Vendor’s Boundary Spanning Behaviour in IT Outsourcing

Submission Type: Completed Research Paper

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Abstract

IT outsourcing success depends on efficient management of client-vendor relationships, wherein, boundary spanners play a crucial role. Boundary spanners are individuals, who operate at the boundary of an organization, performing relevant tasks (Leifer & Delbecq, 1978). In this research we use a qualitative case research method to address the research question “How do boundary spanners influence client-vendor relationships in IT outsourcing engagements?” We have conducted in-depth case based studies of boundary spanners in medium and large Indian IT vendor organizations. The social capital framework guides inductive analysis in this study. The contribution of this study is three fold - (i) develops propositions regarding how boundary spanners operate (ii) empirically validates the elements of social capital of Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) framework in an IT outsourcing context (iii) extends the existing social capital framework by trying to disentangle the constituent elements and develop a sequence of these elements for social capital formation.

Key Words: IT Outsourcing, Boundary Spanners, Social Capital

Introduction

IT outsourcing has witnessed continuous growth since its prominent adoption by Kodak in 1989. Today, it is a global market estimated to be worth more than $300 billion with a compound annual growth rate of around 5% (Harris, Hale, Brown, Young, & Morikawa, 2009). Over time, outsourcing research issues have also evolved from whether to outsource to how to manage outsourcing (Dibbern et al. 2004). Early research has demonstrated that the management of relationship between the clients and the vendors is a key predictor of outsourcing success (Grover et al. 1996, Lee et al. 1999). Despite the understanding offered by the studies on IT outsourcing relationships, PricewaterhouseCoopers (2009) found that only 40% of client/vendor relationships are working effectively, indicating that many organizations and vendors still need to work out relationship issues. In order to develop this line of research, and following Kern and Willcocks’ (2002) call to address relationship management in IT outsourcing, we propose to study the role of boundary spanners in doing so.

Boundary spanners function as exchange agents between the organization and its environment (Leifer & Delbecq, 1978). These roles are vital to the effective monitoring of the environment, the transfer of technology and information across boundaries as well as to represent the organization to the external environment (Keller & Holland, 1975). IT outsourcing being an inter-organizational context, boundary spanners play a crucial role in relationship building and management between client and vendor organizations. While, the role of the boundary spanner is fairly well understood (Aldrich & Herker, 1977; Ancona & Caldwell, 1992), understanding regarding the process of boundary spanning is still limited.

This study attempts to address this gap. It uses a social capital lens to understand the role of a boundary spanner in a client-vendor relationship. We use a qualitative case research method to address the research question “How do boundary spanners influence client-vendor relationships in IT outsourcing engagements?” We have divided our paper into five sections. Section 1 is an introduction to Boundary Spanning. In Section 2 we review the relevant literature. Section 3 consists of the research methodology. In Section 4 we present the data and its analysis, while Section 5 deals with the conclusion of the paper.
Literature Review

In the past, research has explored both the characteristics of boundary spanning roles as well as those of individuals occupying these roles (Aldrich & Herker, 1977; David, Pearce, & Elliott, 1982; Keller & Holland, 1975; Organ, 1971; Tushman & Scanlan, 1981). Studies demonstrated that it would be very difficult to build inter-organizational relationships in the absence of boundary spanners (Aldrich & Herker, 1977; Ancona & Caldwell, 1992). The functions of a boundary spanner were that of information processing (Aldrich & Herker, 1977; Ancona & Caldwell, 1990, 1992; Leifer & Delbecq, 1978; Tushman & Scanlan, 1981) and external representation (Aldrich & Herker, 1977; Ancona & Caldwell, 1990, 1992, Barner-Rasmussen, Ehrnrooth, Koveshnikov, & Makela, 2010).

Boundaries can be spanned effectively only by individuals who understand the coding schemes and are attuned to the contextual information on both sides of the boundary (Carlile, 2002). A boundary spanner in an information processing role is typically responsible for tasks like scouting (Ancona & Caldwell, 1990), informing (Ancona & Caldwell, 1992), scanning (Ancona & Caldwell, 1992), gate-keeping (Ancona & Caldwell, 1990), protecting, allowing entry, translating and filtering information.

Unlike pure information processing, external representation role helps to not only maintain and improve the political legitimacy of the organization but also to mediate between the organization and other important outside organizations (Aldrich & Herker, 1977). Boundary spanners in this function mediate, negotiate and coordinate with an important outside organization (Aldrich & Herker, 1977; Ancona & Caldwell, 1992). As their main tasks they must be able to solve problems, administrate, communicate, anticipate customer needs and build relationships (Abratt & Kelly, 2002; Walter, 1999; Weitz & Bradford, 1999). They open up channels of communications, share ideas of each organization with the other, translate, seek feedback, be an ambassador and mold & manage the organization’s image with important outside organizations (Ancona & Caldwell, 1990, 1992; Friedman & Podolny, 1992).

Thus, we see that literature largely explains “what” a boundary spanner does, but research on “how” a boundary spanner influences business alliances in their information processing and external representation functions are limited. Ferguson et al. (2005) have explored “how” boundary spanners in their information processing role positively influence business alliances. However, a similar exploration for boundary spanners in their external representative function has not been done yet.

Boundary Spanners and Social Capital

The structural position, of a boundary spanner gives them a unique position of being the “central connector” (Cross & Prusak, 2002) in the networks of the collaborating organizations. They use their symbolic position or their personal/professional relationship to help link people across organizational boundaries and become a channel between the two groups interpreting the meaning communicated by each group to the other (Boland & Tenkasi, 1995). They can actively intervene to create positive outcomes to build trust, solve misunderstandings and manage conflicts between the two groups (Kostova & Roth, 2003). While the structural position of the boundary spanner lends power and legitimacy to his/her role, the cognitive elements of creating a shared context is also of great importance in creating an effective boundary spanning function (Levina & Vaast, 2005).

As we can see from the above studies, there are mentions of concepts of network ties, shared context, and trust for understanding a boundary spanner’s role. However, our literature review revealed that a systematic process approach to boundary spanning activity is not available. This triggered our use of the social capital framework for understanding boundary spanning process. In order to explore “how” a boundary spanner could positively influence business alliances, we have used the Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) classification of social capital. This considers social capital in an organization context. Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) have classified social capital as consisting of three elements, structural social capital, cognitive social capital and relational social capital. Structural social capital refers to the overall patterns of connections between actors, presence or absence of network ties, patterns of linkages like density and connectivity of the network as well as the appropriability of the network, that is, existence of networks created for one purpose could be used for another purpose (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). Cognitive social capital refers to resources providing shared representations, interpretations and systems of meaning among...
parties (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). Relational social capital describes the kind of personal relationships people have developed with each other through interactions (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998).

The outsourcing context, offers a unique opportunity to study boundary spanning relationships between a client and vendor and how strategic business alliances are formed between them. However, the process of relationship building by these boundary spanners in an IT outsourcing context has not been completely understood yet. This requires a separate examination as boundary spanners in this context, have an additional role of knowledge creation and service delivery, besides the primary responsibility for information exchange and external representation between the organization and its task environment. The implications of this research are extremely important for building, developing, and managing the client-vendor relationship in IT outsourcing.

**Research Methodology**

This research adopts a case study method to address the research question: “How do boundary spanners influence client-vendor relationships in IT outsourcing engagements?” The case study strategy is most likely to be appropriate for ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions (Yin, 2003). As mentioned in the earlier section, the literature on boundary spanning activity is limited and not adequate to develop propositions. Hence, we adopt an exploratory case study method towards theory building. Theory building requires a multiple case design, which is often considered more compelling, and therefore more robust (Herriott & Firestone, 1983). Here multiple cases are considered equivalent to multiple experiments. Hence, central to building theory from case studies is replication logic. As in multiple experiments, a significant finding from a single case study, drives the immediate research goal of replicating this finding in second, and third cases. These replications may be either in identical conditions, or by altering one or two conditions, considered irrelevant to the original finding, to see whether the finding could still be duplicated (Yin, 2003, pp 47). Thus, in our study, multiple case design has been planned for literal and theoretical replication (Yin, 2003). The theory-building process occurs via recursive cycling among the case data, emerging theory, and later, extant literature. Particular instance of relationship between a boundary spanner and a client team was considered as a case, and is the unit of analysis for the study.

In this paper we present 3 case studies as analytic units for building theory. These 3 cases, study 2 boundary spanners in outsourcing relationships. As per the unit of analysis defined above, two separate relationships of one boundary spanner have been considered as 2 cases. The contexts of outsourcing in the 3 cases are – Application Development, Application Maintenance, and IT Consulting. The within-case and between-case analysis of these cases help us generate preliminary propositions. All the current cases illustrate highly successful client-vendor relationships, as perceived by the concerned boundary spanner. Thus, replication across the 3 successful cases in different outsourcing contexts contributes to the robustness of the developed propositions.

Our empirical approach comprises the use of social capital conceptual framework (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998) to interpret data from our cases to understand how a boundary spanner operates, especially in the context of IT outsourcing. This framework guides inductive analysis and prevents ‘data overload and lack of compatibility across cases’ (Miles & Huberman, 1994). We wish to study the personal and informal styles of boundary spanners, so our investigation relies largely on detailed interviews with the participants regarding their intentions, and perceptions of their roles. The boundary spanners themselves have been identified to be the only informants because no one else would be able to throw light on the drivers of their actions. We also reviewed email interactions of our respondents with members of the client team, as well as members of their own teams to ensure the veracity of data shared. This helped triangulation of interview data. Particular instance of relationship between a boundary spanner and a client team was considered as a case, and is the unit of analysis for the study. The current cases illustrate highly successful client-vendor relationships, as perceived by the concerned boundary spanner.

Data was collected through semi-structured face-to-face interviews over 4 meetings of 4 hours each. The respondents were Regional Delivery Managers and Consultants in a medium and a large Indian IT vendor organization. These vendor organisations were chosen because they demonstrated intensive boundary spanning activities. The digital recordings of interviews were transcribed verbatim. We used Nvivo-8, a
leading qualitative software package, to develop the first level of coding of the interview data (Lewis & Silver, 2007; Richards, 1999).

Based on the data available we did a within case analysis of the research sites. Each researcher separately coded the data twice after an elapse of 3 weeks. Both intra-rater and inter-rater reliability was checked and the percent agreement was found to be 98% and 92% respectively. We also did a between case analysis and developed propositions which can be used for empirical validations.

**Description of Case Data**

We studied three cases within two outsourcing relationships.

**Tigae and Hwobs**

Tigae is a globally respected medium-sized information technology and business process outsourcing conglomerate in India. In close to twenty years of its existence, it has made a name for itself worldwide in providing IT outsourcing solutions. Tigae manages its relationships with its customers by appointing Delivery Managers in various regions. The role of the delivery manager is to maintain client vendor relationships and get more business from the client.

Hwobs is a large American brokerage and banking company, based in San Francisco, California. The company serves 7.9 million client brokerage accounts from over 300 offices in the U.S, one office in Puerto Rico, and one branch in London.

In the Tigae-Hwobs relationship, we have studied two boundary spanning situations –

Case 1: boundary spanning with its vendor management organization (VMO), and

Case 2: boundary spanning with the data warehousing unit.

**Innotech and BestBank**

Innotech is a globally respected software technology service provider based in India. In over thirty years of its existence, it has made a name for itself worldwide in the application development and maintenance sphere.

BestBank, is an Australian bank and financial-services provider headquartered in Sydney. It is one of Australia’s big four banks and is also the second-largest bank in New Zealand.

This case is set at a time when BestBank as an entity had just undergone a very big change, as it had just emerged post the merger of three big banks. This merger resulted in IT disruption. Innotech’s consulting offering to BestBank was to enable IT synergy. The study in question (Case 3) analyses the boundary spanning process in this case.

**Data Analysis**

The interview data was transcribed verbatim, and the social capital conceptual framework (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998) was used to guide the data reduction and coding process. Operational definitions for all key concepts of the framework were borrowed from Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998). Operational definitions were strictly adhered to so as to facilitate consistent categorization of interview data (Miles & Huberman, 1994). “Any block of data, a clause, sentence or paragraph is usually a candidate for more than one code” (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Multiple coding of data segments are considered useful for both descriptive and inferential codes (Miles & Huberman, 1994). In our analysis too, we had instances where data segments were coded under one or more categories as was appropriate based on the idea communicated by the block of data and the operational definition (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The interview data collected in the three cases studied was used to populate Table 2. This table illustrates the presence of elements (rows) of social capital in all the three cases (columns). It also presents additional concepts like joint problem solving and growth that help understand the boundary spanning process.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements of Social Capital</th>
<th>Case 1</th>
<th>Case 2</th>
<th>Case 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structural Elements</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Network ties and configuration</strong></td>
<td>“Our relationship with the people in VMO was weak. I, personally, connected with the lady VP first. Built a rapport with her slowly.”</td>
<td>“The manager heading the Data Warehousing unit had a Tigae connection.”</td>
<td>“I decided to approach William for two reasons, one, he was from our team and two, he was widely respected by BestBank’s employees.”</td>
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<td><strong>Appropriable organization</strong></td>
<td>“At the conference I made friends with people at VMO…. Through them I got to know the gaps in skills and capabilities…. This helped me identify new offerings…”</td>
<td>“He had worked with Tigae in the past. It would have been a very hard sale otherwise.”</td>
<td>“…. I went to a barbeque party hosted by her. Through her I met lots of others in the project….Once you get to know them, they were very helpful and friendly.”</td>
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<td><strong>Cognitive Social Capital</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Shared Context</strong></td>
<td>“We set up an all US Customer conclave. VMO was given an invite and the Sr. Vice President became a part of our social engagements.”</td>
<td>“The manager ... Data Warehousing unit ... had worked with Tigae in the past. You always have an affinity towards a place you have worked in. I just worked on him.”</td>
<td>“I met one lady from the client team, on her desk there were photos of dogs, we had a dog, I shared my dog story with her, and she with me, so it was 80% dog story 20% work, but end of the day, she made sure that I got tons of material.”</td>
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<td><strong>Relational Social Capital</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Norms</strong></td>
<td>“So, they would share all the requests raised by different business unit, even if it didn’t always didn’t translate into work orders for us.”</td>
<td>“Because of involvement and strong advocates on the client side – they would not escalate matters; they would call us and bash us up rather than escalate.”</td>
<td>“The way we would work is, I would crack the data, and go back to them with my analysis and request their opinion? Then they would say that you are on the right path, or they would say there is another perspective to that, and reveal some hidden fact.”</td>
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<td><strong>Trust</strong></td>
<td>“I showed them my keenness in working with them when I quickly recruited and identified right resources with needed certification. Then they began to trust me, that I am not just making superficial statements, but mean business.”</td>
<td>“By now they knew that we would be able to set things right at our level”.</td>
<td>“I would collect information, and tell them, this is the information you gave, this is how I am using it. Basically transparency. So the minute they get confidence, you are not misusing the data. They will share information.”</td>
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| **Obligations & expectations** | “We invited sales reps to conferences which we were holding for all our customers.” | “We made a new Data Warehouse client talk to our old client thus, making them thought leaders. Makes them feel important in the industry.” | “Many of them did not have access to the CIO, so could not present their views to him. But as I had access, they would try to use me to send the ideas across….. At the end of the day, once
the CIO endorsed the project, they were willing to act upon that as they were involved in the solutioning.”

“I knew that if I needed to break into Hwobs, I needed to work on the off-beat areas.”

“When the team is small, the service provider team identifies with customer more. This identification is a double-edged sword. Sometimes they get absorbed by the client. To continue the relationship, we let go off a few people.”

“The actually wanted to know if it [our solution] will solve their [business] problem. This our people had not understood... I understood this. I began to talk with the clients with conviction.... this was appreciated by them.”

I heard from my friends at VMO that they were struggling to look for vendors with the right capabilities in some off-beat areas.... I worked with them.... quickly recruited and identified right resources with needed certification... Worked with VMO and created an offering meaningful to both, them and us.”

“The project here was high pressure. Turnaround times for problem resolution needed to be very low. Both our teams had to closely work together to ensure there were no lapses. I even got them to meet our senior management.”

“I understood that they were looking at a business solution not a technology solution. I knew technology and they knew the business problem. So, I would involve them in the whole process... they will feel connected, and they would support you. At the same time, they met their KPIs.”

“With this energy we went on to create a 7mn dollar account. Once we built a rapport with one unit that opened many other doors.”

“This was a new area when we took it up but finally resulted in becoming a $4.5 million account.”

“From a twenty five member assignment, this account today has crossed into a $140 million account.”

**Table 1: Cross case analysis with interview quotes**
We did a within case and between-case analysis, and attempted generalization of boundary spanner behaviour across cases. Within each case, we looked for patterns that allowed us to deduce the steps through which the elements of social capital fitted together in a pathway for ensuring the boundary spanner’s success in growing the account. Within case analysis was done by creating cause effect matrices for each of the cases and developing detailed process maps for each of the cases these maps and matrices were developed using the methodology suggested by (Miles & Huberman, 1994) All three cases were analyzed in a similar manner. Each of the within case analysis affirmed the existence of the social capital variables and a temporal direction of how a boundary spanner achieved growth of the account. After the within case analysis, we did a cross case analysis. Through the within case analysis, we had already identified the key factors and their relationships within each of the three cases. The relationship between two factors is called a stream (for example, in case 2, a past affiliations (shared context) lead to ability to leverage relations in present context (Leveraging appropriable organization)) (Miles & Huberman, 1994). As prescribed by Miles and Huberman (1994) we did a cross case analysis by picking up the identified streams in one case and comparing them with the identified streams in the other two cases. This is in effect a pattern matching approach, where we attempted to observe that given a similar scenario, could we discover a pattern found in one case being replicated in other cases too (Miles & Huberman, 1994). We found a clear temporal sequence that was common across the three cases (Figure 1). In each of the three cases we observed that as a first step, the boundary spanner attempted to develop cognitive social capital by building informal social acceptance. He generated the cognitive social capital through his present and past affiliations with employees of the client team. Subsequently, the cognitive connect was appropriated to help increase network ties in the client organization. This led to increased structural social capital. The structural and cognitive elements enabled social acceptance of the boundary spanner. He used network resources to create joint problem solving situations wherein both the client and vendor teams worked together. This resulted in the vendor identifying with client issues, developing norms of behavior, setting obligations and expectations between the two teams, and generating trust between them. The outcome of this was generation of relational capital in the professional context resulting in client’s professional acceptance of the vendor team. We observed that this sequence of events in boundary spanning resulted in successful growth of the account. In order to attain a generalizable model, we had to drop a few streams that were local to a particular case and did not have a direct bearing on the research question or any of the key factors (Miles & Huberman, 1994). For example in case 1, the case was an existing engagement, which had run into some trouble, so before the boundary spanning exercise towards growth could be put in place, the boundary spanner had to take some corrective operational measures to set the hygiene factors in place.

![Figure 1: Conceptual Model for Boundary Spanning](image-url)
As we observed similar pattern across the three cases we have used one example from each case to explain the conceptual model in Figure 1.

**Building Social Acceptance through Cognitive Social Capital**

In Case 1, the Regional Delivery Manager of Tigae who was the designated boundary spanner built an informal relationship with the Senior Vice President of the Vendor Management Organisation (VMO) of Hwob's. He did this by inviting her and other employees in VMO to Tigae's Customer Conclave. Through this social engagement he developed a rapport with all of them. In case 2, we found the manager from the data warehousing unit had previously worked with Tigae, this past shared context, gave the designated boundary spanner an opportunity to build informal relationship with the manager.

*Proposition 1: A past or present shared context, helps a boundary spanner build cognitive social capital.*

**Building Social Acceptance through Structural Social Capital**

In Case 3, through these ties, the boundary spanner was able to meet other employees at BestBank. Going through these ties helped him gain a better footing among BestBank employees as he was introduced by someone they considered a part of their group. Thus, their openness to listening to him was more than it would have been had he approached them purely as an Innotech employee. The boundary spanner was not only able to build social ties with the client organization, but he was also able to appropriate them for other purposes like understanding the perspective of the client organization and leveraging them for professional purposes. This indicates that he was able to successfully create structural social capital at the client organization. In this way he developed social acceptance in the client organization.

*Proposition 2: Existence of cognitive social capital, facilitates the formation of structural social capital, in an unknown environment.*

*Proposition 3: Cognitive and structural social capital, helps the boundary spanner achieve social acceptance.*

**Building Professional Acceptance through Joint Problem Solving**

In Case 1, the boundary spanner, through his informal connects at the VMO got to know that the VMO were in search of new vendor's who were willing to work on certain off-beat areas. VMO faced problems getting vendors for those areas, as incumbent vendors were not specialized enough, and could not commit to acquiring specialized resources. VMO had limited visibility of external specialist, and the requirement being urgent, they were tight on time. Tigae did not readily have the said expertise. But the boundary spanner, began to work with his connects at VMO to understand the nature of the project, and required capabilities. He was able to source the necessary resources with the required certifications. He ensured that all checks like people background verification, audit, and systems to ensure reporting compliances were all met. Thus, from being a non-participant in that area, Tigae became a viable vendor for VMO to consider. The boundary spanner was able to create this joint problem solving situation, only because of the informal ties that he had with employees at VMO.

*Proposition 4: Structural and cognitive social capital, facilitate joint problem solving situations.*

**Building Professional Acceptance through Relational Social Capital**

In Case 2, the boundary spanner was involved in a joint problem solving situation, where the client and vendor were in a high pressure engagement where the speed of execution was critical to the project. The vendor and client had created a working environment, where both would work closely together to resolve issues at the earliest. Hwobs The moment an issue would crop up, the client would call the boundary spanner and candidly state the problem. The boundary spanner in response would ensure that he immediately arrives at the client site, and resolves the problem. So, despite problems arising in the project, the client and vendor team (boundary spanner) had created a norm where no escalations happened to the vendor organization. The boundary spanner had managed to set the expectations of the clients, by assuring priority and quick quality response. The boundary spanner also made the Data Warehouse client talk to their other clients, showcasing the work done by the Data Warehouse team, this made them feel important.
in the industry, and a sense of obligation to the vendor was developed. The boundary spanner also ensure that the client could do that as he trusted the boundary spanner's abilities and knew that he could handle things at his level. The boundary spanner also committed himself to the problem, with a high level of intensity, as he identified with the client problem. The entire vendor team, closely identified itself with the client, this in fact also lead to the vendor losing some of its employees to the client. In this way, through the joint problem solving situation, the boundary spanner was able to create a relational social capital with the client. The existence of this joint problem solving situation and relational social capital, leads to the development of professional acceptance by the vendor organization.

**Proposition 5:** The joint problem solving situation leads to the creation of relational social capital.

**Proposition 6:** The existence of relational social capital and joint problem solving in a professional setting helps a boundary spanner gain professional acceptance.

**Growth of the Account**

In all three cases, we observed a growth of the account. Case 1 and 2 refer to the Tigae–Hwobs engagement. This account grew from two people to $7 million. The relationship built with these two units, helped them connect with many other units at Hwobs. In Case 3 as well, the boundary spanner grew the account from a small twenty five team member engagement into a $140 million business.

**Proposition 7:** Ceterus paribus, the growth of an engagement is dependent on the boundary spanner's ability to create and leverage the cognitive, structural and relational social capital.

**Conclusion**

In this paper, we develop a process to describe how boundary spanners influence client-vendor relationships. Our empirical findings enable us to make several contributions to the literature on boundary spanning and Social Capital. This paper extends research on boundary spanning by developing an in-depth understanding of how boundary spanners create inter-organizational relationships in an IT outsourcing context. Our results revealed that boundary spanners positively influence client-vendor relationships by creating and leveraging social capital, and thereby facilitating increase in revenue from a particular engagement.

This paper also extends the research on social capital by attempting to understand how the various elements of social capital (namely, structural, cognitive, and relational) (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998) interact with each other and help the boundary spanner to create and strengthen client-vendor relationship. The client-vendor relationship in an IT outsourcing context is necessarily one of partnership that requires engagement from both sides (Kern & Willcocks, 2000, 2002). We observed a similar finding when boundary spanners engaged with the client in a joint problem solving situation. This finding is also echoed by Levina and Vaast (2005) who observed that a joint understanding of the project helps a boundary spanner create relevant boundary objects (Bechky, 1999; Carlile, 2002).

This paper also empirically validates the elements of social capital in an IT outsourcing context.

The practice based perspective of this study helps unravel the steps involved in developing successful boundary spanners. The practical and managerial implications of this study will enable effective boundary spanning in both client, and vendor organizations.

**Reference**


