Bengtson, 2001, P. 1). Furthermore, while relational identity interactions can include family members across multiple generations of family (Edirisingha et al., 2018), not all extended family members are equally important to key enactments of extended family identity (Fernandez et al., 2011). For example, different family members within the extended family may have different interpretations of object biographies

and how these fit when enacting family identity. This simultaneously complicates and supports already intricate relational level identity interactions in such families (Sun, 2008; Jæger, 2012).

Increasingly complex and multigenerational interactions contribute to greater tensions in extended families (Sarkisian & Gerstel, 2012). For example, agreements between family members of enacting gender role stereotypes (such as fathering and mothering) often differ across generations, leading to discord and tensions in extended family relationships (Sear, 2016). Similarly, culturally conditioned character traits can be intricately interwoven into individual, relational, and collective level family enactments in extended families (Edirisingha et al., 2018, 2015). For example, in South Asia, collectivist family norms associated with filial duties and family pride (Fernandez et al., 2011) define how individual and relational groupings interpret and enact family identity (Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998). Research suggests that these extended family dynamics inform key but often silent or silenced figures within contemporary families, such as women who act as the glue binding extended families together (Sarkisian & Gerstel, 2012). Furthermore, collective level commitment towards preserving family pride and prestige necessitates synergy between family members, obligating them to adhere and commit to normative family discourses (Ahmed & Lemkau, 2000). Consequently, "being an extended family", is a complex process (Bengtson, 2001) that involves the negotiation of interrelationships between family members, their material possessions, and various mundane and ritualistic practices and identity enactments (Fernandez, et al., 2011). Understanding these layered negotiations is essential to comprehending their role in extended family decision-making (Parkinson, Gallegos, & Russell-Bennett, 2016). So far, this review establishes how family identity is negotiated through a variety of practices often involving material possessions, yet how these dynamically intersect to negotiate tensions during extended family identity construction is unknown.

2.2. Material objects, family transitions, and extended family

Material possessions can be markers of individual and collective family identities and sources of meaning-making processes in home consumption (Hurdley, 2006; Chitakunye & Maclaran, 2014). By singularising such possessions, they are assigned personal, familial, material, communal, and sacred meanings (Epp & Price, 2010) enabling families to represent, negotiate and establish their family identity (Epp & Price, 2008). Possessions imbued with symbolic meanings, such as family heirlooms (Curasi et al., 2004) and cherished possessions (Ahuvia, 2005), act as repositories of meanings that enable family members to understand each other (Miller, 2008). Furthermore, mundane possessions can also fulfil similar functions during routine family life (Coupland, 2005). For example, taken-for-granted objects, such as televisions/furniture, can be deeply embedded within everyday enactments of family identity and help us understand gradual changes to family consumption practices (Chitakunye & Maclaran, 2014).

However, during times of transition, such as marrying, material objects can be separated from identity enactments within the existing family networks (Noble & Walker, 1997), thus, prompting families to renegotiate their position and roles within the new family arrangement. According to McAlexander (1991), family members are faced with having to negotiate ambiguity, expect uncertainty, and resolve tensions associated with liminality during family transitions to achieve a sense of stability and continuity. As material possessions and their biographies (Kopytoff, 1986) are linked to the social processes of family identity construction that produce meanings (Miller, 2008; Appadurai, 1988), each object has the capacity to act as a prop as well as a catalyst (Ahuvia, 2005) to help families cope with the tension and stress associated with navigating change (Noble & Walker, 1997; Gentry et al., 1995). For example, the inclusion (Mehta & Belk, 1991) or exclusion (Roster, 2014) of cherished objects, allows family members to attach or detach themselves from the object's particular meanings as they seek to re-negotiate

their individual identities in response to collective and relational family identity needs. Family identity needs can include management of uncertainty, achieving ideal-self, bridging between identities, and bringing a sense of control within states of flux (Ogle, Tyner & Schofield-Tomschin, 2013; Voice Group, 2010).

Our focus on materiality affords a broad scope to consider transitions within the complexities of extended family identity construction. Mehta and Belk (1991) established material practices as key to illuminating transitions within extended families; specifically focusing on how material possessions could be adapted, and their individual and collective significance established and negotiated. This premise has been examined intergenerationally to explicate differing identity priorities linked to material possessions. For example, as Fernandez et al. (2011) explain, even the cultural symbolism of gold may mean different things within complex layers of extended family. Therefore, when extended families negotiate transitions, meanings of material possessions are applied differently to re-configure their relationships.

As family members react differently to the meanings and significance of particular material objects to different individuals, the added complexity of extended family dynamics can create a confusing web of personal, subjective, and contextually driven, tensions. For example, Fernandez et al. (2011), explain how an extended family defines its membership, manages its intergenerational relationships, organises its resources, and engages with its social world during transitions through deeply entangled material relations. Such interrelationships between people and their material objects within their uniquely constituted environments are referred to as intersubjectivities (Miller, 2001; 2008). And it is these intersubjectivities that have the capacity or agency to produce meanings in our relationships (Miller, 2008; Borgerson, 2009) and anchor the construction of extended family identities. By adopting Miller's conceptualisation of materiality, with its focus on intersubjectivities between actants, we can abstract beyond the cultural context of Sri Lankan newlyweds to conceptualising material capacities as interwoven dynamics that play an essential role in the construction of identity for extended families.

In summary, the literature reviewed above, suggests that the role of materiality in extended family identity construction is exponentially more complex than that experienced by nuclear families. Whilst there is agreement that a focus on material possessions has value for unpacking familial identity processes, limited research adopts this within the context of extended families. Furthermore, transitions incorporating shifting role identities of individual family members (e.g. becoming a spouse) or dyads (e.g. becoming parents) (Epp & Price, 2008) provide opportunities for families to re-configure their relationships to objects of consumption (Epp, Schau, & Price, 2014), thus, connecting private familial consumption and the marketplace. Again, this relationship has not been investigated in the context of extended family identity constructions.

3. Methodology

3.1. The context: Sri Lankan family and marriage

The traditional Sri Lankan "family" implies a multigenerational formulation that includes interrelated individuals through blood and marriage, such as parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts, nephews, and nieces, and, in some cases, close family friends (Gamburd, 2020). Religious teachings, including those of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, and Islam, have established core values, practices, and beliefs that underpin the lives of traditional Sri Lankan families (Goodhand, Klem, & Korf, 2009). The traditional Sri Lankan family is agrarian and patriarchal where fathers have the ownership of economic resources (Obeyesekere, 1963). There is a clear gender division of labour within everyday family life, sanctioning males as providers and females as nurturers (Malhotra & Mather, 1997). However, females are afforded an important status as the role of motherhood is venerated within Sri Lankan

culture (Chapin, 2014). There is also a particularly close bond between Sri Lankan parents and their children (Tambiah & Ryan, 1957). Parents are expected to dedicate their lives to raising their children (Chapin, 2010) whilst children, in return, are expected to attend to parents' emotional and economic welfare during old age. Preserving and celebrating family ancestry and unconditional respect for the elderly are taught from childhood, first within family traditions and second within wider Sri Lankan social systems (Tambiah & Ryan, 1957).

Important decisions about marriage are made by senior family members who are conversant with cultural values, traditions, and norms contributing to the pride and prestige of their family. The traditions associated with marriage involve careful deliberation of religious and cultural rituals symbolising the boundary crossing from a natal to a conjugal family (Fernandez et al., 2011). This process is lengthy and commences with parents searching for a suitable partner for their child (leading to arranged marriage) (De Munck, 1998) or by introducing the partner to the parents if a young couple is already romantically involved. Usually, an extensive compatibility analysis of family caste, religion, and personal background precedes the matching of horoscopes for prospective couples (Malhotra & Tsui, 1996). Dowry giving is also an important material tradition in Sri Lankan marriage and is usually transacted between the parental parties (Pathirana, 2012).

3.2. Participant selection and ethnographic data collection process

Snowballing sampling was used to recruit a purposive sample of nine participant couples about to get married. All our participating couples are heterosexual with individual's ages ranging from 25 to 38 years and marrying for the first time. All of our participating couples and their extended families living in Sri Lanka belong to the 'new urban Sri Lankan middle class', characterised by dual incomes and the enjoyment of expressive lifestyles through conspicuous consumption (Liyanage, 2010). However, family caste, pride, and prestige are still essential to their sense of family as much as they are important to their elderly family members. In Table 1 (refer to Table 1), we provide a detailed account of each participating couple and key extended family members who were involved in the process of family identity negotiation.

We adopted a longitudinal (Bradbury & Karney, 2004) and adaptive ethnographic research process that Arnould and Wallendorf (1994) prescribe to immerse the first author in the socio-cultural complexities of Sri Lankan extended families. The first author conducted a two-stage ethnography. Initial data collection commenced 6 months prior to the wedding date and provided a deep understanding of two key areas: 1) the identity discourses of new family members and their relationship to important material possessions, 2) individual expectations of marriage, family life, and extended family identity. The second stage of data collection commenced 2 months after the wedding ceremony and examined the lived experiences of the newly formed extended family. The process of data collection and analysis lasted three years and incorporated several ethnographic research tools including semi-structured in-depth interviews, participant observation, social media engagement, elicitation tasks and projective techniques.

We conducted 44 semi-structured, in-depth interviews at multiple times during both stages following McCracken's (1988) framework for reviewing and identifying analytical and cultural categories during long interviews. Interview data provided rich emic perspectives (Arnould & Wallendorf, 1994) of daily routines, lifestyles, and expectations of new family relationships. Longitudinal data illuminated how key dynamics evolved during data collection. Participant observations were conducted within and outside of participants' homes and these provided important insights into the lived experiences of participants (Belk & Kozinets, 2005). The first author accompanied research participants on individual and joint consumption experiences during both data collection stages, such as during shopping trips and meetings with wedding planners utilising audio or video recordings to capture data. Unplanned ethnographic observations and naturalistic conversations also occurred as the

first author garnered greater rapport with participating families. For example, participation in special family occasions, such as birthday celebrations, provided opportunities for naturalistic observations of evolving extended family relationships. Employing elicitation tasks initiated and framed conversations on difficult issues particularly when addressing family tensions. By combining performative elicitation techniques (Foster, 2012) with projective methods, our participant families were able to reflect upon changes in their lives. For example, one of our couples, Ashan and Nimani, felt they were 'treated like children' as their parents made most of the household decisions even after marriage. Consequently, the new couple struggled to progress their new identity. We asked them to design their ideal living room space and furnish it using the Autodesk-Homestyler software application. While discussing and designing the virtual living space, the new couple uncovered perspectives about each other and identified potential family tensions, leading to speculative consideration of how these tensions might be enacted and resolved. Secondly, we used photo and video elicitation (Heisley & Levy, 1991) during follow up in-depth interviews to prompt recollections and enable reflexive comparison with prior expectations.

Social media data, particularly Facebook, extended our ethnographic approach during data collection and operated as an elicitation tool during in-depth interviews. This helped us overcome geographic distance during observations and interactions whilst bringing multiple layers of perspective (Baker, 2013). Following participants' Facebook timelines and engaging with them in chat facilities, enabled us to learn about their families in real-time and map the changes as they occurred. Identifying the changes as they happened provided a unique opportunity for participants to reflect on their significance and consider their responses. Table 1 provides a detailed list of ethnographic data collection tools used in relation to each family.

3.3. Data analysis and thematic interpretation

The hermeneutic process of data analysis (Arnold & Fischer, 1994) and interpretation building used the constant comparative process of data analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and occurred iteratively throughout data collection. Most of our data was collected in Sinhalese to encourage naturalistic articulation of participant experiences. This data was translated into English at the transcription stage. However, the first author drew from his etic understanding of the Sinhalese language and cultural connotations as well as situational meanings during both open and axial coding processes (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) to develop initial themes in English. Our iterative data analysis process included peer coding and debate within the research team, generating insider and outsider perspectives fleshing out thematic relationships across all data (Spiggle, 1994). Accordingly, the themes that we have identified are a result of a process of our constant comparison, integrating and delimiting processes (Glaser, 1965) until redundancy of themes and theoretical saturation was achieved (Goulding, 2005). Adopting analytical techniques discussed by Arnould and Wallendorf (1994) to develop etic-level ethnographic interpretations, we triangulated all forms of data to construct the model presented in the Findings section.

4. Findings and discussion

In response to RQ1, what intermediating capacities of domestic materiality facilitate negotiation of extended family identity, our findings introduce four key capacities: catalysing, associating, dissociating, and bridging. These capacities are illustrated diagrammatically in our conceptual framework (Fig. 1). This framework also addresses RQ2, by explaining how these domestic materiality capacities progress extended family identity negotiations. Initially, these materiality capacities destabilise existing intersubjectivities between individual family members and their material objects, which can produce tensions in family relationships. However, the same materiality capacities are also central

Table 1
Participant details and ethnographic research process.

Couple Names (Pseudonyms) & Ages	Ethnographic Research Engagement
Shani (F 29) & Hem (M 30) Key extended family members: Hem's mother and sister, Shani's parents, sister, cousins, and uncles and aunts.	**Stage −1: (4 months)** 1 individual and 1 joint interview Accompanied wedding planning session Meal consumption session with Shani Accompanied joint furniture moving session Facebook engagement with both individuals Projective technique: Picture elicitation **Stage-2: (17 months)** 2 joint interviews 1 accompanied grocery shopping session and invited participation in a surprise birthday party for Hem. Joint meal preparation and consumption session; participation in family dinner at restaurant; participation in furniture shopping Informal conversations Facebook engagement with both individuals and several other extended family members Projective technique: Picture elicitation
Ushi (F 27) & Samar (M 31) Key extended family members: Ushi's parents, Ushi's grandfather, Samar's mother, brother and sister.	**Stage −1: (3 months)** 2 individual and 1 joint interview Observation of joint wedding dress shopping session Accompanied meeting with floral arrangement organiser Projective technique: Picture elicitation **Stage −2: (1 year)** 2 individual and joint interviews Facebook engagement with both participants Accompanied joint wedding materials shopping session
Natali (F 35) & Oshan (M 38) Key extended family members: Natali's mother, Oshan's brother and brother-in-law	**Stage −1:** 1 joint semi-structured in-depth interview 2 informal ethnographic conversations with Oshan **Stage-2: (30 months)** 3 individual semi-structured interviews 1 joint semi-structured interview Informal conversations Observations of meal preparation/meal consumption
Yaromi (F 30) & Lalantha (M 32) Key extended family members: Yaromi's parents and Lalantha's mother	**Stage −1: (4 months)** 4 individual interviews Accompanied observation of the meeting with wedding planner Facebook engagement with Yaromi **Stage-2: (2 years)** 2 individual and joint interviews Facebook engagement with both participants 2 dinner preparation and consumption sessions and accompanied furniture moving and arranging session Informal conversations Projective technique: Picture elicitation using Facebook material and pictures taken during prior observations
Hilmie (F 25) & Amil (M 28) Key extended family members: Amil's parents and sister	**Stage-1: (7 months)** 2 individual semi-structured interviews 1 Joint semi-structured interview **Stage-2: (18 months)** 1 joint semi-structured interview Participant observation of cloth shopping Informal conversations Facebook engagement
Uvani (F 26) & Nilan (M 28) Key extended family members: Nilan's parents, Uvani's parents, brother, and cousins.	**Stage −1: (3 months)** 2 individual interviews Accompanied wedding planning and shopping session **Stage-2: (7 months)** 2 interviews Meal preparation and consumption session Facebook engagement with Nilan Projective technique: Picture elicitation
Mili (F 34) & Jude (M 37) Key extended family members: Mili's parents, Jude's parents, grandparents, and uncles and aunts.	**Stage −1: (3 months)** 1 individual interview with Mili and 2 with Jude Facebook engagement **Stage-2: (5 months)** 2 joint interviews 1 accompanied joint furniture shopping session Facebook engagement Projective technique: Picture elicitation
Nimani (F 28) & Ashan (M 29) Key extended family members:	**Stage −1: (5 months)** 2 individual sessions and 1 joint interview session Accompanied joint shopping session

Table 1 (*continued*)

Couple Names (Pseudonyms) & Ages	Ethnographic Research Engagement
Nimani's parents and sister, Ashan's parents, sister, uncles and aunts.	Facebook engagement with Ashan Projective technique: Picture elicitation using Facebook material **Stage-2: (19 months)** 2 joint interviews Projective technique using Autodesk Homestyler Elicitation task using video clips from floor plan design activity and floor plan discussions Facebook engagement with Ashan
Lakisha (F 32) & Romesh (M 34) Key extended family members: Lakisha's father, uncle, few aunts from father's side, Romesh's mother.	**Stage −1: (2 months)** 2 individual interviews Accompanied joint clothes shopping session; accompanied meeting with the wedding photographer Projective technique: Picture elicitation using material from prior observations **Stage-2: (21 months)** 1 joint interview 3 accompanied weekend grocery shopping sessions; participation in a family day out; participation in birthday celebration for family member; 2 family meal preparation and consumption sessions Informal conversations Facebook engagement Projective technique: Picture elicitation

to the re-configuration of more matured intersubjectivities, thus helping to bring a new sense of status, power, understanding, obligation, and trust into extended family relationships. Given that these intersubjectivities are re-evaluated and re-constituted as new multigenerational relationships across natal and conjugal families, we term those as 'contingent materialities'. This emphasises the dynamic nature of the meanings that have been imbued in them through past experience and the ways in which they change as a result of new contextual and relational circumstances. Our findings show how key components of extended family identity, such as its structure, character, and generational orientation, emerge within these complex de-stabilisations and re-configurations of material intersubjectivities. Fig. 1 illustrates how these domestic materiality capacities shape extended family identity and serve as the framework for further discussion.

4.1. Contingent materiality and envisaged extended family identity

Each new family member enters the process with an envisaged extended family identity. The intersubjectivities (elliptical paths) between this new family member, their material possessions, and other extended family members (small circles on elliptical paths) play a key role in forming their envisaged extended family identity. Although our figure only has 3 intersubjectivities circling the nucleus for illustrative convenience (a, b, and c), in reality there are many intersubjectivities contributing to an envisaged extended family identity. These intersubjectivities are contingent, comprising each individual's predicted

material compositions and their authority and role in enacting the ideal extended family structure, character, and generational orientation. For example, what family rituals and practices will need to change or be retained and in what capacities, how much control family members will have on various facets of family decision-making, and ultimately who is in the extended family and who is not.

Not all intersubjectivities are equally important to an individual's sense of extended family as well. Stronger intersubjectivities (a - darker elliptical paths travelling closer to the nucleus) are considered indispensable by the new family member. For example, Shani (F) relates how she has been socialised into "*the role of a good daughter since the childhood*" through repeated enactments of the role. Such socialisation includes routine enactments of traditional role expectations relating to obeying parents, taking care of household tasks, and ensuring family continuity. Shani instinctively integrates this expectation when forming her envisaged extended family identity. She has strong relations with her family members (parents, uncles, and aunts) and likewise strong intersubjectivities with material possessions she considers important to her sense of extended family. As a result, she not only considers her parents and their important possessions (e.g. a set of wine glasses and furniture) as central to her new family identity, but also anticipates both her parents and her in-laws to continue their influence during family decision-making.

Weaker intersubjectivities (c - represented in lighter elliptical paths) are open to re-consideration during extended family identity formation. For example, family meal preparation had never been of interest to Ushi
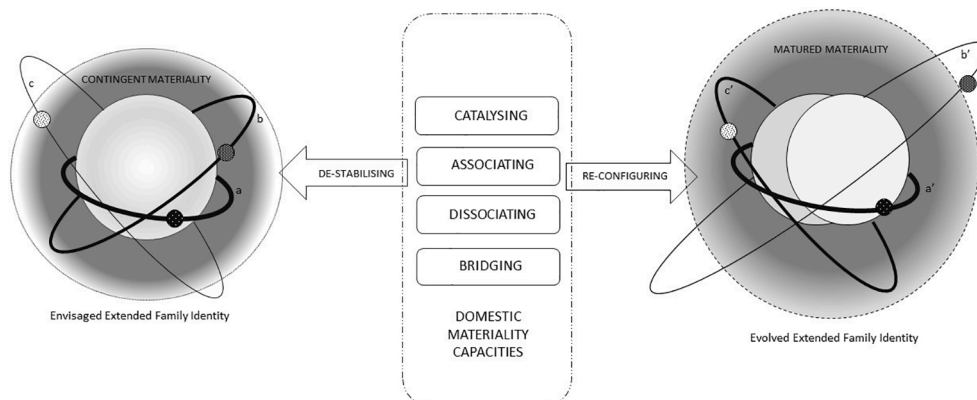

Fig. 1. Framework of domestic materiality in extended family identity formation.

Table 2
Material capacities and extended family identity negotiation processes.

New couple within Extended Family	Intersubjectivities that trigger tensions	Materiality Capacities				Matured intersubjectivities leading to tension resolution
		Catalysing	Associating	Dissociating	Bridging	
Shani (F) & Hem (M)	**Wine glasses and furniture:** Shani received a collection of wine glasses and furniture items when her parents left the country. She wanted to take care of those items, however, she did not have a place of her own to do so. Her relatives were unable to help her with secure storage.	Needing to find a secure home for these cherished items, Shani and her parents approached Hem. Hem understood the importance of these objects for Shani and her family. He understood the consequences of being a custodian for these objects even though it meant less space in his own home for his belongings.			Being custodian of these cherished items meant cleaning and caring, as well as displaying the wine glasses in his living room. Shani supported him in these practices which was perceived as a relational level effort to preserve her father's cherished objects. Hem consequently became an insider family member as only insiders are trusted to care for cherished family objects.	Shani and Hem learnt about each other through caring for the glassware and furniture. The parents as well as the extended family began to trust Hem and consider him an insider. Hem also recognised his transition from outside to insider in the new family.
Ushi (F) & Samar (M)	**Papyrus:** Ushi received a papyrus from her grandfather. As a family heirloom it has multi-generational history. It was used by her grandfather, who was an ayurvedic doctor to prescribe medicines to his patients. She wanted to bring it to her new family home after marriage. She expected that it would be a venerated object in her new family home continuing the status and prestige of her family. She expected to display the papyrus in her new extended family's living room.	When Ushi tried to display the papyrus in the living room cabinet, there was insufficient space. Her mother-in-law called it an "old thing" which shouldn't really be in the cabinet with all the other displayed, important family possessions.	Samar valued the symbolism of the papyrus. He liked traditional heirlooms such as this papyrus. He knew that it is an object demonstrating family heritage and prestige. He wanted to bring these values into his own family.			Ushi tried to display the heirloom in the cabinet but when her mother-in-law resisted, she kept it in their room. The couple acknowledged the mother-in-law's dislike of the papyrus. Later, Samar re-arranged some objects in the living room cabinet to create space. Since it was the son's action rather than the daughter-in-law's, it was not resisted by the mother-in-law. However, Ushi was unhappy that it was not the display centrepiece. She continues to plan with her husband to build their own home and move out, where she will be able to display and venerate her cherished objects.
Natali (F) & Oshan (M)	**Carving knife:** Natali was using one of Oshan's specialty knives (a carving knife) to chop vegetables during everyday cooking. The knife was broken. Oshan didn't approve of the knife being used in such a basic way and was angry at the outcome.	Using the carving knife for a different purpose triggered animated conversations within the extended family. It brought their character preferences, experiences, priorities and differences to the surface of their relationship.				The couple ended up disappointed with each other subsequent to the knife breaking. Oshan left the broken knife to be used in the kitchen but considered his wife irresponsible. Natali considered her husband insensitive and unappreciative of her daily efforts.
Yaromi (F) & Lalantha (M)	**Electronic devices:** Lalantha expected to take all his electronic devices (television, sound system, and DVD player) to his new home with Yaromi. He expected to bring these items into the home without compromise as they were important to him.	When he spoke to Yaromi about bringing all his electronic devices they agreed that accommodating all of them in their living room could be problematic. They mutually recognised the identity importance of Lalantha's possessions. Yaromi wanted to accommodate his 'techy' identity. They considered what other objects (furniture items) would go well	Yaromi was not a techy person but she enjoyed watching movies, especially with her husband. She enjoyed the experience of the sound system and associating with this routine made Lalantha less compromised in the new family.			The experience developed a shared movie watching practice between the new couple. It also made Lalantha feels more integrated into the new family.

Table 2 (*continued*)

New couple within Extended Family	Intersubjectivities that trigger tensions	Materiality Capacities				Matured intersubjectivities leading to tension resolution
		Catalysing	Associating	Dissociating	Bridging	
Hilmie (F) & Amil (M)	**Drum set:** Amil's drum set symbolised his teenage life. It had been a cherished object during his teenage years and he had many fond memories of good times playing music with his friends. He expected to take the object to his new home and continue playing it after marriage.	with the electronics and which items, they would have to divest. Initial discussions addressed where the drum set would fit within the new family home centring on adequate space. However, the couple also considered time, especially how much time he would have to play the drums. Finally, they considered how appropriate it will be for him to have a drum set or to continue playing.		Amil understood the drum's special biography but also its mismatch with his new home. He recognised the act of playing drums does not align with the new family identity they jointly wanted to pursue. To embrace his new professional identity, they agreed he had to move away from having and playing the drum set.		They first left it with his parents, anticipating the object would be re-integrated when they have a bigger house but finally decided to sell it. Amil understood the importance of moving on from the object and knew he had to mature and adopt new hobbies as part of forging his family identity. He acknowledged that his teenage years and associated pursuits were now behind him.
Uvani (F) & Nilan (M)	**Contemporary furniture:** Uvani's parents bought furniture as part of her dowry, instead of passing down their old furniture and heirlooms.	Discussing what furniture to buy triggered multiple animated conversations about the style, make, type of wood and comfort of the furniture. The couple preferred contemporary furniture, whereas, the parents valued sturdy and solid furniture (not necessarily as comfortable), escalating tensions around relational family character.	Buying modern furniture, especially the new sofa, allowed the new couple to associate themselves with a key character component of their couple identity.		Going against tradition and allowing the couple to choose their furniture assisted them financially and bridged two relational groupings (the new couple and the parents-in-law).	This helped the parents to understand what the young couple wanted (contingent materiality) whilst the new couple appreciated the parent's gift and their tolerance of rejecting tradition. Thus, creating bonds.
Mili (F) & Jude (M)	**Sofa and Cavicci:** Mili receives a new sofa as part of her dowry, which the couple initially place in the centre of the new extended family's living room. They shift an old existing cavicci to one side to accommodate this.	Trying to find space for the new sofa by moving the existing cavicci acts as a catalyst that brings out existing extended family character and intergenerational orientation.	Eventually, learning to appreciate the family history is indicated by Mili as she learns to respect the cavicci and her mother-in-law's preferences. Over time, she appreciates the value of the cavicci, particularly its market value (they are very expensive).	Jude is compelled to dissociate some part of his previous natal self by compromising the importance of the cavicci and displaying the new sofa prominently in the living room.		After initial movements, the Cavicci remained in the centre of the living room. The new sofa continued to be moved from one place to another in the living room at times becoming disembodied (it was a 2 piece). Mili realised the importance of the cavicci to her parents-in-law and they accommodated the new sofa recognising its usefulness and comfort for watching TV. The Cavicci was more concerned with status than comfort.
Nimani (F) & Ashan (M)	**Painting and artwork:** Nimani has pursued patch work, paintings and other crafts as a hobby for many years. She likes to display them in her home and after marriage she expected to continue both the practice and the display.	After moving into Ashan's extended family home, she learns it has a different biography with different wall decorations. Predominantly these are pictures of family members and other commercially produced arts and craft. She struggled to find space for her creations in her new home.		Nimani stopped painting temporarily. She felt both the practice as well as displaying her creations were not compatible with her new family.	Understanding and complying with her new extended family's norms and practices allowed her to integrate into her extended family.	Nimani stopped painting and moved the larger pieces she had previously painted to her parent's home. Then she created a portfolio of the smaller artworks which she can display in her new home. This tension resolution allowed her to be non-confrontational as is her preference.
Lakisha (F) & Romesh (M)	**Antique table:** Romesh received an antique table which he wanted to bring to his new extended family (moving in with wife and her	The table symbolised Romesh's family linage and its continued daily use was important to him. Lakisha valued being able to link			They gave the father's table to the uncle and kept the antique table.	By gifting Lakisha's father's table to her uncle, the extended family redrew their family boundaries to include their uncle as a close family

Table 2 (*continued*)

New couple within Extended Family	Intersubjectivities that trigger tensions	Materiality Capacities				Matured intersubjectivities leading to tension resolution
		Catalysing	Associating	Dissociating	Bridging	
	family). There was already a table in the family (with symbolic meaning for Lakisha' father), so the new couple wanted to replace the existing table with the antique one.	herself to her husband's family lineage through daily use of the antique table.				member. He was consequently much closer to the new couple than previously.

(F). She considers herself "progressive" and is dismissive of traditional prescriptions expecting women to take care of household meals as an "*outdated practice*". Consequently, the extended family members' material objects, and a host of mundane practices that make up those intersubjectivities are dispensable to her at this stage. Yet, meal preparation is important for her mother-in-law. Consequently, Ushi is expected to shadow her mother-in-law until she is fully trained and become "worthy" of taking over this nurturing role in her new extended family, precipitating a renegotiation of this relationship.

Initial intersubjectivities are unsurprisingly positive as new family members anticipate their future and begin their transitions. Ushi and Shani's anticipation of their changing circumstances have a naïve and temporal quality. Our findings show how everyday experiences related to materiality differ from one family member to another and provide the site for addressing differences in meaning and significance across extended families. As a result, they are antecedent to extended family power struggles and relationship tensions when competing intersubjectivities collide as two extended families come together.

4.2. Domestic materiality capacities

Drawing from DeLanda (2006, p. 7), we define "capacities" as the capabilities of a range of meaning-laden material objects and their intersubjectivities with different family members, when such objects are "constituted and mobilised" within extended family networks. While the significance and meanings of these material objects for the newly integrating individuals often overlap and interconnect, each new extended family member uses a unique combination of materiality capacities to form their new extended family identity. Table 2 (Refer to Table 2) presents the combinations of capacities used to form the extended family identity. For ease of interpretation when exploring interplaying intersubjectivities, we have used exemplars that focus on a single material object. We recognise that each couple's accounts of such processes are not abstracted events but a cultural sensemaking process of 'being in the world' (McCracken, 1988). To represent our nuanced data analysis, we use a single event or incident specific to selected couples to illustrate the reflexive and iterative process and enactment of negotiation (Arnould & Wallendorf, 1994). Pragmatically, this approach provides a condensed version of an extensive dataset to exemplify our findings.

4.2.1. Catalysing capacity

Catalysing capacity is the triggering potential of domestic materiality to serve identity negotiations by exposing the nature of contingent materiality and its role in responding to emerging relationship tensions. Resolving these tensions can create a sense of urgency and a state of destabilisation within extended families. For example, Natali (F) and her mother tried to improvise with one of Oshan's (husband) carving knives (a knife used specifically for culinary decoration) to chop vegetables as part of her everyday meal preparation. Unfortunately, she accidentally damaged the knife, and this created significant tensions between all three family members. They could neither continue with those tensions in their relationships nor manage household cooking when the various meanings attached to the knife for the different actors were in conflict. The conflict was triggered by a lack of understanding of the object's significance and the tensions resolved as a new understanding emerged.

Oshan showing his damaged carving knife, demonstrating how it should be used and consequently understanding how the damage occured.

4.2.2. Associating capacity

Associating capacity is the ability of domestic materiality to introduce, normalise, and preserve essential aspects of extended family identity at individual, relational, and collective levels across time and through generations. This capacity enables family members to link
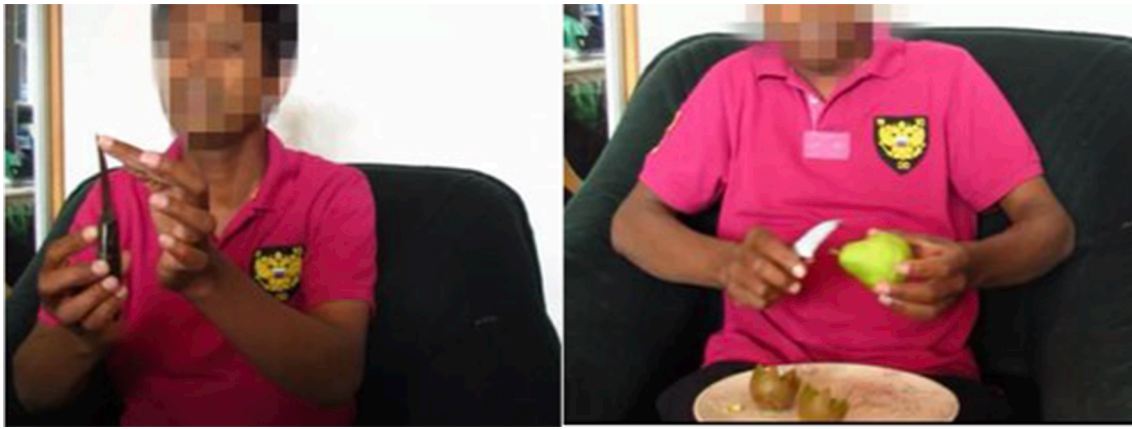
themselves to important aspects of extended family identity, such as indicating their commitment to existing personal routines or agreements to new family traditions. For example, Lalantha (M) explained how important his electronics (TV, surround sound system, DVD player, etc.) are to "*feel comfortable about his own self*" and feel "*less compromised*" in the new extended family. The economic and social biographies (Kopytoff, 1986) of these objects are closely linked to his identity as a "techy" person who enjoys the experience of these new items. Yaromi (wife) embraced these objects and the experience they brought to their home and the meanings they signified as they were assimilated into a new relational routine. The presence of these objects and their intersubjectivities, therefore, bring a sense of continuity for Lalantha. Additionally, Yaromi indicates her consent to a previously individual practice cherished by her husband transforming it into a new shared relational practice.

Electronics carefully placed in Lalantha (M) and Yaromi's (F) living room to facilitate their joint experience.

4.2.3. Dissociating capacity

Dissociating capacity is the ability of domestic materiality to facilitate family members' and their extended families' efforts to move away from aspects of the prior family identity that are incompatible with the new extended family. As disagreements and incompatibilities emerge across different identity groupings within new extended families, the dissociating capacity enables recognition of incompatibility and the means to evolve beyond it. For example, Amil (M), recollected how his wife (Hilmie) told him that he "*must grow out of*" playing a set of drums he had cherished growing up because he was "*not 20 anymore*". It compelled him to first leave the drum set with his parents before getting

rid of it. Conversations with the couple revealed that their joint aspirational social status was incompatible with this consumption practice, yet divestment of the drum set required an intermediate phase. Moving on from the object and its practice signified that an important transition from a "*carefree young adult*" to a "*responsible partner*" had occurred. It also demonstrates "*growing out*" of Amil's teenage adventures, distancing himself from symbolic representations of teenage lifestyle, and moving on to a lifestyle in keeping with his professional identity as a surgeon.

4.2.4. Bridging capacity

Bridging capacity is the ability of domestic materiality to prompt and support a range of different individual, relational, and collective boundary crossing pursuits during extended family formation. Prior literature suggests that marriage into extended families involves a gradual movement from outsider status to family insider; such boundary crossings are deeply anchored in domestic materiality (Fernandez et al., 2011). This transition from outside to inside is a key function of bridging capacity, but not limited to it. We conceptualise bridging as a gradual reconstitution of family structure and character through changing intersubjectivities. For example, Nilan (M) and Uvani (F) preferred a contemporary style in their new home, including bright wall colours and modern furniture items. As a result, Uvani's father reconfigured his dowry giving tradition by offering to buy them new furniture, rather than passing down heirlooms. Although the actual furniture shopping trips included multiple disagreements, especially between Nilan and his father-in-law, they ended up purchasing what they desired and were grateful to their parents. This newly formed intersubjectivity between the new couple and the bride's parents, bridged a boundary between two relational dyads and strengthened their relationships within the extended family.
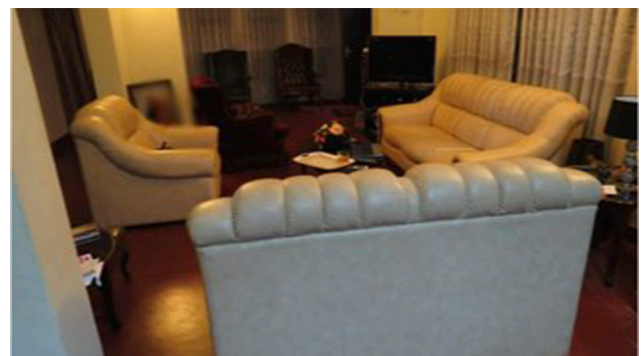
Modern sofa that was purchased and given to Uvani (F) and Nishan (M).

4.3. The role of domestic materiality capacities in extended family identity formation

Responding to RQ2, how do these domestic materiality capacities progress extended family identity negotiations, our framework illustrates that extended family identity construction is achieved through a process of de-stabilisation and reconfiguration of material intersubjectivities. It is through Miller's theorising of materiality (Borgerson, 2009; Miller, 2008), specifically intersubjectivities, that we are able to see both the problem and the solution to reach conflict and tension resolution within extended family identity negotiations. Challenges to existing intersubjectivities arise from experiencing tension which in turn causes destabilisation; intermediating materiality capacities progress and reformulate new intersubjectivities creating an evolved extended family identity. Therefore, destabilisation of material intersubjectivities and consequential emergence of tensions are necessary for the process of identity formulation and intersubjectivities are the lens through which complex extended family identity negotiations can be understood.

Next, we discuss how domestic materiality informs extended family identity negations to reach an evolved state. Table 2 (Refer to Table 2) provides examples of how each couple synthesised a unique concoction of various materiality capacities to negotiate specific tensions and move towards a sense of shared extended family identity.

4.3.1. De-stabilising extended family identity.

Idealistic and temporary intersubjectivities between family members and their material objects underpin manifestations of ideal extended family identity, such as character, structure, and intergenerational relationships. It is these intersubjectivities that become de-stabilised and catalyse the negotiations as the individuals experience the transition to marriage. Both extended (natal and conjugal) families that come together are host to layered family narratives, traditions, and mundane interactions that rely on material objects for meaning. Therefore, it is not just the intersubjectivities of the marrying couple that are challenged, but also those of their extended family members. For example, Mili [F] explains how the biographies of two objects collided after marriage and the disruption caused to everyone's understanding of their extended family identity:

"We had to find space (for my new sofa) by re-arranging some of Jude's parent's things, like the cavicci set (antique sofa). We moved it to the back of the living room… thought it was alright if we kept the new sofa by the television at the centre of the living room. They (his parents) did not say anything at the time, in fact his mother said it looked nice…We came two weeks later and the old cavicci was back in the centre… Said she (mother-in-law) was cleaning the house and was too tired to move it back…We re-arranged, thinking we were helping…It happened again few weeks later and she said that some of her relatives visited and it was better to keep the cavicci where they can see… there is past to these things… Some of these things came here even before Jude was born. Especially, the cavicci was their (parents') wedding gift" – Mili.

The biography of the cavicci is tightly entwined around the generational experience of Jude's extended family. It is a sacred symbolic resource (Belk, Wallendorf, & Sherry, 1989) that links multiple family generations and helps them to construct and communicate family prestige. As Jude (M) elaborates, the cavicci anchors an important family narrative (Epp & Price, 2008) connecting parents to grandparents, thus, materialising a sense of intergenerational continuity (Curasi et al., 2004). He was *"obligated to protect and care for it"* during everyday family life, however, he became more open to re-considering its role in the new family after marriage. It may be an indispensable object for his parents and other older members of his extended family, but not an automatic inclusion for Jude in his new family's material composition and their progress towards a new family identity.

Each de-stabilisation of initial intersubjectivities identified within our data, compel family members to re-consider layered and hierarchical compositions of their extended family identity, thereby questioning existing relationships and constitutions of power between family members. Each process is unique, yet the dynamic processes through the lens of intersubjectivities remain constant as explicated by Ushi (F) and Samar (M):

"My grandfather was a well-respected village doctor. This is his (an ayurvedic papyrus) and I remember he used to read and write things down from it when prescribing medicine…But his (Samar's) mother doesn't see its value and I cannot keep it here the way I want, the way it supposed to…We spoke about moving out so it is just us… When we build our house, I will display it in the living room for everyone to see…" – Ushi.

Although the biography of the papyrus embodies her natal extended family identity, its sacralised status is contested in the conjugal family. It symbolises Ushi's strong respect for her grandfather. Envisioning its incorporation in her future home brings a sense of continuity to her grandfather's position in the family, therefore, allowing the deceased family member to remain a key part of new family narratives. However, the mother-in-law's distaste of such "*old things*" is a threat to Ushi's sense of continuity. Consequently, Ushi considers moving out to form a stronger and more independent relational dyad between herself and her husband, minimising the intergenerational power of the mother-in-law. Also, Samar opines that he *"values rich Sinhalese history"* and "*the magical healing powers of ancient Ayurveda*". Growing up in a "*practical family that could afford only the necessary things"*, Samar (M) recognises the tapestry of meanings that the papyrus emblematises. The cultural biography of the papyrus embodies sacred, "*magic from the past*". His beliefs privilege a new shared nuclear-relational identity between himself and his wife and distance himself from his mother's perception of the object. But it also creates an extended level family constraint. Such discord questions family membership commitments, the status of family members and the significance of their symbolic objects in the new family, resulting in tensions that need to be addressed and resolved in the process of identity formation.

In summary, as material intersubjectivities are de-stabilised, the position of existing structural formulations and power hierarchies between relational and collective family members are questioned. Also, a range of family character attributes become un-anchored, allowing families to present their past and reconsider representations of their futures in new ways. Relationship tensions emerge as family members experience de-stabilising intersubjectivities and realise the contingent nature of materiality underpinning their sense of extended family identity.

4.3.2. Re-configuration of extended family identity

We suggest that the four domestic materiality capacities identified in our research help us understand how extended families address tensions in their relationships. Emergent family tensions are inevitable as new intersubjectivities are negotiated and the development of an extended family identity is achieved. For example, Shani's (F) parents left her a collection of wine glasses and some furniture items when they migrated to United States. She could not provide those items with a home but his fiancé, Hem (M), recognised the importance of these items for her and offered to keep them in his home. This action brought the couple together and strengthened his position in the new extended family:

"Most of those were her father's…They had some furniture items and a collection of wine glasses…They asked some of their relatives first but maybe they didn't see much value…For me it wasn't about the price worth. I knew they were important to her (Shani)… When her parents were leaving the country, they asked me if I could keep those. The thing is, at the time we were just dating. Everyone knew about us, but the parents had not officially met to discuss marriage and match our horoscopes and all. I knew that keeping her furniture will take our relationship to the next level. You do not give your family heirlooms away to just anybody. It was like her parents giving me their approval, unofficially…" – Hem (Male).

As prior research suggests (e.g. Fernandez et al., 2011), materiality of the objects enabled Hem to bridge from being an 'outsider' to an

'insider'. The intergenerational transferring of the objects' guardianship (Curasi et al., 2004) to Hem reformed the existing intersubjectivity between the objects and Shani's extended family members. Duties of this object guardianship involved displaying them in a *"more visible space"* and keeping them in *"a dust free and clean state"*. Previously, Hem had not afforded his furniture significant care, so Shani began to visit his house regularly to help him with the expected care-taking routine for her family heirlooms. It is this reformation of the material intersubjectivity that actually enabled traversing of family boundaries and Hem to become an insider member of the extended family.

It is not customary in Sri Lankan tradition for a new couple to visit each other's residence alone before marriage (De Munck, 1998). However, Shani's and Hem's newly formed everyday interaction was positively viewed in their extended family because it represented thoughtful caretaking of valued family possessions. Entrusting Hem with this caretaking role introduced a new layer of relational identity narrative and extended family boundaries to include revised values, cultural traditions, membership hierarchies and commitments. Thus, the strength of the objects' materiality enabled the couple to legitimately navigate a traditionally unacceptable behaviour.

As discussed earlier in this section, materiality capacities can bond family members and sensitise them to become comfortable with the expectations of a new extended family. As part of the process of family assimilation beyond the negotiations of individuals, the two extended families must also find ways to come together. Successful merging of two extended families into one large family unit communicates a united and desirable "family face", particularly in a Sri Lankan social context (Liyanage, 2010). Collective togetherness is considered a source of family pride, which can simultaneously cause private family tensions during marriage transitions. For example, Romesh (M) was gifted an antique table by his parents when he moved into Lakisha's (F) extended family home. Yet there was already a table in the home belonging to Lakisha's father. The situation caused tensions to emerge in the extended family, eroding relationships between extended family members:

"We tried to sell my father's table, so we have space for his (Romesh's)… My father's aunt was upset about us trying to sell the table…Ramesh also had to bring it because his parents gave it to him…then one of my uncles, who is nicer, asked to take my father's table. He knew the position that we were in… My father never said anything, he is not like that, but his (Romesh's) mother asked why he is not taking it… I didn't want to be in the middle of it… But my uncle saved us. It could have been bad; you know how parents and relatives start…" – Lakisha (F).

On one hand, the continuity of rich family ancestry was important at the relational level to Romesh (M) and Lakisha (F). Compared to Romesh's table, Lakisha's father's table does not have the same rich cultural connotations, although it has been in the family for a long time and symbolises family experience. While the biographies of the two objects are in opposition, Romesh's antique table has greater synergy with the couples' sense of family identity. Objections from the extended family constrained their preferred course of action whilst creating relational tensions between the couple and the aunt. Not bringing the table to the new extended family home also created relational tensions across extended families connecting Romesh's mother and Lakisha's aunt. Another relational intervention from her uncle brought a resolution to this family tension, initiating a fresh dyadic and collective engagement between different sub-groupings of the extended family. The relational level support from their uncle enabled them to pursue a family character acceptable to everyone and bridge family discord across extended families.

4.4. Matured materiality and formation of evolving extended family identity

Extended family identity becomes increasingly anchored as matured intersubjectivities develop between family members and their possessions. These matured intersubjectivities are the result of an organic and dynamic process of meaning assimilation and the de-stabilisation and re-configuration that accompany the transition to newly configured family identity. Changes to these intersubjectivities can be challenging as some members re-negotiate their roles within the family and others re-consider their changing status. Also, material objects may receive novel meanings as they become important family identity symbols whilst other previously meaningful objects are discarded. Families may innovate new material practices around objects, adding to their existing social biographies and giving them legitimacy to remain part of new extended family. As illustrated in Fig. 1, some intersubjectivities (a) remain equally important to the new couple and their extended family (a'). They continue to produce a strong gravitational pull tying important material objects to family members and extended family identity. For example, the intersubjectivities that involved Shani (F), Hem (M), her parents and their cherished possessions, became a powerful binding force that transformed Hem (M) into a legitimate caretaking insider within the family whilst repositioning her father as a key family figure within the new family structure. The importance and strength of these intersubjectivities shaped relationships between the new couple and their parents.

However, some initial intersubjectivities connecting material object and family members (b and c) may alter during de-stabilisation and re-configuration (represented by intersubjectivities b' and c'). For example, although family meal preparation was an undesirable practice to Ushi (F) before marriage, family tradition necessitated her to gradually become accomplished over time, therefore, strengthening her relationship with her mother-in-law and creating a new relational layer that is privileged in her new family identity. Also, the intersubjectivity linking Ushi, her mother-in-law and materiality of meal preparation made her an essential part of the intergenerational continuity of her new extended family identity. Thus, matured materiality may not seem to be an ideal outcome for every family member at the onset. However, changes to intersubjectivities help to bring empathy, understanding, and unity, thus reducing tensions in family relationships and contributing to the construction of a shared extended family identity.

5. Conclusions

5.1. Contributions to research and managerial implications

The purpose of this study was to investigate the ways in which extended family identity is constructed during times of transition, such as marriage. In particular, we were concerned with the role that domestic materiality played in constructing an identity for extended families and the negotiations and capacities necessary to achieve it. Our first research question investigated the type of domestic materiality capacities that aid extended family formation, whilst the second explored how those capacities contributed to resolving the tensions accompanying the formation of the new extended family identity. Therefore, our contribution is one of progressive coherence, defined by Locke and Gold-Biddle (1997) as cumulative progress beyond existing knowledge, specifically by identifying and explaining the exponential complexity between domestic materiality and family identity in extended families. In doing so, our research contributes to family identity and domestic materiality literature in four important ways. Firstly, we identify and provide empirical support for a framework that comprises four agentic properties of material capacities that exist between extended family members and their material objects: catalysing, associating, dissociating, and bridging. Prior literature establishes that transitions such as marriage can disrupt existing and established family identities and produce significant tensions as family members re-negotiate their roles (Hopkins et al., 2006; Hill, 1991; Hetherington, 1989), responsibilities, and status in the newly forming extended family relationship (Edirisingha et al., 2018, 2015; Fernandez et al., 2011; Hannah, 1991). (When confronted with such tensions during transitions, material objects

can bring a sense of continuity (Curasi et al., 2004) and stability to extended families (Mehta & Belk, 1991). As illustrated in Table 2 (Refer to Table 2), our findings extend this understanding of family by showing how extended families rely on a unique mix of materiality capacities to negotiate tensions and re-construct sense of family identity within newly forming and dynamically constituted relationships.

Secondly, our findings demonstrate the importance of domestic materiality (Miller, 2008; Borgerson, 2009) and its role in reformulating intersubjectivities as a means of conceptualising extended family identity complexity that is hinted in prior literature (Lien et al., 2018; Fernandez et al., 2011; Hannah, 1991). We demonstrate this by using a lens of materiality (Miller, 2008; Borgerson, 2009) to understand the nature and role of intersubjectivities and provide a framework that comprises the stages through which these intersubjectivities are enacted. We contend the competing intersubjectivities that Miller (2008) identifies as central to emergence as well as resolution of extended family tensions. It is the process of remaking those material intersubjectivities and reflectively negotiating their hierarchical interplays through our materiality capacities that the extended family identity is formed. As our framework demonstrates these materiality intersubjectivities cause tensions in extended family relationships by de-stabilising existing intersubjectivities between family members and their material possessions. This de-stabilisation can question and invalidate existing structural formulations, challenge character priorities, and blur generational orientations, consequently producing tensions between family members. However, our findings also suggest that the materiality capacities are central to addressing these tensions by enabling and then anchoring complex re-configurations of changing intersubjectivities, helping family members move away from their naïve expectations and form a more stable and consensual family identity. In demonstrating how domestic materiality capacities and intersubjectivities illuminate, address, and mediate tension negotiations in extended family identity development, we further Epp and Price's (2008; 2010) work on nuclear family identity and show how the processes involved in the re-formulation of extended family identities are exponentially more complex. Although the narrative structure of our data replicates similar dynamics found in Hurdley's (2013) analysis of biographical narratives through mantlepiece objects and Holmes' (2018) classification of how objects are inscribed with kinship, our four intermediating materiality capacities provides progressive coherence beyond previous knowledge by identifying the complex interplays that are essential to the formation of new family identities. More importantly, we suggest, how the negotiations engendered by material intersubjectivities provide a sense of connection with a particular past, a dynamic continuity with the present, and, as a result of the meanings embedded in material objects following their re-negotiation, now become a conduit to the future.

Thirdly, a further contribution is the recognition that, contrary to naïve assumptions, the dynamic tensions that arise from competing intersubjectivities are an inevitable, and we contend, a necessary part of extended family identity formation. It is also important to note that while the negotiations often start from differential positions of status and authority, their resolution leads to a recognition and acceptance of the changing nature of the new and emerging extended family identity. Importantly, our research also suggests that this process of identification and resolution is anchored in domestic materiality and enables an equalisation of status in relation to the formation of a new identity. That is, the power relations that motivate the negotiations are themselves re-configured as family members either assert or forgo their position in the dynamic emergence of a new family identity.

In summary, prior research establishes that hierarchies in family membership, synergies, discord, agreements, changes to family rituals, traditions, and symbolic resources contribute to family consumption and decision-making (Epp & Price, 2008; 2010). From an extended family perspective, our findings show that materiality capacities both trigger such discords and misalignments during periods of de-stabilisation as well as encouraging the synergies that are necessary to establish and

anchor new meanings and significance. While the focus of the study has been largely on the role of existing material possessions and their relationships to family members, the findings suggest that future consumption decisions will be informed by the experiences of the negotiated nature of materiality. Thus, material capacities and the extended family decision-making are tightly interwoven and contribute to the resolution of tensions as meaning systems collide or conform. However, as families navigate these tensions and construct a sense of stability, joint and collective decisions made in different identity groupings become normative. In addition, individual-centric decisions also become contextualised within relational and collective interplays within extended families. Therefore, materiality capacities contribute to the constitution of new decision-making groupings as well as the continuity and discontinuity of existing ones. Such harmony and unity within extended family relations are essential to the continuity of cultural mentorship and patriarchal roles within extended families (Lien et al., 2018). Findings in this research show that material capacities are key to the emergence of these harmonious relationships as they bring member agreement to cultural obligations and prescriptions, whilst facilitating decision-making within and across family generations.

5.2. Research limitations and directions for future research

This research uses the context of marriage to understand the role of materiality as two individuals and their extended families (natal and conjugal) come together in a transitional process of integration. Our process shows how matured expectations anchored in domestic materiality alleviate extended family tensions by bringing a sense of agreement, adaptability, and synergy to the process of identity development. Further research could investigate how these material capacities playout in subsequent family transitions such as the arrival of children or the passing of a family member. We also emphasise that the role of materiality capacities could be central to navigating extended family transitions encompassing different cultural contexts and different social groupings. Whilst not the focus of this research, our data hints at disruptions to extended family identity when one of its nuclear or relational-level subgroups migrate to a different cultural context. Maintaining some sense of extended family identity and attending familial obligations are still imperative to families even when they are geographically dispersed (Wamwara-Mbugua, 2012). But how do macro level cultural discourses that are different to the home culture challenge the ebb and flow of extended family identity groupings and the continuity of sense of family in such situations? Future research could explore the role of domestic materiality in understanding how such dispersed families create a sense of home and acculturate into a new cultural context. In addition, our findings concur existing research on extended family arguing for exponential complexity of extended family identity (Deanhu et al., 2014; Lien et al., 2018). For example, our findings elucidate that relational identity interactions between extended family members could be further layered into hierarchical orbits around a highly fluid nucleus family identity, therefore, signifying the value of less significant family identity elements at times whilst propelling the same identity elements to the periphery of significance in other times. However, we did not set out to theorise extended family identity yet appreciating how domestic materiality is central to formation of it revealed such inherent complexity. Therefore, future research could further theorise this exponential complexity of the extended family identity structure, character, and generation orientation. Finally, given the importance of intergenerational influence on, and involvement in, the process of identity formation, it is important to understand how participants perceive the changing nature of power, authority, and status as a result of this process and how they negotiate their role in their on-going family relationships.

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Prabash Edirisingha: . **Robert Aitken:** Writing – review & editing,

Writing – original draft, Conceptualization. **Shelagh Ferguson:** Conceptualization, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing.

Declaration of Competing Interest

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Robert Aitken Rob is an associate professor and head of the department of marketing at University of Otago Business School. His current research focuses on marketing to children, sustainability and consumption, and place branding. He is also interested in culture and identity, ideology and hegemony, audience theory, symbolic consumption, popular culture, not-for-profit business, social marketing and service dominant logic.

Shelagh Ferguson Shelagh is a senior lecturer at the University of Otago Business School. Her current research is about bringing the everyday fabric of our lives into sharp perspective to challenge and critically review our collective and individual marketplace practices. She believes that If we can see clearly how and why we act as we do in the marketplace, then we collectively and individually can make informed decisions regarding our agency and be smarter consumers for the benefit of ourselves and society.

Prabash Edirisingha Prabash is a constructivist who is interested in understanding consumers' lived experience and how they make sense of their lives through consumption. He is an interpretivist whose current research looks into various areas of family consumption such as family identity, smart homes, and family migration and acculturation. His other research investigates masculine representations and fathering in contemporary consumer culture.