

Role Stress of Local Japanese Staff in Japanese Companies in Australia

Kazue Okamoto

School of Languages and Linguistics, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia

Email: k.okamoto@unsw.edu.au

Associate Professor Stephen Teo

School of Management University of Technology Sydney, Australia

Email: Stephen.teo@uts.edu.au

Preferred Streams:

1. Stream 5: International Management
2. Stream 4: Human Resource Management and Development
3. Stream 11: Organisational Behaviour

Profile:

Kazue Okamoto's research focuses on Intercultural Management and Japanese management in overseas Japanese companies. Her doctoral research examines the challenges in achieving an integrative approach to people management in Japanese companies in Australia. She is also a lecturer in Japanese.

Associate Professor Stephen Teo researches and teaches in HRM and International HRM where he has published in several national and international refereed journals. He is the current Co-Program Chair of the Public and Nonprofit Division of the US Academy of Management.

Role Stress of Local Japanese Staff in Japanese Companies in Australia

ABSTRACT *This paper reports the findings from a qualitative study which investigates the level of work attitude and role stress (role ambiguity and role conflict) experienced by local hired Japanese staff in Japanese companies in Australia. The findings revealed that work attitudes of local hired Japanese staff were similar to those of employees in Japan. Role stress experiences of local hired Japanese staff refer to dissatisfaction with both Japanese expatriate staff and non-Japanese local staff. Three sources of their role stress experiences were also identified. These were lack of English language competence, source of recruitment, and cultural background. Each source is related to a particular type of role stress.*

Keywords:

Cross Cultural Management, Japanese Management, Australia, Perceived role stress, Expatriate management

In conjunction with increasing globalization, the number of Japanese living overseas has grown exponentially reaching one million for the first time in 2005 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan 2006a). Among the numerous countries where Japanese reside, Australia is the fifth most popular country (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan 2006b). As of January 2006, more than 52,000 Japanese were living in Australia (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan 2006b). However, on-line search on full-text databases (e.g. ABI/INFORM Global, Proquest Asian Business and Reference, Social Sciences Index, Business Source Premier, Business Periodicals Index, Omni File Full Text Mega) on 23 September 2007 did not identify any studies which examine the work-stress experience of local hired Japanese staff in overseas Japanese companies.¹ The current study, therefore, focuses on local hired Japanese staff in relation to their work attitudes and their role stress.

PROBLEMS OF LOCAL STAFF IN OVERSEAS JAPANESE COMPANIES

The management of white collar staff in overseas Japanese companies offers many challenges (e.g. Shimada 1998; Taga 2004; Yoshihara 2001). For example, communication is one of the commonly challenges identified in the literature (e.g. Bamber, Shadur & Howell 1992; Byun & Ybema 2005; Tokusei 1994). Local managers find that explanation or instructions provided by Japanese managers are frequently imprecise, abstruse or ambiguous (Shimada 1998). This communication problem gives rise to lack of clarity (Shimada 1998), communication (Takeuchi, Yun & Russell 2002), and information about company's corporate plan and policies (Bamber et al. 1992). The lack of clarity, communication, and information are key components of role ambiguity (Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn & Snoek 1964; Katz & Kahn 1978). Hence, the communication problems are directly related to role ambiguity.

¹ We searched the databases using the following key words: 'local hired Japanese' and 'management'. There were only three entries. The three entries were all published in the same journal. However, they did not examine the work related stress experience of local hired Japanese staff in overseas Japanese companies.

The expectation of job flexibilities by Japanese expatriates of local staff is another problem identified in the literature. This is related to tacit expectations (Ishida 1985) and strong interdependency between superior and subordinate in Japanese companies in Japan (Haitani 1990; Naylor 2000). The relationship is often compared to that between a mother and a child, and is referred to as '*amae*' (strong dependency) by Doi (1989). It brings advantages for both parties such as receiving help or favorable treatment (Yoshimura & Anderson 1997). Employee makes great effort trying to do his/her best and being patient expecting that these efforts and behaviors would be compensated by better career opportunities and salary increases (Rice 1986). In Japanese companies in Japan, job distribution is unclear, and heavy reliance is placed on implicit rules (e.g. Hayashi 1996; Shimada 1998). Ishida (1994) claims that there are broad or shared duties in which peers, senior staff, or groups participate. This requires a high level of flexibility. In contrast, the duties of staff members are explicitly described in Western companies, and there is a clear demarcation of duties (Ishida 1994). The broad or shared duties found in Japanese companies are thus ambiguous for Western staff, and they do not recognize that they are expected to carry out those broad duties. The job flexibility also includes overtime, and Japanese managers expect a work environment where employees routinely work longer hours (Byun & Ybema 2005). When non-Japanese local staff members of overseas Japanese companies refuse to undertake duties not described in their job description and leave work at the prescribed work completion time, Japanese managers are dissatisfied with their 'nine to five' mentality (Byun & Ybema 2005). Job flexibility is thus elusive and ambiguous matters for non-Japanese local staff. Ambiguity and uncertainty are the central themes of role ambiguity (Hardy 1978), and their experience is directly related to role ambiguity. If local hired Japanese staff in overseas Japanese companies have work experience in Japan, then, they are likely to understand the tacit expectations placed on them by their superiors (Ishida 1985). They would also understand how they should be engaged in the broad or shared duties (Ishida 1994). Thus they may be demonstrating a high level of the job flexibility commonly found in Japanese companies in Japan.

Non-Japanese local staff are dissatisfied with an insufficient level of participation in sharing information and consequently they feel alienated (Bamber et al. 1992; Lincoln, Kerbo & Wittenhagen 1995; Yamanaka 1991). Similarly, in the decision making process, the level of participation by local staff is low leading to feelings of estrangement and frustration (Yamanaka 1991). Head Office exerts a strong control over a local office (Bamber et al. 1992; Lincoln et al. 1995), and Head Office in Japan relies heavily on expatriates to manage overseas subsidiaries and dependence on local staff is regarded as of much less consequence from the perspective of both Japanese expatriates and Head Office (Chung, Gibbons & Schoch 2006; Taga 2004; Yoshihara 2001). Ishida (1988) explains that a good understanding of the company's corporate culture, Japanese culture and language are essential for local staff to receive reliance by Head Office. Haitani (1990), on the other hand, argues that the source of recruitment of staff in terms of whether they are employed by Head Office or not, equates to the level to which Head Office

is prepared to depend on them. Japanese expatriate staff possesses a great deal of knowledge about the company, its people, and corporate culture. They are, therefore, regarded as members of the corporate family. Local staff are not considered to be members of the corporate family but members of their offshore office, so that they are discriminated against (Haitani 1990). Local staff, therefore, experience feelings of inferiority under Japanese ways of managing local staff (Haitani 1990). Their lack of participation indicates expectations between Japanese expatriate staff and local staff towards one another do not meet. Unmet expectation between role sender and focal person is defined as role conflict (Kahn et al. 1964; Katz & Kahn 1978). Thus local staff's experiences in their insufficient participation in sharing information and decision making are connected to role conflict (Kahn et al. 1964; Katz & Kahn 1978).

ROLE STRESS

Role Theory examines role stress which is composed of two constructs, role ambiguity and role conflict (Kahn et al. 1964; Katz & Kahn 1978). Role ambiguity is defined as uncertainty in relation to one's role (Katz & Kahn 1978; King & King 1990; Singh & Rhoades 1991) and lack of information or clarity (Kahn et al. 1964; Katz & Kahn 1978; Shenkar & Zeira 1992). Role conflict is defined as incompatible expectations between role sender and focal person (e.g. Dubinsky, Kotabe, Lim, Michaels & Moon 1992; Katz & Kahn 1978). Role stress examines role occupant's subjective feelings and assists understanding patterns of behavior within given contexts (Katz & Kahn 1978). Exploring the extent of role stress of local hired Japanese staff enables us to understand their behaviors.

In the case of local hired Japanese staff in overseas Japanese companies, they share the same cultural background with Japanese expatriate staff. The only difference is in terms of source of recruitment (Head Office versus Subsidiary). Local hired Japanese and non-Japanese local staff are the same in terms of being a locally hired staff, and yet different in terms of cultural background.

There has been an abundance of studies applying Role Theory to organization studies. The majority have been conducted in a mono-cultural context (Kahn et al. 1964; Siegall 1992). Only a small number of studies apply Role Theory to an international and intercultural context (Peterson et al. 1995; Shenkar & Zeira 1992), little is known about role stress in these situations. In particular, there is little research on whether expatriates and locally hired parent country nations (that is local hired Japanese staff) experience similar or different role stress. Hence, the following research question is set.

Research Question: What is the perceived role stress (role ambiguity and role conflict) experienced by local hired Japanese staff working for Japanese companies in Australia?

METHODS

The current study explores role stress (role ambiguity and role conflict) experienced by local hired Japanese staff working in Japanese companies in Australia. A descriptive and exploratory approach is required to answer the research problem, and a qualitative approach has been selected. Data were collected from multiple sources including in-depth interviews, documentation, archival records, direct observation, and field notes. This is to assist in expanding evidence and corroboration and to increase reliability and validity (Yin 1994). Counting the number of phenomena is an effective way of verifying a hypothesis and reducing researcher bias (Miles & Huberman 1994: 215-216). This study employs this approach where an analysis of data includes counting the frequency of text segments under the code and making comparisons.

The current study forms part of a larger project which examines the role stress of Japanese and non-Japanese staff in Japanese companies in Australia. We interviewed 14 local hired Japanese staff in Japanese companies in Australia. Among them, three held managerial position and they were all male. The rest of local hired Japanese staff were of non-managerial position. Local hired Japanese staff were all born, brought up, and educated in Japan. They also had work experience in both Japan and Australia, and they were familiar with Japanese corporate life.

FINDINGS

This study identified both role ambiguity and role conflict experienced by local hired Japanese staff. They experience two types of role ambiguity. The first type involves insufficient English competence. It is about their lack of English competence hindering understanding between non-Japanese local staff and Japanese staff. Local hired Japanese staff acknowledged the difficulties inherent in communicating in English, with one out of two (51 percent) admitting they have insufficient competence in English. Non-Japanese local staff likewise acknowledged the problem, in particular, 40 percent of non-Japanese local manager experienced communication difficulties due to the language barrier. In relation to the language problem in communicating with non-Japanese local staff, communication difficulties due to lack of understanding about host country culture were not expressed by local hired Japanese staff.

At first, there is a language problem. Even when we have some idea in our head that we want to do something in such and such a manner, we can't describe them all clearly, so it is misleading for them [non-Japanese local staff].

(Local hired Japanese Employee: ONAB, Date: 26/10/2001)

The second type of role ambiguity is about information shortage. It involves local staff failing to receive sufficient information from Japanese expatriate staff. This resulted in feelings of unrest, annoyance, and uncertainty among local hired Japanese staff. The results found that 35.7 percent of local hired Japanese staff were dissatisfied with the level of information they received. Correspondingly, approximately 55

percent of Japanese expatriate staff acknowledged the lower level of information sharing with staff in Australia. Furthermore, nearly 33 percent of Japanese expatriate staff mentioned their own hesitation in providing information, especially important information, to local staff (non-Japanese and Japanese). The reason of the hesitation was Japanese expatriate staff's fear that local staff would 'leak' company information to outsiders. The reason was related to the high turnover of local staff, as illustrated by the following comment made by a Japanese expatriate staff.

Of course, there is information we cannot disclose [to local staff] in the company. But the balance sheet is different. It is created by our local staff, so when they see it, they know it all, so we don't have anything to hide in this sense. But when it comes to information like what people in Head Office are thinking about this company [in Australia], we don't tell them. Because it involves our company's future, it may create unrest [among local staff]. Also, if they [local staff] leak it to other companies, it may cause us problems.

(Japanese Expatriate Staff: KTAI, Date: 20/02/2002)

Local hired Japanese staff experienced three different types of role conflict: (1) role exclusion, (2) role incompetence, and (3) role overload. Role exclusion was experienced by both local hired Japanese and non-Japanese local staff. It is concerned with their dissatisfaction with the level of participation permitted them. In particular, the ratio of these managers, were higher where about half of the managers expressed about their experience of being alienated by Japanese expatriate staff. An example comment is below.

I want to tell them [Japanese expatriates] that local [managers] should be included. 'Manager meeting' should be joined by all managers.

(Local hired Japanese Manager: KONI, Date: 12/07/2001)

Role incompetence concerns the perceptions of both local hired Japanese and Japanese expatriate staff on the role competence of non-Japanese local staff. Approximately 50 percent of local hired Japanese staff regarded their fellow non-Japanese local staff's level of competence as unsatisfactory, nearly 15 percent greater than the ratio of Japanese expatriate staff. The reasons for the occurrence of role incompetence were associated with job flexibility, especially in relation to conducting tasks promptly, keeping a deadline even if it compelled local staff to stay back late. Both local hired Japanese and Japanese expatriate staff regarded punctuality and keeping deadlines as crucial, and they made an effort to be on time and to send back completed work by the date requested, especially with request from Japan.

Locals are irresponsible. They don't keep promises to complete jobs. They say, "Okay, I'll do it",

but they don't often do it by the due date. There are many cases like this.

(Local hired Japanese Staff: HWAKI, Date: 21/03/2000)

The current study identified that Japanese staff has high job flexibility. Approximately 78 percent of local hired Japanese staff understood that if necessary, they might have to take on a job not included in their job description, or a job that might not be directly related to their areas of responsibility. This confirms that the attitudes of local hired Japanese staff were similar to Japanese employees in Japan.

Local hired Japanese who are married here and live here for a long time is, you know, their basis, their core is to work co-operatively. So that, even though we don't like to say "yes" to Japanese expatriates, we still say "yes". Thinking of the negative consequences, saying "yes" is better. You see, atmosphere or the relations between us will go bad if we were to say "no" to them.

(Local hired Japanese Staff: ISHT, Date: 10/02/2001)

Unlike expatriate Japanese and non-Japanese local staff, local hired Japanese staff experienced role overload. It is related to the degree of overload in role expectations. Results revealed that 64.2 percent of local hired Japanese staff felt that higher expectations were placed on them by Japanese expatriate staff compared with non-Japanese local staff. This caused role overload. Local hired Japanese staff also said that they sometimes had to take over a task from a non-Japanese local colleague. This occurred partly because non-Japanese local staff did not carry it out promptly. This is related to role incompetence where Japanese staff perceived non-Japanese local staff as lacking a flexible attitude to work.

I find that [non-Japanese] local staff draw a clear line around the job they do. I mean, it's like "This is my job up to here, but more than this, it's not my job. So, ask someone else." When they [Japanese expatriate staff] are told this, they cannot say anything, so they come and ask us [local hired Japanese], and sometimes they even ask one [local hired Japanese] from a different section! ... We do our work mainly for Japanese clients, so we, Japanese have to bear their [non-Japanese locals] work.

(Local hired Japanese Staff: KOTI, Date: 20/05/2002)

Two findings emerged as explanation as to why this was happening. First, 42.8 percent of local hired Japanese staff understood that Japanese expatriate staff preferred to ask them rather than asking non-Japanese local staff. Second, although the ratio was not high, 16.1 percent of Japanese expatriate staff specifically corroborated this. The reasons why Japanese expatriate staff found it more comfortable to ask local Japanese staff were their ease in using Japanese language and the convenience of a shared cultural background. Expatriate staff were aware that their local hired Japanese staff had worked in Japan and understood how companies operate there. This indicates, therefore, that Japanese expatriate

staff assume that local hired Japanese colleagues will not only understand the Japanese expatriates' expectations but accept them as well.

It seems that Japanese expatriates feel comfortable and ease to interact with Japanese people. Because they can speak using their own language. When they [Japanese expatriates] want to ask favors, there is a tendency that they go and ask local hired Japanese. Because both of them are the same Japanese and that they can do '*amae*'[dependency].

(Local hired Japanese Staff: ISHT, Date: 10/02/2001)

Overall, the findings suggest that Japanese managers tended to have higher expectations of local hired Japanese staff in terms of work commitment. They expected local hired Japanese staff to demonstrate a similar work attitude to employees back home, including doing overtime and beyond what was outlined in the job description. These expectations involve job flexibility.

DISCUSSION

The findings demonstrate three key sources of role stress enabling to understand why local hired Japanese staff experience role stress in Japanese companies in Australia. The first source is about insufficient English competence. It was found as one of role ambiguity types. Communication problems between non-Japanese local staff and Japanese expatriate staff are commonly identified as problems in overseas Japanese companies (Bamber et al. 1992; Byun & Ybema 2005; Tokusei 1994). The problem stems from differences in communication style (Shimada 1998; Yamanaka 1991), culture, and language (Clarke & Lipp 1998; Yamanaka 1991). Local hired Japanese staff did not express communication difficulties due to their lack of understanding about Australian culture and the differences in communication style with non-Japanese local staff. The current study found that language competence was the only area which hampered the understanding in communication between non-Japanese local staff and local hired Japanese. It suggests that local hired Japanese staff are familiar with Australian culture, people, and communication style. Furthermore, it is possible to say improving English language competence is the hardest to overcome the communication problems exist between Japanese and non-Japanese local staff.

The second source refers to source of recruitment (Head Office versus Subsidiary). Role exclusion and information shortage were experienced by local hired Japanese staff. Role exclusion involves local hired Japanese staff feeling alienated by Japanese expatriate staff in their lack of participation in company's business activities. Information shortage is about local staff's dissatisfaction with Japanese expatriate staff who do not impart company's information sufficiently to local staff. These role stress experiences indicate that the level of reliance placed on local hired Japanese staff is low. The experience of local hired Japanese staff is consistent with the experience of non-Japanese local staff (Ikezoe 2002;

Yoshihara 2001) as non-Japanese local staff also have limited opportunity in participating in decision making and information sharing. Instead, corporate Head Office in Japan tends to rely on Japanese expatriate staff (Chun et al. 2006; Taga 2004; Yoshihara 2001). The low level of reliance is the result of the low level of understanding of the Japanese culture, both society and corporate, of non-Japanese staff in overseas Japanese subsidiaries (Ishida 1988). Haitani (1990), on the other hand, argues that the level to which Head Office relies on a staff member depends on whether or not Head Office employed them. He claims that those employed by Head Office are considered to be a member of the corporate family. This is because these staff members have accumulated knowledge about the company, its people, and corporate culture, and have shown the necessary obligation and loyalty (Haitani 1990). Haitani (1990) further explains that for this reason, Japanese expatriate staff are regarded as a member of the corporate family, while local staff are not regarded as a member of the corporate family. He thus suggests that the crucial matter for staff of overseas Japanese companies is source of recruitment. In other words, regardless of nationality, if staff is an locally hired employee, there will be a considerable difference in the level of reliance Head Office places on them, as well as difference in participation opportunities, career prospects, and income comparing with expatriate staff. The explanation about the needs of Japanese corporate culture, customs, and Japanese language (Ishida, 1988) is not applicable to local hired Japanese staff who shares cultural background with Japanese expatriate staff. The findings, therefore, suggest that the low level of reliance is placed on local hired Japanese staff due to their source of recruitment.

Cultural background is the final source of role stress. The findings revealed that work attitudes of local hired Japanese staff had flexibility and were similar to Japanese employees in Japan. They also perceived non-Japanese local staff as being incompetent. Their way of judging competence of non-Japanese local staff was similar to those of Japanese expatriate staff and was based on the Japanese style work practices in Japan. Hoecklin (1995) states that culture comprises of different levels. She explains that the deepest level of culture ingrained in human is how one perceives things. It is learned in childhood, and what one learned during this period is the most difficult to change (Hoecklin 1995). Local hired Japanese staff, who participated in this study, were born, brought up, and educated in Japan. They also had work experiences back home. The findings suggests that local hired Japanese staff, who lived in home country until they gained some work experiences, still carry 'Japanese-ness' even when they are placed in an Australian work environment.

Role overload experiences of local hired Japanese staff is related to this 'Japanese-ness'. They felt that Japanese expatriates had higher expectations of them than their non-Japanese colleagues. Correspondingly, Japanese expatriates admitted that they felt more comfortable asking a favor of their Japanese colleagues than approaching non-Japanese staff. The higher expectation Japanese expatriate staff held is an indication that they have '*amae*' (strong dependency) (Doi 1989) towards local hired

Japanese staff. The '*amae*' based interdependent relationships exist between superior and subordinates in Japanese companies in Japan (Haitani 1990; Naylor 2000). Since it induces autonomous mutual cooperation and support (Haitani 1990), managers are able to ask their subordinates favors such as overtime and extra tasks. Local hired Japanese staff themselves understood that they were far more likely to be asked to take on extra work than their non-Japanese colleagues. This is explainable by Biddle's (1979) argument that role behaviors are predictable and may be induced by culture. Having information about others in advance enables a role occupant to know what s/he will expect of others as well as what they may expect of him/her (Goffman 1968). Japanese expatriate staff is aware that local hired Japanese staff were brought up and worked in Japan. Thus Japanese expatriate staff can figure out what they expect towards local hired Japanese staff. Similarly, local hired Japanese staff understand about workplace in Japan. They can therefore discern what they are expected by Japanese expatriate staff. The findings suggest that cultural background of role occupant influences what they are expected by role sender. Simultaneously, it also influences what role sender will expect towards the role occupant.

Overall, the findings suggest that English language competence, source of recruitment, and cultural background are linked to role stress experiences of local hired Japanese staff. This study hence illustrates that these three sources: a competence of language used to communicate with non-Japanese local staff, source of recruitment, and cultural background are the sources of role stress of staff who has the same nationality with expatriate staff and are employed as a locally hired employee in subsidiaries. Language competence is linked to a role ambiguity type, communication difficulties which occur in relation to host country national. Source of recruitment has a connection with the occurrence of role exclusion (a role conflict type) and information shortage (a role ambiguity type) referring to their dissatisfaction with expatriate staff. Cultural background is related to two types of role conflict: role incompetence and role overload. Role incompetence involves their frustration towards host country national, and role overload indicates their dissatisfaction with expatriate staff. Cultural background thus triggers the occurrence of role conflict with both host country national and expatriate staff. It therefore suggests that cultural background is not only the source of role stress between staff with different cultural background but also a source of role stress between staff with the same cultural background in intercultural workplace. In this instance, the role stress occurs due to the fact that they share the same cultural background.

CONCLUSION

This study discovered role stress of local hired Japanese staff in Japanese companies in Australia. The results revealed that they display flexible work attitudes as would be found in Japan. Thus they still carry 'Japanese-ness' even they work in an Australian work environment. Their role stress involves dissatisfactions with Japanese expatriate staff in terms of their level of participation in sharing

information and making decisions, as well as high expectations placed on them. Simultaneously, they also had dissatisfaction with their non-Japanese local staff in their role incompetence. This study extends our understanding of using Role Theory in an intercultural context by incorporating cross cultural management theory to Role Theory to identify the sources of role stress experienced by local hired Japanese staff in overseas Japanese companies. These sources include (i) insufficient English competence, (ii) source of recruitment, and (iii) cultural background.

Our findings have two managerial implications. First, providing local hired Japanese staff with language training will mitigate communication difficulties with non-Japanese local staff in their overseas subsidiaries. Second, management should consider increasing the level of reliance on local hired Japanese staff. These individuals have a good understanding of the Japanese organization's corporate culture. Due to the high costs of expatriate, Japanese companies come to rely on local staff at a greater extent (Paik & Sohn 2004). Local hired Japanese staff, who had lived in Japan until they acquired work experiences back home, already satisfy the crucial criteria of Japanese companies in placing reliance on local staff. This study found that local hired Japanese staff did not experience problems which stem from lack of understanding about Australian people and culture.

A majority of local hired Japanese staff, who participated in this study, did not hold managerial position. Similarly, the majority of local staff was female. The findings of this study, therefore, are applicable to local hired Japanese female staff of non-managerial position. Gender differences influence on role stress experiences (Karatepe, Yavas, Babakus & Avci 2006). Different types of role stress may exist among local hired Japanese male holding managerial position. Future study therefore should examine the influence of gender on role stress experiences of local hired Japanese staff.

Extent research has overlooked the role stress of local hired Japanese staff in overseas Japanese companies. Along with the growing number of Japanese living overseas, their existence in overseas Japanese companies will become more prevalent. Investing their role stress experience is thus critical to improve people management of overseas Japanese companies. This study contributes to the intercultural management literature by examining the effects of role stress on these individuals.

REFERENCES

- Bamber G, Shadur MA and Howell F (1992) The International Transferability of Japanese management Strategies: An Australian Perspective, *Employee Relations* 14(3): 3-19.
- Biddle BJ (1979) *Role Theory: Expectations, Identities, and Behaviors*, Academic Press, London.
- Byun H and Ybema S (2005) Japanese Business in the Dutch Polder: The experience of cultural differences in asymmetric power relations, *Asia Pacific Business Review* 11(4): 535-552.
- Chung LH, Gibbons PT and Schoch HP (2006) The Management of Information and Managers in

- Subsidiaries of Multinational Corporations, *British Journal of Management* 17: 153-165.
- Clarke CC and Lipp GD (1998) Conflict Resolution for Contrasting Cultures, *Training & Development* 52(2): 20-33.
- Doi T (1989) *The anatomy of dependence*, Kodansha, Tokyo.
- Dubinsky A, Kotabe M, Lim CU, Michaels RE and Moon HC (1992) Influence of role stress on industrial salespeople's work outcomes in the United States, Japan, and Korea, *Journal of International Business Studies*, 23(1): 77-100.
- Goffman E (1968) Presentation of Self to Others, in Manis JG and Meltzer BN (Eds) *Symbolic Interaction*, 220-231, Allyn and Bacon, Boston.
- Haitani K (1990) The Paradox of Japan's Groupism: Threat to Future Competitiveness?, *Asian Survey* 30(3): 237-250.
- Hardy M (1978) Role stress and Role Strain, in Hardy M and Conway M (Eds), *Role Theory: Perspectives for health professionals*, 73-110, Prentice-Hall, Connecticut.
- Hayashi K (1996) *Ibunka Intaafaisu Kanri (Cross-Cultural Interface Management)*, Yuikaku, Tokyo.
- Hoecklin L (1995) *Managing Cultural Differences*, Addison-Wesley, Workingham, England.
- Ikezoe H (2002) America, in T. Hanami (Ed) *Kaigai Nikkei kigyoo no koyookanri to genchi roodoo mondai (Employment management and local labour problems of overseas Japanese companies)*, 116: 17-100, The Japan Institute of Labour Shiryoo Series, Tokyo.
- Ishida H. (1985) *Nihon Kigyoo no Kokusai Jinji Kanri (Human Resource Management of Japanese companies)*, Nihon Roodoo Kyookai, Tokyo.
- Ishida H (1988) Kinyuu kikan no Kaigai Kyoten niokeru Jinzei no Genchi ka (Localization of human resource management in Japanese financial companies overseas), *Keio Keiei Ronshuu* 8(1): 28-35.
- Ishida H (1994) Flexibility in Human Resource Management: Is it transferable to industrialising countries?, *Discussion Papers*, Japanese Economic & Management Studies Centre, The University of New South Wales, Sydney.
- Kahn RL, Wolfe DM, Quinn RP and Snoek JD (1964) *Organizational Stress: Studies in Role Conflict and Ambiguity*, John Wiley & Sons, New York.
- Karatepe OM, Yavas U, Babakus, E and Avci T (2006) Does gender moderate the effects of role stress in frontline service jobs?, *Journal of Business Research* 59(10/11): 1087-1093.
- Katz D and Kahn RL (1978) *The Social Psychology of Organizations*, John Wiley & Sons, New York.
- King LA and King DW (1990) Role conflict and role Ambiguity; A Critical Assessment of Construct Validity, *Psychological Bulletin* 107: 48-64.
- Lincoln J, Kerbo H and Wittenhagen E (1995) Japanese companies in Germany: A case study in cross-cultural management, *Industrial Relations* 34(3): 417-440.
- Miles MB and Huberman MA (1994) *Qualitative Data Analysis*, Sage Publications, USA.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (2006a) *Heisei 17 nendo Kaigai Zairyuu Hoojinnsuu Choosa (Research on Japanese living abroad in 2006)*, Japan,

- <http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofai/toko/tokei/hojin/06/pdfs/1/pdf>, accessed on 10 February 2007.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (2006b) *Australia*, Japan, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/area/australia/data.html>, accessed on 10 February 2007.
- Naylor DM (2000) Should Western managers be encouraged to adopt JMPs?, *Employee Relations* 22(2): 160-178.
- Shenkar O and Zeira Y (1992) Role Conflict and Role Ambiguity of Chief Executive Officers in International Joint Ventures, *Journal of International Business Studies* 23(1): 55-75.
- Peterson MF, Smith PB, Akande A, Ayestaran S, Bochner S, Callan V, Cho NG, Jesuino JC, D'Amorim M, Francois PH, Hofmann K, Koopman PL, Leung K, Lim TK, Mortazavi S, Munene J, Radford M, Ropo. A, Savage G, Setiadi B, Sinha TN, Sorenson R and Viedge C (1995) Role conflict, ambiguity and overload: a 21-nation study: Special Research Forum-International and Intercultural Management Research, *Academy of Management Journal* 38(2): 429-452.
- Siegall M (1992) Some effects of role conflict source on the experience of role conflict, *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 22: 628-637.
- Shimada H (1998) Nihon kigyoo no guroobaru ka no shindankai to jinzai katsuyoo no shomondai (New stage of of Japanese companies' globalization and problems of human resource management), in Hanami T (Ed) *Kaigai Nikkei kigyoo no koyoo kanri to genchi roodoo mondai (Internationalization of labour market and its influence on Japan's economy and society): The Japan Institute of Labour Shiryou Series*, 74: 1-16.
- Singh J and Rhoads GK (1991) Boundary role ambiguity in marketing-oriented positions: a multidimensional, multifaceted operationalization, *Journal of Marketing Research* 28(3): 328-339.
- Takeuchi R, Yun S and Russell JEA (2002) Antecedents and consequences of the perceived adjustment of Japanese expatriates in the USA, *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 12(8): 1224-1244.
- Tokusei A (1994) The cultural Coping Processes of Japanese and Americans at Japanese Automotive Transplants in North America. PhD thesis, University of California, Los Angeles.
- Taga F (2004) *Zai Oosutoraria Nikkei kigyoo chuuzaiin no seikatsu koozoo ni kansuru choosa Hookoku sho (Research report on on expatriates of Japanese companies in Australia)*, University of Kurume, Fukuoka.
- Yamanaka M (1991) Japanese Boss and Australian White Collar - Based on A Consciousness Survey of Local Key Persons of Japanese Subsidiary Companies in Australia, in Toyama Y and Tisdell C (Eds) *Japan-Australia Economic Relations in the 1990s*, The Center for Australian Studies, 85-108. Otomon Gakuin University, Osaka.
- Yoshihara H (2001) Global Operations Managed by Japanese and in Japanese, in Taggart JH, Berry M and McDermott M (Eds) *Multinationals in a New Era*, 153-168. Academy of International Business, New York.
- Yoshimura N and Anderson P (1997) *Inside the Kaisha: Demystifying Japanese business behaviour*,

Harvard Business School Press, Boston.