

科学研究費助成事業 研究成果報告書

令和 5 年 6 月 26 日現在

機関番号：14301
研究種目：若手研究
研究期間：2020～2022
課題番号：20K13589
研究課題名（和文）Implications of Bridge Individuals and Bridging Roles for Headquarter-Subsidiary Relationships: a Mixed Method Empirical Study of Multinational Companies
研究課題名（英文）Implications of Bridge Individuals and Bridging Roles for Headquarter-Subsidiary Relationships: a Mixed Method Empirical Study of Multinational Companies
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交付決定額（研究期間全体）：（直接経費） 3,300,000円

研究成果の概要（和文）：この研究プロジェクトは、ミックスメソッドを用い、質的研究と量的研究の両方を取り入れ、多国籍企業の本社と子会社間の人間関係や外国子会社でのバウンダリースパニング活動に焦点を当て、駐在員のバウンダリースパニング活動とそれに伴うダブルエッジ効果に関する新しい理論的枠組みを開発し、検証した。本研究におけるコンテキスト固有のアプローチは、既存のバウンダリースパニングの文献に貢献した。研究成果は国内外の主要な学会で発表した上で、国際経営におけるトップジャーナルに投稿した。

研究成果の学術的意義や社会的意義

このプロジェクトは、駐在員のバウンダリースパニングがもたらすプラスとマイナスの効果に関する新しい理論的枠組みを開発し、実証的に検証した。また、バウンダリースパニング活動を行う駐在員やグローバル人材を採用する際の実践的な指針を提供している。多国籍企業は、バウンダリースパニングのポジティブとネガティブな効果を考慮し、利益を最大化すると同時に負の影響を最小限に抑えるための政策を実施する必要がある。

研究成果の概要（英文）：This research project employed a mixed-method approach, including a qualitative explorative study and a quantitative theory-testing study, to investigate expatriates' boundary spanning activities and their implications for interpersonal relationships in foreign subsidiaries and between headquarter and subsidiary relationships of multinational companies. The project developed and validated a novel theoretical framework on the double-edged effects of expatriates' boundary spanning in the global context, specifically in the context of MNCs, foreign subsidiaries, and expatriate-host-country employee interactions. This context-specific approach contributes to the existing boundary spanning literature. Main findings from this research project have been presented at several international and domestic academic conferences and submitted to top academic journals.

研究分野：国際人的資源管理論・組織行動論

キーワード：multinational companies boundary spanning expatriates cross-cultural research mixed-method approach

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様式 C - 19、F - 19 - 1、Z - 19 (共通)

1. 研究開始当初の背景

Multinational companies (MNCs) face the challenge of developing a consistent corporate strategy across all foreign subsidiaries while maintaining local distinctiveness, which is difficult due to vast differences in languages, cultures, behavioral norms, economics, and political states worldwide. Neglecting these differences significantly impairs knowledge flow in MNCs, requiring boundary-spanning activities within and between subsidiaries, as well as between headquarters (HQs) and foreign subsidiaries. Expatriates are a common type of globally mobile employee relied on by MNCs to execute boundary-spanning activities, operating across complex inter and intraorganizational, sociocultural, and geographic boundaries through different channels. Expatriates are labeled as boundary spanners, bridge individuals, bridge builders, multicultural brokers, and language nodes, making them indispensable for the effective functioning of MNCs. Existing work has focused on the positive effects of boundary spanning, such as improving knowledge flow and enhancing global integration effectiveness.

2. 研究の目的

The research purpose is to address the gaps in the existing literature regarding boundary-spanning activities and their consequences in multinational companies. Specifically, this project aims to examine the nature of expatriates' boundary-spanning activities and their positive and negative effects within MNCs, which have not been fully understood or analyzed. By doing so, this project will provide a better understanding of the role and impact of expatriates in boundary-spanning activities and offer practical implications for MNCs to maximize the benefits and minimize the negative consequences of such activities.

3. 研究の方法

This project adopts a mixed-method research design, utilizing both qualitative and quantitative research methods, to explore the relationship between expatriates' boundary-spanning activities and their positive and negative effects in MNCs, while also expanding the existing conceptualization of boundary spanning. For the qualitative component, this project team interviewed 38 expatriates and 22 host-country employees across 13 Japanese subsidiaries of various parent companies. Based on the findings, this project identified three types of boundary spanning among expatriates: functional, linguistic, and cultural. This project also identified additional concepts and their interrelationships, which enabled the development of a theoretical framework and proposition development. To test the framework, this project utilized a two-wave survey project involving 177 pairs of expatriates and host-country coworkers to investigate expatriates' boundary-spanning activities and their double-edged effects.

4. 研究成果

(1) Identifying specific types of expatriates' boundary spanning.

This project has allowed us to categorize expatriates' boundary spanning into three distinct types: functional, linguistic, and cultural. This categorization enables a better understanding of the cognitive and time demands associated with each type and highlights the double-edged effects that arise from these boundary-spanning activities. The theoretical significance lies in the fact that these three types encompass different levels of depth, depending on the knowledge and skills involved. Functional boundary spanning primarily relies on explicit knowledge, such as discussions regarding the adoption of specific practices. In contrast, cultural boundary spanning draws more on tacit knowledge, necessitating deeper interpersonal relationships within the subsidiary to facilitate successful information transfer and mutual cultural understanding. Linguistic boundary spanning, falling between functional and cultural boundary spanning, is influenced by the implicit or explicit language policies and practices within MNCs. In language-diverse environments, expatriates and others engage in behaviors like

translating and language switching, enabling them to overcome certain language barriers. By recognizing these distinct types of boundary spanning and their varying levels of depth, we gain valuable insights into the intricacies of expatriate roles and their impacts on organizational dynamics.

(2) Understanding the positive and negative effects of expatriates' boundary spanning.

This project has developed and empirically validated a novel theoretical framework on the double-edged effects of expatriates' boundary spanning. Our research reveals that these activities can result in both positive and negative outcomes. On the positive side, they foster mutual trust and organizational identification. However, they can also lead to negative effects such as role stressors, emotional exhaustion, and outgroup categorization. Furthermore, our project highlights that different types of boundary-spanning behaviors have distinct effects on mutual trust and role stressors. Firstly, we found that cultural boundary spanning exhibits the strongest association with both positive and negative consequences, indicating a significant double-edged effect. Secondly, functional boundary spanning demonstrated asymmetrical positive and negative effects compared to cultural and linguistic types. Lastly, our findings indicate that the double-edged effect of linguistic boundary spanning is relatively weaker when compared to functional and cultural boundary spanning. This finding is counterintuitive considering that language is often extensively discussed in international business research.

(3) Highlighting the relational consequences of expatriates' boundary spanning.

This project provides valuable insights into the complex dynamics of interpersonal relationships between expatriates and host-country employees within MNCs, focusing on mutual trust, intergroup relations, and organizational identification. Firstly, our findings align with existing trust literature, highlighting the role of emotional bonding and job interdependence in trust formation. We reveal that different types of expatriates' boundary-spanning activities have varying effects on dimensions of mutual trust. Functional boundary spanning tends to foster cognition-based trust, while cultural and linguistic boundary spanning are more likely to generate affect-based trust. This sheds light on trust formation within the specific context of boundary spanning in MNCs.

Secondly, our study delves into the complex nature of intergroup relations between expatriates and host-country employees. Despite positive interpersonal bonds between expatriates and their host-country coworkers, we observe that expatriates experiencing role stressors and emotional exhaustion tend to rely on and cooperate more with their in-group (e.g., other expatriates) to solve problems. This can inadvertently lead to potential outgroup categorization by the host-country employees, highlighting a discontinuity effect between intergroup and interpersonal behaviors. This understanding contributes to the dynamics of relations experienced by globally mobile employees.

Thirdly, our research extends the exploration of organizational identification within the MNC context by examining how expatriates and host-country employees develop their identification with subsidiaries and MNCs through interpersonal interactions. Overall, our study underscores the importance of relationships in the global work environment and their influence on individual and group interactions, emphasizing the relational outcomes of expatriates' boundary spanning.

In conclusion, the field of international business is diverse and draws from various disciplines, encompassing a wide range of content and research methods. In line with this perspective, our study took a mixed-method approach to develop and validate a unique theoretical framework that examines the double-edged effects of expatriates' boundary spanning in a global context. This framework explores the characteristics of expatriates' boundary-spanning activities and explains both the positive and negative outcomes through interpersonal interactions. It specifically focuses on the context of MNCs, foreign subsidiaries, and the interactions between expatriates and host-country employees. By doing so, our study provides context-specific insights that contribute to the literature on boundary spanning. By targeting expatriates, our research takes

an important step in opening a new avenue of investigation into globally mobile individuals, their boundary-spanning activities, and their influence on host-country employees in MNCs.

5. 主な発表論文等

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〔図書〕 計0件

〔産業財産権〕

〔その他〕

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6. 研究組織

氏名 (ローマ字氏名) (研究者番号)	所属研究機関・部局・職 (機関番号)	備考

7. 科研費を使用して開催した国際研究集会

〔国際研究集会〕 計0件

8. 本研究に関連して実施した国際共同研究の実施状況

共同研究相手国	相手方研究機関			
中国	湖南大学			
中国	華東師範大学			
ドイツ	Leuphana University			
デンマーク	Aarhus University			
英国	Loughborough University London			
中国	同済大学			
シンガポール	シンガポール国立大学			