TITLE:

How Inpatriates Internalize Corporate Values at Headquarters: The Role of Developmental Job Assignments and Psychosocial Mentoring

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HOW INPATRIATES INTERNALIZE CORPORATE VALUES AT HEADQUARTERS: THE ROLE OF DEVELOPMENTAL JOB ASSIGNMENTS AND PSYCHOSOCIAL MENTORING

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Abstract

Multinational companies (MNCs) often invite foreign subsidiary employees or inpatriates to their headquarters (HQ) to internalize the MNCs' corporate values and transfer those values to their subsidiaries after repatriation. However, there is a lack of understanding about how and why inpatriates internalize these corporate values during their HQ experiences. By integrating the perspectives of international adjustment and organizational socialization with that of on-the-job learning, we develop a model wherein the job-related and psychosocial factors that inpatriates encounter at HQ promote their internalization of corporate values. Using a sample of 110 foreign subsidiary employee–supervisor dyads from the HQ of a Japanese MNC to which the employees were assigned as inpatriates, we found that developmental job assignments and psychosocial mentoring during inpatriation influenced the internalization of corporate values, which was partially and sequentially mediated by proactive socialization behavior and organizational identification. This study's findings have significant implications for the theory and practice of inpatriation management, particularly with regard to how MNCs promote the internalization of corporate values among inpatriates.

Keywords: MNCs; inpatriates; corporate values; developmental job assignments; psychosocial mentoring; organizational identification

INTRODUCTION

Multinational companies (MNCs) increasingly use inpatriation or invite foreign subsidiary employees to the parent country's headquarters (HQ) to increase the HQ's diversity and to develop "boundary spanners" or "bridge individuals" who form links between HQ and foreign subsidiaries (Collings et al. 2010; Harzing et al. 2016; Moeller and Reiche 2017; Reiche 2011; Reiche et al. 2009a; Sekiguchi 2016). Inpatriates typically stay at HQ for a predetermined period before returning to their foreign subsidiaries to become managers. Therefore, inpatriation is considered a useful means of disseminating and implementing the HQ's knowledge and shared corporate values throughout the MNC (Gertsen and Søderberg 2012; Froese et al. 2016).

Corporate values represent management philosophies or principles, usually summarized in a company's mission statement, that clearly articulate a corporation's objective and purpose. Such values guide an organization's internal conduct, as well as its relationships with customers, partners, and shareholders, which facilitates the success of corporate goals such as increasing financial and operational performance and becoming a socially responsible organization (Gordon and DiTomaso 1992; Hollender 2004; Posner et al. 1985; Spitzeck and Chapman 2012; Wang 2009, 2011; Williams 2008). Shared corporate values also provide an effective means of managing HQ–subsidiary relations in MNCs (Nohria and Ghoshal 1994). However, it is quite challenging to share corporate values within MNCs because MNCs are geographically dispersed, internally differentiated, and culturally and linguistically diverse. Therefore, the role of inpatriates in transferring corporate values from HQ to foreign subsidiaries is particularly important.

To transfer MNCs' corporate values across national borders, MNCs expect inpatriates to learn and internalize the corporate values that are, in general, more salient in HQ while

engaging in their assigned duties. If successful, inpatriates can effectively disseminate these corporate values to subsidiaries after they return (Gertsen and Søderberg 2012; Reiche 2006). However, few studies have explored how and why inpatriates internalize corporate values through their HQ experiences. Therefore, there are several theoretical puzzles that cannot be solved by the extant literature. For example, researchers on global talent management (Collings 2014; Harvey and Buckley 1997) might expect inpatriates to proactively learn and internalize corporate values when working at HQ because inpatriates are considered high-potential, high-performing employees. However, other researchers have suggested that inpatriates exhibit passive behavior and experience difficulties when learning and internalizing corporate values due to the many challenges that they face at HQ (e.g., Harvey et al. 2005; Maley et al. 2015).

International adjustment researchers (e.g., Firth et al. 2014; Takeuchi 2010) have provided some hints regarding how to reduce inpatriates' adjustment challenges. However, in terms of adjustment outcomes, most of their studies have focused on expatriate adjustment rather than on the internalization of corporate values. Therefore, successful international adjustment alone does not necessarily predict inpatriates' effective internalization of corporate values. Moreover, although socializing inpatriates within the HQ environment is critical to promoting the internalization of corporate values, the organizational socialization literature (e.g., Kammeyer-Mueller et al. 2013) has tended to assume that socialization occurs naturally when newcomers become members of the same organization (e.g., Van Maanen and Schein 1979). This may not be the case for inpatriates, however, because HQ employees may not regard inpatriates from a MNC's periphery as members of the same organization and inpatriates' status at MNCs is different from that of HQ employees (Maley et al. 2015; Moeller and Harvey 2011; Moeller et al. 2016). In short, the existing literature does not

sufficiently explain the mechanism by which inpatriates learn and internalize corporate values while performing their HQ duties.

Therefore, understanding how and why inpatriates internalize corporate values that are prevalent in the HQ environment while performing their assigned duties requires a novel theoretical approach. Since the extant literature on inpatriation has hardly emphasized the learning process through their assignments, this study focuses on inpatriates' on-the-job learning. The learning process is important to this study because the ways in which work is performed at a company's HQ (i.e., correct and incorrect methods for carrying out job-related tasks) more or less reflect corporate values, and because inpatriates obtain critical knowledge about corporate values through their on-the-job HQ experiences. In particular, we integrate the perspectives of international adjustment and organizational socialization with that of on-the-job learning (DeRue and Wellman 2009; Dong et al. 2014; McCauley et al. 1994) and develop a model in which HQ-based job-related and psychosocial factors promote the internalization of corporate values among inpatriates. We argue that, in the HQ environment, job-related and psychosocial factors are critical to inpatriates' on-the-job learning processes. In this study, we focus on developmental job assignments (McCauley et al. 1994) as the most significant job-related factor and on psychosocial mentoring (Ragins and McFarlin 1990) as the primary psychosocial factor.

We theorize that developmental job assignments and psychosocial mentoring in HQ inpatriation practices stimulate inpatriates to proactively socialize themselves within the HQ environment (proactive socialization behavior; Saks and Ashforth 1997). In turn, this behavior promotes inpatriates' feeling of oneness with the MNC (organizational identification; Ashforth and Mael 1989). Through this process, inpatriates are meant to learn and internalize corporate values. We assume that inpatriates exhibit their internalization of corporate values

through behavioral demonstration of these values in daily work-related activities. By exhibiting observable behaviors that are consistent with corporate values, inpatriates who return to their home countries influence other subsidiary employees to learn and adopt the HQ's values, thereby disseminating corporate values throughout the MNC.

We empirically test this study's theoretical model using a sample of foreign subsidiary employee–supervisor dyads assigned to the HQ of a Japanese MNC. This study contributes to the literature on international business (IB) and international human resource management (IHRM), especially that of inpatriation, by developing a novel theoretical framework and providing empirical findings that enable us to understand how and why inpatriates internalize corporate values during their HQ assignments. This study also provides invaluable information for IB and IHRM researchers and practitioners who are seeking a better understanding of inpatriate management, particularly in fostering and facilitating the internalization of MNCs' corporate values among inpatriates who effectively disseminate these values at foreign subsidiaries after repatriation.

CHARACTERISTICS OF INPATRIATES

MNCs' increasing use of inpatriation reflects their need to diversify global staffing methods that are suitable to their strategic goals. This need reflects a shift from an ethnocentric or unidirectional approach (i.e., sending parent-country nationals from HQ to foreign subsidiaries) to a bidirectional approach (i.e., using expatriation and inpatriation). In doing so, MNCs aim to increase the effectiveness of global talent management and optimize HQ–foreign subsidiary relationships (Duvivier et al. 2019; Harvey 2000a, 2000b; Moeller and Reiche 2017; Reiche et al. 2009b; Tharenou and Harvey 2006). The global talent management perspective (Collings 2014; Harvey and Buckley 1997; Harvey et al. 2000b; Harvey et al. 2011) emphasizes that MNCs should select inpatriates based on a track record of high

potential, high performance, and a capacity to pursue MNCs' strategic goals as knowledge-transfer and knowledge-sharing agents (Moeller et al. 2016; Reiche et al. 2009a). For example, Harvey et al. (2002) suggested that inpatriates should be appointed based on their cognitive, emotional, political, and cultural intelligence. Therefore, it can be assumed that inpatriates are high-potential, high-performing foreign subsidiary employees who are motivated, proactive, and committed to the MNCs.

Researchers have highlighted the role and nature of inpatriates as being different from those of other types of expatriates. This contrast illustrates why this present study on inpatriates is necessary and important. First, the primary objectives of sending expatriates from HQ to foreign subsidiaries are rooted in ethnocentric needs: i.e., (1) to enable HQ to tightly control subsidiaries, (2) to transfer knowledge from HQ to foreign subsidiaries, and (3) to develop parent-country nationals (Harzing et al. 2015; Reiche et al. 2009). MNCs also expect expatriates to transfer knowledge from foreign subsidiaries to HQ, but this may not be the major motivation for expatriation. On the other hand, inviting inpatriates from foreign subsidiaries to HQ is predicated more on bidirectional motives:, i.e., (1) to develop talent in foreign subsidiaries and (2) to use inpatriates as boundary spanners and knowledge agents (Moeller and Reich 2017; Reich et al. 2009). Typically, MNCs expect inpatriates to absorb specific knowledge and corporate values and then transmit this information to subsidiaries; MNCs also expect inpatriates to import their knowledge regarding the subsidiaries' problems to HQ. For example, Adler (2002) suggested that inpatriation is designed to help selected foreign subsidiary employees learn HQ's organizational culture and ways of doing business and MNCs expect inpatriates to manage foreign operations after repatriation. In short, inpatriates should learn and internalize corporate values during their HQ assignments and bring these values back home. This is not necessarily the case for expatriates since most of

them as HQ representatives already embrace the MNC's values and knowledge for disseminating the values to foreign subsidiaries.

Second, although inpatriates are generally considered highly competent and proactive, researchers have indicated that they tend to experience greater challenges than expatriates do (Harvey and Fung 2000; Harvey et al. 2005; Moeller et al. 2013; Williams et al. 2010). For example, inpatriates not only contend with changes in the national culture but also must socialize and fit into the HQ culture (Moeller et al. 2010; Moeller et al. 2016). They are also subject to the "liability of foreignness" and to "status inconsistency" at HQ because they come from the MNC's periphery; as a result, their status in the eyes of other HQ employees is lower than expatriates' status in the eyes of the foreign subsidiaries' employees (Harvey et al. 2005; Maley et al. 2015; Moeller and Harvey 2011; Moeller et al. 2016; Reiche et al. 2009b). Therefore, without organizational support, inpatriates may become risk averse and reactive, and they may experience difficulties in the socialization process (Moeller et al. 2010).

Based on the aforementioned distinctive characteristics of inpatriates, researchers have examined specific topics related to inpatriation and inpatriates. These topics include inpatriate selection (Harvey et al. 1999b; Harvey et al. 2000a; Harvey et al. 2002), inpatriate training (Harvey and Miceli 1999), socialization (Moeller et al. 2010; Peppas and Chang 1998), trust development (Harvey et al. 2011), inpatriate performance appraisal (Maley 2009), psychological contract (Maley and Kramar 2010; Moeller et al. 2010), and building social capital (Moeller et al. 2016; Reiche et al. 2009b; Reiche et al. 2011). Furthermore, because inpatriates are expected to play various roles after they return to their foreign subsidiaries, researchers have examined inpatriate retention (Reiche et al. 2011) and knowledge transfer after repatriation (Reiche 2012). Research also indicates that inpatriation assignment experiences contribute to the career progress of foreign subsidiary managers (Sarabi et al.

2017). However, past research on inpatriates has not focused on the mechanism that explains how and why inpatriates learn and internalize corporate values during their HQ assignments.

THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

Our study's proposed model is depicted in Figure 1. We theorize that developmental job assignments and psychosocial mentoring, which we consider job-related and psychosocial factors, respectively, facilitate proactive socialization behavior and organizational identification. This, in turn, contributes to inpatriates' internalization of corporate values. Specifically, drawing on the on-the-job learning perspective, we posit that the internalization of corporate values among inpatriates comprises two steps: (1) learning corporate values through on-the-job experience and (2) internalizing these learned values. Below, we explain each step in detail.

Insert Figure 1 about here

The On-the-Job Learning Process

Although inpatriates may be exposed to an MNC's corporate values at its foreign subsidiaries, the HQ environment is ideal for developing a deeper understanding of these values because inpatriates interact with HQ employees and observe their behaviors while performing their own job assignments. As stated above, corporate values are more prevalent at HQ than at any other place within a MNC, and how work is done there likely reflects the MNC's values. Social learning theory (e.g., Bandura 2001; Caligiuri and Tarique 2009; Wood and Bandura 1989) states that individuals learn while interacting with others, by observing the behaviors of others and themselves, using attention, retention, and reproduction processes. In the HQ environment, inpatriates employ the attention process by observing HQ employees'

behaviors and their own behaviors when performing their new assignments and evaluating the results of these behaviors. This process enables inpatriates to understand the essence of the corporate values and how they are demonstrated by HQ employees. Retention then occurs when inpatriates encode, store, and remember this knowledge about corporate values and modeled behaviors. Finally, through the reproduction process, inpatriates exhibit the behaviors that are consistent with the corporate values.

Nonetheless, HQ cannot provide inpatriates with all the necessary information and opportunities to interact with HQ insiders to facilitate a deeper understanding of corporate values, especially if inpatriates perform their assigned duties passively. Therefore, consistent with the findings from organizational socialization literature that emphasizes the employees' role in proactive socialization (Morrison 1993), inpatriates must proactively socialize themselves or exhibit "proactive socialization behavior" if they are to effectively integrate themselves into the HQ environment (Kammeyer-Mueller et al. 2013; Saks and Ashforth 1997; Wanberg and Kammeyer-Muller 2000). Proactive socialization behavior includes positive framing to interpret the work environment positively, networking to form effective relationships with the members of an organization, and information seeking which includes searching for and acquiring job- and organization-related information (e.g., Ren et al. 2014). These behaviors contribute to inpatriates' knowledge about corporate values and facilitate the social learning process described above.

The Values-Internalization Process

Merely obtaining knowledge about corporate values and learning appropriate behaviors may not enable inpatriates to internalize these values. To internalize or "buy into" learned values and voluntarily exhibit behaviors that are consistent with these values, employees must become emotionally attached to the organization. Such attachment is highly

relevant to the concept of organizational identification (Ashforth and Mael 1989). Organizational identification refers to the extent to which employees experience a sense of unity with or belonging within an organization. This includes mirroring organizational attributes in employees' self-definitions (Ashforth and Mael 1989; Dutton et al. 1994; Schaubroeck et al. 2013). Organizational identification often refers to a deep-level psychological phenomenon rather than a surface-level attachment (Ng 2015; Rousseau 1998), and the theory of organizational identification suggests that employees with high organizational identification are motivated to pursue the organization's collective interests (Ashforth and Mael 1989; Dutton et al. 1994). Therefore, although learning corporate values is an ongoing process for inpatriates, increased organizational identification accelerates the social learning process explained above because inpatriates become highly motivated to serve the MNC's interests.

One might think that inpatriates already possess a certain level of organizational identification before arriving at HQ. However, working at locations that are geographically and culturally distant from HQ may render inpatriates less susceptible to organizational identification with the MNC before inpatriation. For example, researchers suggest that foreign subsidiary employees often experience dual identification (e.g., with the foreign subsidiary and with the MNC) in which their identification with the MNC as a whole may be weaker than their identification with their own subsidiary (Vora and Kostova 2007). Therefore, developing high organizational identification with the MNC among inpatriates is key to facilitating their internalization of corporate values.

In short, this study's model suggests that during their HQ assignments, inpatriates' proactive socialization behavior enables them to learn and understand corporate values, and the subsequent development of organizational identification facilitates their internalization of

the learned corporate values. Developmental job assignments and psychosocial mentoring, which function as job-related and psychosocial factors in the HQ environment, facilitate the on-the-job learning process.

Developmental Job Assignments during Inpatriation

Developmental job assignments refer to the demanding work assignments that serve as learning opportunities (McCauley et al. 1994; McCauley et al. 1999). They are expected to broaden assigned employees' leadership competencies in areas such as business knowledge, insightfulness, decision-making, and interpersonal effectiveness (DeRue and Wellman 2009; Dong et al. 2014; Dragoni et al. 2009). Many organizations utilize developmental job assignments to facilitate employees' on-the-job learning (McCauley et al. 1994) and to enhance employees' managerial skills (Day 2010; Mumford et al. 2000). Researchers have identified a variety of dimensions applicable to developmental job assignments, such as unfamiliar responsibilities, high levels of responsibilities, creating change, managing boundaries, resolving employee problems, and managing diversity (e.g., DeRue and Wellman 2009; McCall et al. 1988; McCauley et al. 1994). Empirical evidence shows that, in general, developmental job assignments relate positively to managers' competencies (Dragoni et al. 2009), leadership skill development (DeRue and Wellman 2009), leadership effectiveness (Seibert et al. 2017), promotability (Dong et al. 2014; Seibert et al. 2017), and nonmanagerial employees' task performance and promotability (Aryee and Chu 2012; De Pater et al. 2009).

We argue that the developmental job assignments of inpatriates facilitate their on-the-job learning experiences, including the social learning process (i.e., attention, retention, and reproduction), thus motivating inpatriates to proactively socialize themselves within the HQ environment. For example, developmental job assignments motivate inpatriates to think critically about situations and process ambiguous information (Dong et al. 2014), which

further encourages them to proactively seek information and feedback in the HQ environment so that they are able to overcome job challenges (e.g., DeRue and Wellman 2009). In addition, developmental job assignments provide inpatriates with opportunities to experiment with various behavioral strategies and acquire new skills to meet the demands of their job (Seibert et al. 2017). These processes reinforce inpatriates' attention to and observation of HQ employees' behaviors. Moreover, they encourage inpatriates to model the behaviors, retain them cognitively, and reproduce them. Such learning experiences further enable inpatriates to socialize themselves proactively and understand the HQ environment more deeply.

In addition, previous research suggests that inpatriates tend to appreciate developmental job assignments, viewing them as organizational support that is provided specifically to them for further development (e.g., Kraimer et al. 2011). These practices would satisfy inpatriates' growth needs and make them feel valued. Research shows that employees' perceptions of organizational support provided for their development are related to positive employee attitudes and behaviors when career opportunities within their organizations are high (Kraimer et al. 2011). Because inpatriates may envision positive career opportunities after repatriation, they tend to be generally proactive. In this sense, developmental job assignments further stimulate the proactiveness of inpatriates and motivate them to reciprocate the organizational support by actively engaging in on-the-job learning and socializing themselves within the HQ environment. Thus, we predict the following:

> **Hypothesis 1:** *Developmental job assignments are positively related to inpatriates'* *proactive socialization behavior.*

Psychosocial Mentoring during Inpatriation

Although inpatriates are expected to learn and internalize corporate values mainly through their job assignments and are generally competent, motivated, and proactive, they

may experience great challenges and high stress while adjusting to their new cross-cultural environments, which negatively affects proactiveness and learning (Harvey et al. 2005; Maley et al. 2015; Moeller et al. 2016; Reiche et al. 2009b). The international adjustment literature suggests that inpatriates require organizational support to adjust to the HQ environment (Harvey et al. 1999a; Moeller et al. 2016). Therefore, psychosocial factors that reduce difficulties and stress while promoting adjustments enhance inpatriates' learning through proactive socialization. We argue that psychosocial mentoring functions as a psychosocial factor.

Mentoring is generally defined as a one-to-one, hierarchical relationship between a more experienced organizational member and a less experienced one (Carraher et al. 2008; Kram 1985; Ragins and McFarlin 1990). Mentoring occurs both formally and informally. When it occurs naturally during inpatriation, an inpatriate's supervisor usually assumes the mentor role, and the inpatriate becomes the protégé. Mentoring activities comprise career and psychosocial functions (Allen et al. 2004; Wanberg et al. 2006). In this study, we focus on the psychosocial functions of mentoring, including friendship, social interaction, role modeling, counseling, and acceptance (Noe 1988; Wanberg et al. 2006), because these functions are more relevant to the psychological and social support that inpatriates seek to reduce stress and increase comfort while adjusting to the HQ environment (e.g., Allen et al. 2004). Career mentoring, on the other hand, is more relevant to career advancement (Allen et al. 2004) and may not directly affect international adjustment.

We argue that psychosocial mentoring, by facilitating international adjustment, positively affects inpatriates' proactive socialization behavior. Generally, mentoring is meant to facilitate employees' adjustment by supporting them emotionally (Kram 1985; Pan et al. 2011; Richard et al. 2009). Research on expatriate adjustment shows that mentoring provided

by host-country nationals is positively related to expatriates' degree of socialization (Carraher et al. 2008; Feldman and Bolino 1999; Zhuang 2013). More specifically, psychosocial mentoring provides inpatriates with the psychological resources to cope with high levels of stress associated with their new workplaces by providing psychological safety in the work environment (Edmondson 1999). This enables inpatriates to adjust and proactively explore the HQ environment (Gruman et al. 2006; Kammeyer-Mueller et al. 2013; Thomas and Lankau 2009).

In addition, previous research indicates that inpatriates tend to appreciate psychosocial mentoring, which they view as organizational and supervisory support provided to them, because these practices make them feel valued and provide psychological and social support in unfamiliar and stressful environments (Carraher et al. 2008; Kraimer and Wayne 2004). Therefore, as the case of developmental job assignments, psychosocial mentoring stimulates the proactiveness of inpatriates and their willingness to respond to these practices by actively engaging in on-the-job learning and socializing themselves within the HQ environment. Thus, we predict the following:

> **Hypothesis 2:** *Psychosocial mentoring is positively related to inpatriates' proactive*
> *socialization behavior.*

Proactive Socialization Behavior and Organizational Identification as Mediators

We theorize that inpatriates' proactive socialization behavior and their resultant organizational identification serve as important catalysts that connect job-related and psychosocial factors to inpatriates' value internalization. First, we predict that inpatriates' proactive socialization behavior promotes organizational identification. Organizational-socialization researchers have suggested that once newcomers become familiar with—and socially integrated into—an organization, they become more likely to identify with the

organization (Smith et al. 2013; Smith et al. 2017). As discussed above, inpatriates may be less susceptible to organizational identification with the MNC prior to arriving at HQ. Even after arrival, the unfamiliar cross-cultural HQ environment and the liability of being a foreigner may make them feel similar to outsiders and prevent them from developing organizational identification (e.g., Froese et al. 2016; Moeller and Harvey 2011). However, given that proactive socialization behavior enables inpatriates to integrate into the HQ environment effectively through acquiring deep knowledge of the MNC's strategy and corporate values (e.g., Miller and Jablin 1991), the inpatriates eventually come to view themselves as insiders and develop an emotional bond with the organization (Ashforth and Mael 1989; Hogg and Terry 2000). Inpatriates' proactive socialization behavior also increases their self-efficacy when they contribute to the MNC by acquiring knowledge about its corporate values through the social learning process (e.g., Bandura 2001), which also promotes their organizational identification.

Second, we predict that inpatriates who develop stronger organizational identification are more likely to internalize learned corporate values and demonstrate them by acting on behalf of the MNC. As stated above, by becoming more psychologically attached to the organization, the employees develop a stronger organizational identification and more deeply incorporate organizational attributes and interests into their self-concepts; therefore, they think and act more intensively and comprehensively from an organizational perspective (Ashforth and Mael 1989; Dutton et al. 1994). In addition, they will be more apt to exhibit a supportive attitude toward their organizations, will be more willing to cooperate with strategic agendas, and will engage in behaviors that facilitate effective coordination of organizational actions (Ashforth and Mael 1989; Tangirala and Ramanujam 2008).

The aforementioned process describes the sequential mediating effects of proactive

socialization behavior and organizational identification on the outcome of developmental job assignments and psychosocial mentoring (i.e., the internalization of corporate values). Through this mechanism, proactive socialization behavior enables inpatriates to learn and understand corporate values, and their subsequent development of organizational identification contributes to the internalization of corporate values. Thus, we propose the following hypotheses:

> **Hypothesis 3:** *Proactive socialization behavior is positively related to inpatriates' organizational identification.*

> **Hypothesis 4:** *Organizational identification is positively related to inpatriates' internalization of corporate values.*

> **Hypothesis 5:** *Developmental job assignments and psychosocial mentoring indirectly promote inpatriates' internalization of corporate values, which is sequentially mediated by proactive socialization behavior and organizational identification.*

METHOD

Participants in this study worked for a large multinational Japanese electronic component manufacturer listed on the Tokyo Stock Exchange. The company allowed the authors to distribute a survey to its foreign subsidiary employees currently on international assignments or who had returned from such assignments. The company also permitted us to distribute a survey to the current inpatriates' supervisors at its HQ and to the other employees' supervisors at foreign subsidiaries. This company systematically utilizes inpatriation and other international assignments as a part of a company-wide succession plan to develop future leaders and enhance knowledge transfer between HQ and foreign subsidiaries, including the dissemination of corporate values, technical knowledge, and managerial skills.

Upon the authors' request, the company's global HR department distributed the

employee and supervisor surveys, and employees and their current supervisors who agreed to participate in the surveys sent their responses directly to the authors. We guaranteed anonymity of survey responses through an agreement between the authors and the company that the global HR department would not have access to individual survey responses. To facilitate responses from employees and supervisors with diverse national backgrounds, we prepared Japanese and English versions of the questionnaires and asked participants to complete either version. The survey packets were distributed to 234 employees with current or past international assignment experience and their current supervisors. In total, we received 158 employee responses (67.5% response rate) and 170 supervisor responses (72.6% response rate). We matched samples from employees to their supervisors, resulting in 144 employee–supervisor dyads in which both employees and their respective current supervisors accurately completed the survey. We eliminated 34 dyads because the employees in these dyads were not sent to the Japanese HQ as inpatriates (i.e., they were sent from one foreign subsidiary to another). Therefore, the final sample consisted of 110 employee–supervisor dyads.

Participating employees came from subsidiaries in various countries, including China (39.1%), Thailand (29.1%), Malaysia (14.5%), Singapore (4.5%), South Korea (4.5%), Hong Kong and the Philippines (4.5%), Taiwan (2.7%), and Europe (0.9%). Of the survey responses, 55.5% of employees had returned to their foreign subsidiaries at the time of the survey, but 44.5% were still on the international assignment at HQ. The employees stayed at HQ for an average of 2.1 years ($SD = 0.8$) at the time of the survey. Most employees were male (73.6%), with an average age of 31.9 years ($SD = 5.7$). Because this study's sample included current and returned inpatriates, we explored whether these groups exhibited significant differences in the mean levels of variables central to the study's hypotheses. Independent-sample t tests for each variable revealed no significant differences between the

two samples, except for the internalization of corporate values, as rated by the supervisors. Thus, we used status difference (current or returned) as a control variable in the analyses.

We checked for the possibility of systematic response bias by comparing responding and nonresponding foreign subsidiary employees using demographic information obtained from the company. There were no significant differences by gender or repatriation status (i.e., whether they returned to their subsidiaries) between the two groups. However, the employees who did not respond were relatively older ($M = 36.4$, $t = 4.76$, $p < .01$) and stayed at HQ longer ($M = 2.5$, $t = 2.42$, $p < .05$) than the employees who responded. Considering the high response rate, these characteristics do not pose a serious threat to this study's empirical analyses and inferences.

Measures

We measured this study's variables (except for most of the control variables) using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). In developing a Japanese version of the survey, we translated the original English items into Japanese and used back-translation to ensure that their meaning had been retained (Brislin et al. 1973). First, two of the authors translated the original English items into Japanese. Second, another author checked the accuracy of the translation and slightly modified the wording when that was necessary. Third, a bilingual graduate student who is independent of this study translated the Japanese version of the survey back into English. Subsequently, we compared the original and back-translated versions of the survey and confirmed the accuracy of the Japanese translation.

Developmental job assignments. We measured developmental job assignments across four dimensions based on the shortened version of the Developmental Challenge Profile (DCP), as used in Dong et al. (2014) and McCauley et al. (1994). We omitted one

dimension (*high levels of responsibility*) from the original five dimensions because most of the items in this dimension (e.g., "You are responsible for multiple functions or groups" and "You are responsible for numerous different products or technologies or services") did not apply to the target company's job-assignment policy for inpatriation. The remaining four dimensions and sample items are as follows. The first dimension is *unfamiliar responsibilities* (three items, e.g., "You are doing a type of work dramatically different from what you've done before," α =.70). The second is *creating change* (three items, e.g., "You have to create or establish new policies or procedures," α = .74). The third is *working across boundaries* (two items, e.g., "A great deal of lateral coordination with others is required in the organization," α = .73). The fourth and final dimension is *managing diversity* (two items, e.g., "You have to bring people from different backgrounds to work together," α = .73). For each of the *working across boundaries* and *managing diversity* dimensions, we omitted one item from the original three-item scales, as those items did not apply to all inpatriates. We performed a second-order confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with the four dimensions as first-order factors and the overall DCP as the second-order factor. The CFA results support this model ($\chi^2 [31] = 47.60$, CFI = .95; TLI = .92; RMSEA = .07). All factor loadings are significant and larger than .40. We averaged the items for each dimension to create dimension scores, which we used as indicators of the latent construct of developmental job assignments. The Cronbach's alpha of the overall scale is .81.

Psychosocial mentoring. Participating employees rated their international-assignment mentors (who were either supervisors or colleagues) using five of the six dimensions of psychosocial mentoring from the Mentor Role Instrument (MRI) that Ragins and McFarlin (1990) developed. The five dimensions that we used are *friendship* (three items, e.g., "My mentor provides support and encouragement," α = .88), *social interaction* (three

items, e.g., "My mentor and I frequently get together informally after work by ourselves,"

α = .84), *role modeling* (three items, e.g., "My mentor serves as a role model for me,"

α = .89), *counseling* (three items, e.g., "My mentor serves as a sounding board for me to

develop and understand myself," α = .89), and *acceptance* (three items, e.g., "My mentor

accepts me as a competent professional," α = .77). We omitted the *parent* dimension from the

MRI because it does not seem to reflect the common mentoring relationships between

employees such as between parent-country nationals (Japanese HQ managers) and host-

country nationals (inpatriates). We performed a second-order CFA with the five dimensions as

first-order factors and with the overall construct as the second-order factor. The CFA results

support this model (χ^2 [85] = 152.42, CFI = .94; TLI = .93; RMSEA = .09). All factor

loadings are significant and larger than .50. We averaged the items in each dimension to create

dimension scores, which we used as indicators of the latent construct of psychosocial

mentoring. The Cronbach's alpha of the overall scale is .94.

   Proactive socialization behavior. Following Ren et al. (2014), we measured

proactive socialization behavior using three dimensions from the Proactive Socialization

Behavior Scale that Ashford and Black (1996) developed. The three dimensions are *positive*

framing (two items, e.g., "To what extent have you tried to see your situation as an

opportunity rather than as a threat," α = .76), *networking* (two items, e.g., "To what extent

have you tried to get to know as many people as possible in other sections of the company on

a personal basis," α = .80), and *information seeking* (two items, e.g., "To what extent have

you sought feedback on your performance after assignments," α = .76). For each of the

positive framing and *networking* dimensions, we omitted one item from the original three-

item scales because these items had similar wording to other items. We performed a second-

order CFA with the three dimensions as first-order factors and the overall construct as the

second-order factor. The CFA results support this model (χ^2 [17] = 36.18, CFI = .96;

TLI = .93; RMSEA= .10). All factor loadings are significant and larger than .50. We averaged

the items in each dimension to create dimension scores, which we used as indicators of the

latent construct of psychosocial mentoring. The Cronbach's alpha of the overall scale is .86.

   Organizational identification. We measured organizational identification using five

items from Mael and Ashforth (1992); a sample item is "When I talk about this organization, I

usually say 'we' rather than 'they'." Following Heckman et al. (2009) and Tangirala and

Ramanujam (2008), we omitted one item from the six-item original scale because it had a low

factor loading. The CFA for the single-factor model of this measure indicates a good fit

(χ^2 [5] = 14.06, CFI = .96, TLI = .92, RMSEA= .13), and all the factor loadings are significant

and larger than .60. The Cronbach's alpha of the five-item scale is .85.

   Internalization of corporate values. At the time of the survey, the subsidiary

employees' immediate supervisors rated the extent to which those employees exhibited

behaviors that are consistent with the target company's values using a seven-item behavioral

anchored scale. The company carefully developed the behavioral anchors of its corporate

values and has used them for several years. These values are based on the company's mission

statement and corporate philosophy, which together describe the principles and behaviors that

underlie the company's core values. Therefore, the scale has high content validity and face

validity. In addition, because the target company has not made drastic changes to its

management style for many years, we assume that its corporate values are quite stable. To

ensure the target company's anonymity, we do not report the exact wordings of the items. Two

items in this scale relate to how the focal employee's behaviors and interactions with

colleagues increase the value that the company offers to its customers (e.g., "In order to raise

the value that Company X offers to the customers, this employee always considers and

practices what he/she can do for the workplace"; *Company X* represents the company's real name). The other five items relate to specific behaviors that reflect the company's core values: being flexible, being creative, involving people, setting high goals, and pursuing personal development through work (e.g., "In order to achieve high performance, this employee always involves the people around him/her in the process."). We used a principle-component factor analysis with Kaiser's eigenvalue-greater-than-one cutoff criteria to create a single-factor model for this seven-item measure. The CFA for this model also shows a good fit (χ^2 [14] = 27.85, CFI = .96, TLI = .95, RMSEA= .10), as all the factor loadings are significant and larger than .40. The Cronbach's alpha of the seven-item scale is .88.

   Control variables. We measured the following control variables, which could have influenced the key variables in this study: the employee's age, gender, and status (i.e., whether the employee had returned to the foreign subsidiary at the time of the survey or was still on the inpatriation assignment), as well as the duration of the international assignment at the time of the survey. The status and duration of the international assignments represent time factors that could have affected the relationships between the variables. The employee's status also represents a potential systematic difference between HQ managers (for current inpatriates) and foreign-subsidiary managers (for returned inpatriates) with regard to ratings for the internalization of the target company's values. In addition, we controlled for the subsidiaries to which the employees belonged using a dummy variable, i.e., whether or not employees were from the subsidiaries in China that accounted for nearly 40% of the total sample. Furthermore, we also included a control variable for the average internalization of the target company's values among employees in each unit, as rated by the unit supervisors (using the same items as for the inpatriates). This variable could affect the internalization of corporate values among focal employees. The Cronbach's alpha for this seven-item scale

is .87.

Measurement Equivalence

For the surveys, we used a questionnaire in two languages—Japanese and English—to promote responses from people of various national backgrounds within the target Japanese MNC. This necessitates an illustration of the survey instruments' equivalence in both languages. To check this empirically, we conducted a series of multigroup CFAs for each construct for two groups—those who responded to the Japanese version and those who responded to the English version. Following the conventional method (e.g., Byrne 1994; Grappi et al. 2018), we tested both configural invariance (i.e., the equivalent factor structure) and metric invariance (i.e., the equivalent factor loadings). The results indicate an acceptable group-model fit for both the configural and metric invariances. For configural invariance, the CFI values for DCP, MRI, proactive socialization behavior, organizational identification, and the internalization of corporate values are .95, .89, .93, .94, and .91, respectively. For metric invariance, the CFI values for the same five measures are .95, .89, .92, .93, and .92, respectively. The configural and metric invariance values are very similar. Moreover, chi-squared tests of the difference between the configural and metric models yielded statistically nonsignificant values for all measures ($\Delta\chi^2 = 8.42$ [9] for DCP; $\Delta\chi^2 = 18.93$ [14] for MRI; $\Delta\chi^2 = 10.66$ [7] for proactive socialization behavior; $\Delta\chi^2 = 5.38$ [4] for organizational identification; and $\Delta\chi^2 = 4.18$ [6] for the internalization of corporate values); this supports the existence of full metric invariance between the Japanese and English versions.

Using the methods described above, we also tested the measurement equivalence of the internalization of corporate values, as rated by HQ managers (who assessed current inpatriates) and foreign-subsidiary managers (who assessed returned inpatriates). The configural invariance CFI value is .89, and the metric invariance CFI value is .88. The chi-

squared tests of the difference between the configural and metric models revealed statistically nonsignificant values ($\Delta\chi^2$ = 10.84 [6]); this supports the existence of full metric invariance between the HQ managers' ratings and the foreign-subsidiary managers' ratings.

RESULTS

The descriptive statistics and the correlations among the variables are shown in Table 1. Before testing the hypotheses, we conducted a CFA to examine discriminant validity and the potential common-method variance among the variables collected from the foreign employees; these results are shown in Table 2. As the original measures include many indicators relative to sample size, we reduced the number of indicators for each latent variable to prevent model misspecification due to excessive parameter estimations; this also allowed us to obtain stable estimates of the latent variables' structural relationships (e.g., Landis et al. 2000). To achieve a ratio of sample size to estimated parameters between 5:1 and 10:1 (Bentler and Chou 1987), we parceled the unidimensional items based on the CFA results for each variable (Rhemtulla 2016). Specifically, we parceled these items into the dimensions of developmental job assignments, psychosocial mentoring, and proactive socialization behavior. Likewise, we parceled the indicators for organizational identification into an aggregated indicator. The resulting four-factor model (Model 1 in Table 2) shows a good fit to the data (χ^2 [60] = 95.92; CFI = .93; TLI = .91; RMSEA= .07), and all of its factor loadings are significant and larger than .50. We compared the results of the CFA for the four-factor model with those of the one-factor model in which all the variables are attributed to common-method variance (Podsakoff et al. 2003). The CFA results for the one-factor model (Model 2 in Table 2) show a poor fit to the data (χ^2 [65] = 233.59; CFI = .68; TLI = .61; RMSEA= .15), and Model 1 fits the data significantly better than Model 2 ($\Delta\chi^2$ [5] = 137.67, $p < .001$). This indicates that common-method bias most likely does not exist in this study's data.

Insert Table 1 about here.

Insert Table 2 about here.

To test the hypotheses, we conducted structural equation modeling (SEM). In addition to reducing the number of indicators for the latent variables (in the same way that we did for the previous CFA), we aggregated the indicators for the internalization of corporate values that the supervisors rated. The results of this SEM are reported in Table 2. The SEM results for the initial model (Model 3 in Table 2) show a good fit (χ^2 [130] = 206.70; CFI = .89; TLI = .84; RMSEA = .07). Next, we tested alternative models in which the paths led from developmental job assignments and psychosocial mentoring to the internalization of corporate values. These SEM results (Model 4 in Table 2) show a strong model fit (χ^2 [128] = 193.18; CFI = .91; TLI = .86; RMSEA= .07) that are significantly better than that of Model 3 ($\Delta\chi^2$ [2] = 13.52, $p < .01$). Moreover, for Model 5 (also in Table 2), we added paths from developmental job assignments and psychosocial mentoring to organizational identification, as well as from proactive socialization behavior to the internalization of corporate values. However, this model's fit indices (χ^2 [125] = 192.16; CFI = .91; TLI = .86; RMSEA= .07) are not significantly better than those of Model 4 ($\Delta\chi^2$ [3] = 1.02). Based on the above results, we concluded that Model 4 yields the best fit for this study's data; thus, Model 4 is the final model. The path coefficients of Model 4 are shown in Figure 2.

Insert Figure 2 about here.

The final model indicates that the direct paths from both developmental job assignments ($\beta = .61$, $p < .001$) and psychosocial mentoring ($\beta = .30$, $p < .05$) to proactive socialization behavior are significant, thus supporting Hypotheses 1 and 2. In addition, the direct path from proactive socialization behavior to organizational identification is significant ($\beta = .44$, $p < .001$), which supports Hypothesis 3. Furthermore, the direct path from organizational identification to the internalization of corporate values is significant ($\beta = .14$, $p < .05$), which supports Hypothesis 4.

The results for Hypothesis 5 indicate that both proactive socialization behavior and organizational identification have sequential mediating effects on the relationships between two independent variables (developmental job assignments and psychosocial mentoring) and the dependent variable (internalization of corporate values). We tested this hypothesis using the following steps. First, we examined whether proactive socialization behavior mediates the paths from each of developmental job assignments and psychosocial mentoring to organizational identification. Aside from the support for Hypotheses 1 through 3, which implies the existence of such mediation, the direct paths from developmental job assignments and psychosocial mentoring to organizational identification in Model 5 of the SEM are nonsignificant ($\beta = -.23$ and $\beta = .01$, respectively); this suggests a full mediation effect. To check the robustness of the mediation, we used the bootstrapping approach (across 5000 samples) to test the indirect effects that developmental job assignments and psychosocial mentoring have on organizational identification through proactive socialization behavior (Hayes 2013). The results, which are shown in Table 3, indicate that developmental job

assignments (B = .203, 95% CI [.084, .338]) and psychosocial mentoring (B = .145, 95% CI [.044, .314]) each have significant indirect effects on organizational identification.

Insert Table 3 about here.

Second, we examined whether organizational identification mediates the path from proactive socialization behavior to the internalization of corporate values. In Model 5 of the SEM, aside from the support for Hypotheses 3 and 4, which lends initial support to this mediation, the direct path from proactive socialization behavior to the internalization of corporate values is nonsignificant (β = −.17). Because this direct path is nonsignificant, we suggest that there is a full mediation effect. To determine the robustness of this mediation, we used the bootstrapping approach (across 5000 samples) to test the indirect effects that proactive socialization behavior has on the internalization of corporate values through organizational identification. As shown in Table 3, the results indicate that proactive socialization behavior has a significant indirect effect on the internalization of corporate values (B = .074, 95% CI [.011, .158]).

Third, the evidence for the two mediating relationships examined above lends initial support for the existence of sequential mediation. However, although the direct path from developmental job assignments to the internalization of corporate values is nonsignificant (β =.11), the direct path from psychosocial mentoring to the internalization of corporate values is significant (β =.23, p < .01), which suggests that proactive socialization behavior and organizational identification partially serially mediate the relationship between psychosocial mentoring and the internalization of corporate values. Finally, we use the bootstrapping approach (again across 5000 samples) to test the serial indirect effects that developmental job

assignments and psychosocial mentoring have on the internalization of corporate values through proactive socialization behavior and organizational identification. As shown in Table 3, the results indicate that developmental job assignments (B = .037, 95% CI [.005, .079]) and psychosocial mentoring (B = .023, 95% CI [.002, .064]) each have a significant indirect effect on the internalization of corporate values. The overall results of these analyses partially support Hypothesis 5.

Finally, we created two alternative models to conduct an additional analysis regarding the possibility of reverse causality. In the first alternative model, we reversed the paths from each of developmental job assignments and psychosocial mentoring to proactive socialization behavior from the initial theoretical model to consider the possibility that inpatriates who exhibit a high level of proactive socialization behavior are more likely to receive high levels of developmental job assignments and psychosocial mentoring. In the second alternative model, we used two paths from the internalization of corporate values to each of developmental job assignments and psychosocial mentoring instead of a single path from organizational identification to the internalization of corporate values (as in the initial theoretical model) to consider the possibility that inpatriates who have already internalized the target company's values are more likely than other inpatriates to receive high levels of developmental job assignments and psychosocial mentoring. The results indicate that the fit of the final model is significantly better than that of the first ($\Delta\chi^2$ [2] = 13.05, p < .01) and second ($\Delta\chi^2$ [1] = 8.38, p < .05) alternative models described above.

DISCUSSION

To the best of our knowledge, this is the first attempt to understand how and why inpatriates internalize corporate values during assignments at the HQs of MNCs. By integrating the perspectives of international adjustment, organizational socialization, and on-

the-job learning in this study's theoretical model, we demonstrated that both developmental job assignments (a job-related factor) and psychosocial mentoring (a psychosocial factor), when provided during inpatriation at HQ, can influence employees' internalization of corporate values in the form of their behavioral demonstration in daily work-related activities. Our findings indicate that developmental job assignments facilitate inpatriates' on-the-job learning experiences, including the social learning process, and stimulate their proactivity in socializing themselves in the HQ environment. Our findings also indicate that psychological mentoring facilitates inpatriates' international adjustment in the HQ environment and helps them proactively socialize themselves in the HQ environment and engage in on-the job learning. Further, our findings involving proactive socialization behavior and organizational identification suggest that proactive socialization behavior is the main contributing factor in the process of learning corporate values and that the subsequent development of organizational identification is the main contributing factor to the internalization of corporate values.

Although this study primarily focused on the sequential mediation paths from developmental job assignments and psychosocial mentoring to the internalization of corporate values, the results also suggest that psychosocial mentoring has a direct effect on the internalization of corporate values. In this research, the psychosocial mentoring consisted of daily in-person interactions between inpatriates and mentors (supervisors or colleagues); therefore, it is possible that the mentors directly transmitted corporate values to the inpatriates through psychosocial mentoring. Indeed, the HQ employees may have accurate knowledge and a deep understanding of the target company's values, and their behaviors may strongly reflect those values, thus helping inpatriates to learn and internalize these values via their direct psychosocial-mentoring interactions with such HQ insiders. This outcome is consistent

with the predictions from our theoretical perspective such that inpatriates' frequent contacts with HQ employees will promote their social learning process.

Theoretical Implications

This study contributes to the literature on IB and inpatriates by providing the theoretical framework and empirical findings that accommodate the unique context wherein inpatriates who work at a MNC's HQ learn and internalize corporate values through their HQ experiences. First, our study highlighted the importance of the on-the-job learning process for the internalization of corporate values through inpatriation, job-related and psychosocial factors that facilitate on-the-job learning, and the sequential process of learning and internalizing corporate values through proactive socialization behavior and organizational identification. Our findings suggest that inpatriates' frequent contacts with HQ employees through conducting assigned duties, especially developmental job assignments, promote their social learning process. Psychosocial mentoring is also a factor that could facilitate the internalization of corporate values among inpatriates due to social learning. The theoretical framework proposed in the study is particularly critical in the context of inpatriation because the mission of absorbing corporate values at HQ distinguishes inpatriation from other international assignments (e.g., expatriation, in which home-country employees are sent to foreign subsidiaries).

Second, the theoretical framework and findings in this study provide explanations for why developmental job assignments and psychological mentoring in the HQ environment are necessary in promoting inpatriates' internalization of corporate values, which addresses the theoretical puzzles we discussed in the introduction. That is, while inpatriates are generally highly competent, motivated, and proactive, they might be rather passive when performing job duties at a HQ because of status inconsistency and the liability of being a foreigner.

Organizational socialization may not naturally be offered to inpatriates because HQ employees tend to see them as different types of employees (e.g., outsiders). Therefore, their proactive potential and ability to learn and internalize corporate values will not function effectively without the stimulation and support of job assignments and interactions with HQ employees. These job-related and psychosocial factors enable inpatriates to proactively explore the necessary information for a deeper understanding of corporate values and to observe HQ employees' behavior for social learning, while overcoming the difficulties of adjusting to the HQ environment.

Practical Implications

This study's findings have several practical implications. First, although corporate values should be shared throughout the entire MNC to ensure success, and although such values provide an effective means to manage HQ–subsidiary relations, universally shared values are quite challenging to achieve because subsidiaries are geographically dispersed, internally differentiated, and both culturally and linguistically diverse. In this regard, MNCs can benefit from our theoretical framework and findings in promoting the internalization of corporate values among inpatriates and expect them to disseminate the values in foreign subsidiaries after their repatriation. In particular, managers of MNCs should be aware of the important role of developmental job assignments and psychosocial mentoring to facilitate inpatriates' internalization of corporate values. Without these practices, inpatriates may not be able to make the most of their proactive potential and learning abilities due to the difficulties they face at HQs. Indeed, MNCs could develop specific guidelines to offer developmental job assignments to their inpatriates at HQ. MNCs could also offer formal mentoring practices for inpatriates, as well as encourage their HQ employees to provide psychosocial mentoring to inpatriates.

Managers of MNCs should also pay close attention to and actively support inpatriates' on-the-job learning process for their internalization of corporate values because MNCs' corporate values are deeply embedded in the jobs and people of the HQ environment. For example, managers of MNCs could facilitate inpatriates' social learning by creating an environment where inpatriates and HQ employees interact with each other frequently and inpatriates are therefore motivated to proactively socialize into the HQ context. Under this HQ environment, inpatriates are more likely to identify themselves to their MNCs and are motivated to engage in behaviors that are consistent with the MNCs' corporate values. In addition, focusing on job-related and psychosocial factors in the HQ environment and paying particular attention to the on-the-job leaning process may not only be beneficial for inpatriates' internalization of MNCs' corporate values but may also generate many other positive inpatriate outcomes, such as increasing their managerial skills because inpatriates will have greater access to corporate knowledge though the practices and develop stronger identification with the MNCs. These benefits could continue even after their repatriation such that they demonstrate excellent job and managerial performance at their foreign subsidiaries and are less likely to leave their MNCs.

Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations. For example, its data are essentially cross-sectional. Therefore, the causal inferences that can be made from the data are limited. We tried to address this issue by conducting additional analyses using alternative models to examine possible reverse causality. We found that the final model yielded the best fit to the data. Additionally, the proposed theoretical mechanism underlies two assumptions: (1) that job-related and psychosocial factors stimulate inpatriates' proactivity and (2) that inpatriates have low levels of organizational identification and internalization of corporate values when they

arrive at HQ. These assumptions cement the basis for the development of both this study's hypothetical model and the proposed causal relationships, which the results indicate are more plausible than alternative explanations. Nonetheless, we cannot completely rule out the possibility of reverse causality (i.e., that the inpatriates who socialized proactively or who had internalized corporate values before arriving at HQ were more likely than other inpatriates to receive developmental job assignments and psychosocial mentoring). Future researchers could utilize longitudinal research designs to overcome this issue. A further limitation is that we collected the key variables of this study using self-report measures. Therefore, common-method variance could be an issue. However, we collected data from two sources: both foreign-subsidiary employees working at the target company's HQ (i.e., inpatriates) and their immediate supervisors at the time of the survey. This helped minimize common-source bias. We also used CFA to test whether common-method variance affected the data and the subsequent analyses, and the results suggest that such effects are less likely.

Furthermore, the target of this empirical study is a Japanese MNC, and the majority of foreign-subsidiary employees who participated in this study came from Asian countries, with relatively few participants from other parts of the world (e.g., European and North American countries). Therefore, this study's findings may be specifically associated with the Japanese management style and with Asian cultures. For example, Japanese firms tend to emphasize normative cultural control rather than administrative control (Wang 2009 2011; Wilkins and Ouchi 1983). Although both forms of control are effective means of managing MNCs (Nohria and Ghoshal 1994), MNCs from other parts of the world (e.g., the West) may be less focused than Japanese MNCs on transferring corporate values across borders. Additionally, in an Asian MNC, proactive socialization behavior and organizational identification are more likely to manifest for Asian employees than non-Asian ones because of cultural proximity (e.g., a

Chinese inpatriate has greater proximity than a French inpatriate at a Japanese HQ). Therefore, future researchers should constructively replicate this study's framework and extend its findings in other contexts (e.g., the West), such as by using a group of employees that is more culturally diverse and from a wider array of countries.

As this is the initial attempt to examine how and why inpatriates learn and internalize corporate values, its findings open up various new research possibilities. One such possibility would be to extend the current study's theoretical framework by further exploring the influence of a MNC's HQ context, including job-related and psychosocial factors, as in our study, on inpatriates' on-the-job learning process and the resultant outcomes, such as internalization of corporate values. For example, future research could examine the effect of HQ climate, such as climate for inclusion (e.g., Nishii, 2013), which reduces adjustment challenges and promotes proactivity and organizational identification among inpatriates. Future research could also examine particular practices at HQ, such as training for inpatriates to promote the understanding of MNCs' mission statements, which might contribute to inpatriates' internalization of corporate values. Furthermore, the nature of social exchange between inpatriates and HQ employees and supervisors deserves future research because it might influence inpatriates' social learning. This line of research could examine not only the internalization of corporate values but also various other inpatriation outcomes that are influenced by their on-the-job learning process. In so doing, future research could develop an integrative theoretical framework of inpatriates' experiences at HQ, which has significant implications for the theory and practice of inpatriate management.

Given the importance of transferring corporate values across national borders for MNCs, another future research possibility could be to focus on an MNC's foreign subsidiary context and investigate what factors promote the dissemination of MNCs' corporate values

that inpatriates bring to them. These factors could include the cultural and institutional characteristics of host countries, foreign subsidiaries' strategic roles within MNCs, organizational structure, climate, and other workplace characteristics as well as returning inpatriates' individual characteristics. This line of research could be further extended to the development of a more comprehensive picture of MNCs' transfer of corporate values across national borders using various types of international assignments. Recently, some researchers have suggested that certain types of international assignments (e.g., inpatriation and expatriation or short-term and long-term) complement each other and foster the effective knowledge transfer between HQ and foreign subsidiaries (Duvivier et al. 2019). Because an increasing number of MNCs are seeking to combine various types of international assignments (Moeller and Reiche 2017; Reiche et al. 2009b), future research on the transfer of corporate values through inpatriation helps them by providing useful information to determine the best combination of various international assignments for transferring corporate values across borders.

      In conclusion, in this study, we proposed and tested a new theoretical framework that introduces a new avenue of research through which researchers can reveal the mechanisms through which inpatriation and other international assignments enable the transfer and dissemination of MNCs' corporate values across borders. Through this avenue, researchers can also provide a comprehensive understanding of inpatriates' HQ experiences.

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Table 1. Descriptive statistics and correlations of key variables in this study [a]

		Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.	Age	31.87	5.66										
2.	Gender (male = 1)	.74	.44	-.05									
3.	Inpatriation status (returned = 1)	.56	.50	.46	.13								
4.	Length of assignment (months)	25.43	9.98	-.21	.06	-.36							
5.	Foreign subsidiary (China = 1)	.39	.49	-.42	-.03	-.26	.15						
6.	Internalization of corporate values among unit members	4.95	.62	.12	.14	-.03	.02	-.25					
7.	Developmental job assignments	4.98	.89	.25	.09	.12	-.14	-.14	.17				
8.	Psychosocial mentoring	4.63	.92	-.02	.06	.08	-.09	-.12	.19	.31			
9.	Proactive socialization behavior	5.25	.78	.14	.12	.09	.09	-.01	.24	.50	.40		
10.	Organizational identification	5.14	.91	.04	.06	.08	.00	-.03	.03	.18	.26	.39	
11.	Internalization of corporate values	4.85	.86	.40	.05	.50	-.17	-.34	.41	.29	.35	.31	.27

$N = 110$.

a. Critical r, $p \leq .05$, two-tailed, $|r| = .187$, Critical r, $p \leq .01$, two-tailed, $|r| = .245$, Critical r, $p \leq .001$, two-tailed, $|r| = .310$.

Table 2. Results of confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling

Model	Description	χ^2	df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA
Model 1	Confirmatory factor analysis (four-factor model)	95.92	60	.93	.91	.07
Model 2	Confirmatory factor analysis (one-factor model)	233.59	65	.68	.61	.15
Model 3	Theoretical model	206.70	130	.89	.84	.07
Model 4	Model 3 + Direct paths from developmental job assignments and psychosocial mentoring to internalization of corporate values	193.18	128	.91	.86	.07
Model 5	Model 4 + Direct Paths from developmental job assignments and psychosocial mentoring to organizational identification, and from proactive socialization behavior to internalization of corporate values	192.16	125	.91	.86	.07

Table 3. Tests of indirect effect of the mediators from a bootstrapping approach

Independent variable	Mediator	Dependent variable	B [a]	95% CI [b]	
				Lower	Upper
Developmental job assignments	Proactive socialization behavior	Organizational identification	.203	.084	.338
Psychosocial mentoring	Proactive socialization behavior	Organizational identification	.145	.044	.314
Proactive socialization behavior	Organizational identification	Internalization of corporate values	.074	.011	.158
Developmental job assignments	Proactive socialization behavior, organizational identification	Internalization of corporate values	.037	.005	.079
Psychosocial mentoring	Proactive socialization behavior, organizational identification	Internalization of corporate values	.023	.002	.064

N = 110; Number of bootstrapping resamples = 5000.

a. B represents a standardized indirect effect.
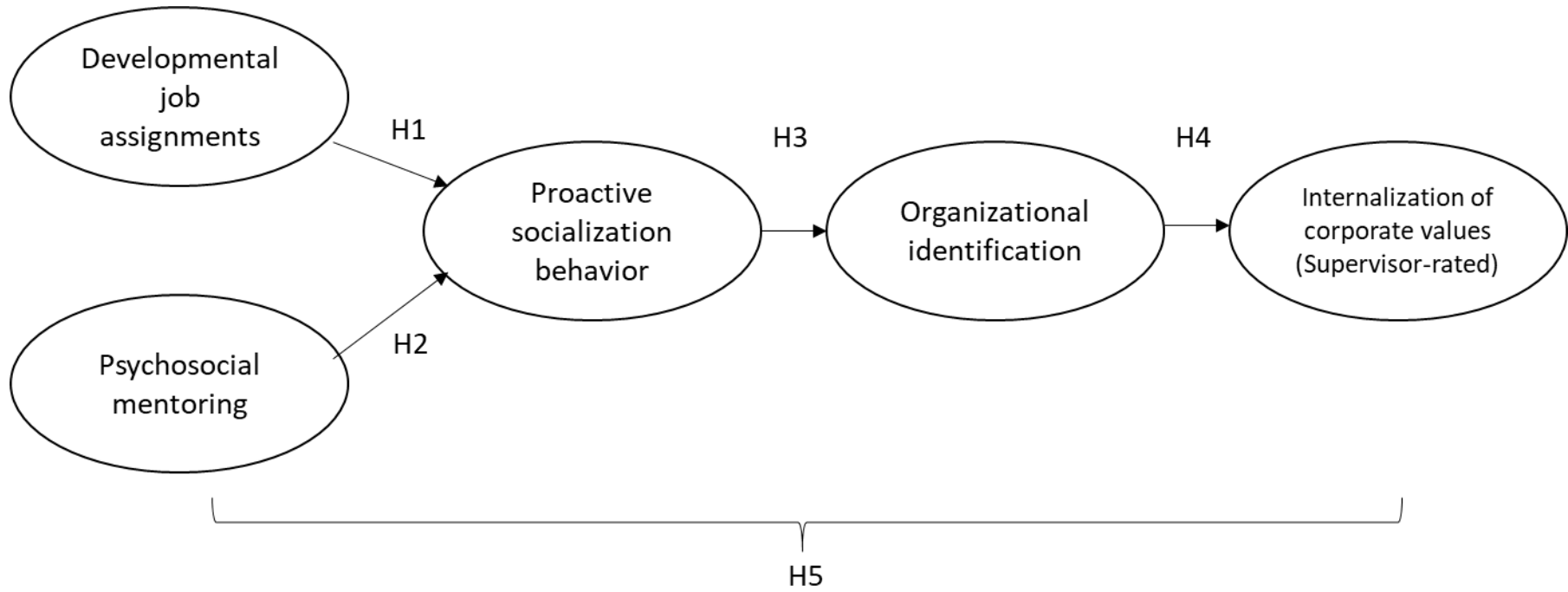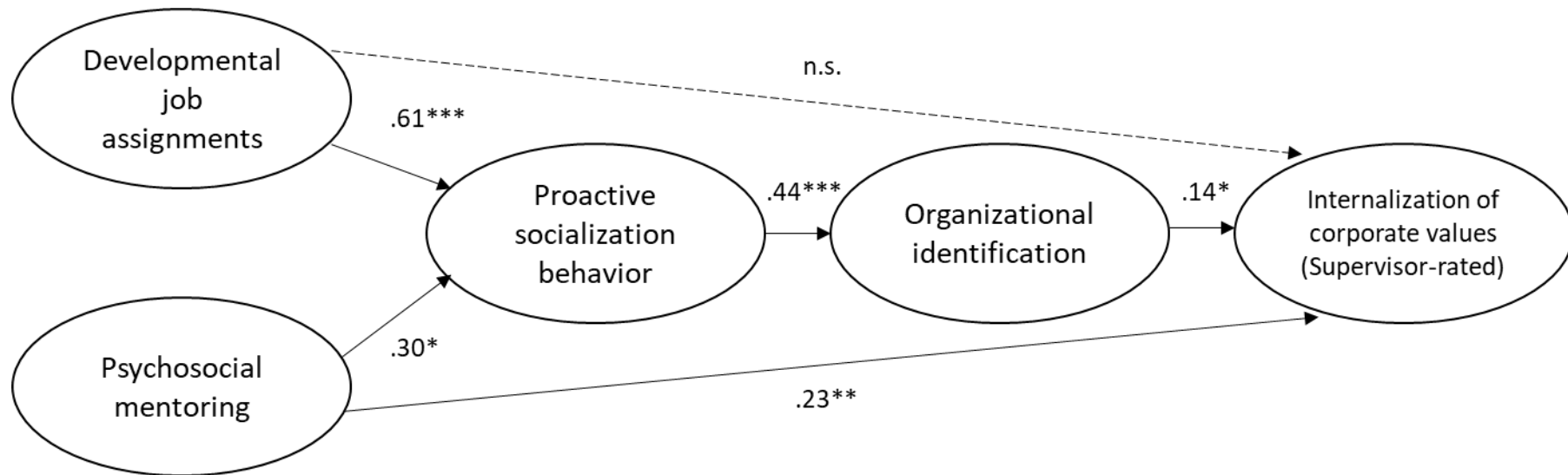b. CI = bias-corrected confidential interval.

Figure 1. The theoretical model

Figure 2. Final model from structural equation modeling (Model 4)

Note: $N = 110$. Standardized path coefficients are presented. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. Results from control variables are omitted from the figure for simplicity.