

Global HRM and transnational networks: unpacking the micro-behavioral process supporting global HRM integration using a quantitative multi-source, multi-level design

Prof Olga Tregaskis (contact), Norwich Business School, University of East Anglia, UK

Dr Christoph Wu, Norwich Business School, University of East Anglia, UK

Prof Kevin Daniels, Norwich Business School, University of East Anglia, UK

Martin Hogg, (formerly Norwich Business School, University of East Anglia, UK)

Prof Phil Almond, School of Business, Leicester University, UK

Prof Tony Edwards, Institute of International Management, Loughborough University, London, UK

Dr Philipp Kern, Institute of International Management, Loughborough University, London, UK

Dr Kyoungmi Kim, Centre for Languages & Linguistics, York St. John University, York, UK

Corresponding Author:

Prof Olga Tregaskis (contact), Norwich Business School, University of East Anglia, UK

Email: o.tregaskis@uea.ac.uk

Declarations of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

Funder

This research was funded by the UK Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), Award Number ES/N007883/1.

Data availability statement

The data that support the findings of this study are in the process of being made openly available by UK Data Services (UKDS).

Key Words – Global employees, social skill, globalizing norms, norm-making, international networks

Informed consent in the methods

To appear in *Human Resource Management Journal*. This is not the copy of record.

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Abstract

Whether and why social processes support global HRM integration is an overlooked, yet increasingly relevant performance question in decentralized transnational work environments. Using social capital theory, we conceptualize the social dynamic and behaviors influencing global HRM integration. Interview data from 63 professionals in transnational professional service firms (PSF) were used to develop measures for a multi-source multi-level diary study (study 1) and a multi-source multi-level cross-sectional survey (study 2). Our research shows that involvement of network members in integrating global HRM activities increases their commitment to the shared goals of the network, but only when leaders simultaneously engage in translational and collaboration behaviors. These leader behaviors demonstrate a collaboration mechanism where corporate-local tensions might reconcile. Our work illustrates the significance of examining the multiplicity of spaces where global HRM is enacted to better explain how and why global integration is progressed or resisted.

Keywords

Global employees, social behaviors, global HRM, international networks

Practitioner Notes

What is currently known:

- Global HRM refers to integrated policies, practices and norms that harmonize corporate-local approaches to how people are managed in transnational firms; to increase performance outcomes by reducing conflict between corporate-local interests.
- Research has focused on the role of formal HRM organizational structures of control and authority, and the role of expatriate managers in managing the tensions between corporate and local demands.
- However, in transnational firms the flow of resources and people globally is fluid, traversing networks, bound to social capital, and less fixed in hierarchy. These conditions challenge the scope of current theorization on how global HRM integration operates in practice.

What this paper adds:

- Using social capital theory, we conceptualize the social processes underpinning global HRM integration in transnational networks.
- We empirically test and show an interplay between leaders' behavior for integrating global HRM and members' experience of this collaboration that leads to increased members' affective commitment to the network's shared goals.
- We identify the conditionality of this relationship. Network members' experience of collaboration on integrating global HRM needs to be reinforced by network leaders' collaboration and translational behaviors.
- These leaders' behaviors boost members' commitment through increasing members' understanding of the local meaningfulness of global HRM.

Implications for practitioners:

- Social capital building behaviors can support global HRM integration and create greater commitment to shared goals where diverse interests might conflict.
- The effectiveness of social capital building behavior is derived from the capability to translate the value of global HRM in a meaningful and collaborative way to those impacted.

Global HRM and transnational networks

- Network leaders and members both have agency to influence global HRM, and as such collaboration offers an opportunity for meaningful integration and innovation.

1 INTRODUCTION

Can the social context in networks be leveraged in support of global Human Resource Management (HRM) integration in ways where top-down, hierarchical bureaucratic mechanisms cannot? If so, how are network leaders' capabilities influential? These are significant questions in transnational firms because the everyday experience and practice of global HRM occurs through devolved managerial responsibilities and decentralized structures (Moussebaa, 2015). Networks are a fundamental decentralized space where corporate desire for co-ordination and control over valuable human resources to address firm-wide performance goals meet with local actor concerns over business unit strategic mandates, cultural norms and expectations (Bretos et al., 2018; Edwards et al., 2025; Fang et al., 2015). However, an emphasis on bureaucratic mechanisms for global HRM integration over social processes jeopardizes the theoretical relevance and explanatory power of our models to capture advances in practice. Specifically, current theorizations on global HRM integration overlook the social context of exchange relations in the enactment of organizational policy. In doing so the significance of actors beyond those in formal roles of authority is diminished (Edwards et al., 2025), limiting our understanding of the capabilities of those involved in implementation (Gutierrez-Huerter et al., 2020).

In managing the corporate-local tension, proponents of social capital-based models of global HRM (Smale, 2008; Taylor et al., 1996; Taylor, 2007) argue that consistency and alignment in management structures and culture supports collaboration by providing equity, fairness and a common frame of reference; in turn overcoming the geographical and cultural distances between employees, and enhancing shared understandings and affective commitment to common goals (Morris et al., 2009). However, these top-down models focus on formal structures and policy frameworks as the driving integrating mechanism and are less suited to transnational structures and contemporary global ways of working (Dasí et al.,

2026). An alternative stream of research on key actors involved in global collaboration highlights the importance of social processes and social capital (Espedal et al., 2013), with global leaders creating a bridge between corporate-local interests (Klimkeit & Reihlen, 2016). Although how and why specific behaviors are effective is less clear (Gutierrez-Huerter, 2024; Hocking et al., 2007). There are limited studies that unpack the social interaction when leaders work with others to implement, modify and adapt HRM processes as part of global HRM integration (Malik & Sanders, 2021). Unpacking such social interaction would provide insight not only into what leaders do, but whether and why social processes are influential.

We adopt social capital theory to develop our conceptualization of the interaction between network leaders and members underpinning global HRM integration in transnational networks. Social capital defined broadly captures “the sum of the actual and potential resources embedded within, available through and derived from the network of relationships possessed by an individual or social unit” (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998; p. 243). Research on organizational social capital concentrates on aggregated individual-level resources as an organizational asset, and the accumulation of social capital as an individual resource (Harris et al., 2018). Our work is not concerned with measuring social capital per se, but on the individual social capital building behaviors that support shared understanding (Fukuyama, 1995) as common good; access to diverse knowledge bases that enable innovation performance by employees (Grosser et al., 2018); and relational ties that translate knowledge building interdependencies between actors enhancing cognitive clarity of purpose making it easier to evaluate how best to mobilize diverse knowledge (Coleman, 1990; Tortoriello et al., 2025). These individual behaviors have the potential to build a social interaction that is collaborative with a unifying mission (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). As such social capital building behaviors are a potentially strong integrating mechanism in transnational networks, warranting further scrutiny.

We use mixed methods to build and test our framework, and a research design that accounts for the dynamic nature of the social process under scrutiny. Interview data from 63 professionals involved in international networks in UK transnational professional service firms (PSFs) were used to develop measures for a multi-source multi-level, longitudinal, diary study (study 1) and a multi-source multi-level cross-sectional survey (study 2). Study 1 involved 25 networks, across 3 organizations, with data collected at 4 waves yielding 181 observations. This study identifies what behaviors are performed and how the interplay between network leaders and members on global HRM integration influences members' affective commitment to the global network. Study 2 involved 44 networks and 152 members across 4 organizations. Here the focus is on understanding why the social process is influential on outcomes. In both studies network leaders were matched with their members.

By using interview data, we developed measures rooted in the social processes of transnational PSFs. We choose two different quantitative approaches in two field studies for several reasons (Grégoire et al., 2025; Wellman et al., 2023). Triangulating results across different methods and in different samples in transnational PSFs supports generalization of findings and the ecological validity of the results. Multisource (both studies) and time-lagged data (Study 1) afford stronger causal inference. Study 2 is a constructive replication and extension of Study 1, in that we explore why the social process is influential by including a theoretically derived mediator variable in the design. Overall, the theoretical contributions are enhanced through strong empirical elements (Grégoire et al., 2025).

We propose a conceptual framework that explains the social dynamic between network leaders and members enacting global HRM through collaboration. We identify social capital building behaviors performed by network leaders that affect members' commitment to the global network. Involvement of network members in integrating global HRM activities enhances commitment to the global network, but only when leaders simultaneously engage in

behaviors to translate and interpret the relevance of global HRM in a way that is meaningful to network members. In the absence of this social process, network members' commitment is lower.

2 LITERATURE AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Hypotheses Development: global HRM integration through collaboration

We define global HRM as the policies, practices and norms for how people are managed in transnational PSFs. Global HRM integration is the activity of harmonizing HRM across the firm's geographically dispersed businesses.

Using social capital theory we identify a set of social capital building behaviors and their theorized relationship to supporting global HRM integration (see Figure 1). Bedwell et al. (2012, p.130) define collaboration as "an evolving process whereby two or more social entities actively and reciprocally engage in joint activities aimed at achieving at least one shared goal". In our study, this definition of collaboration brings the relational context and agency of the individual into the process of global HRM integration.

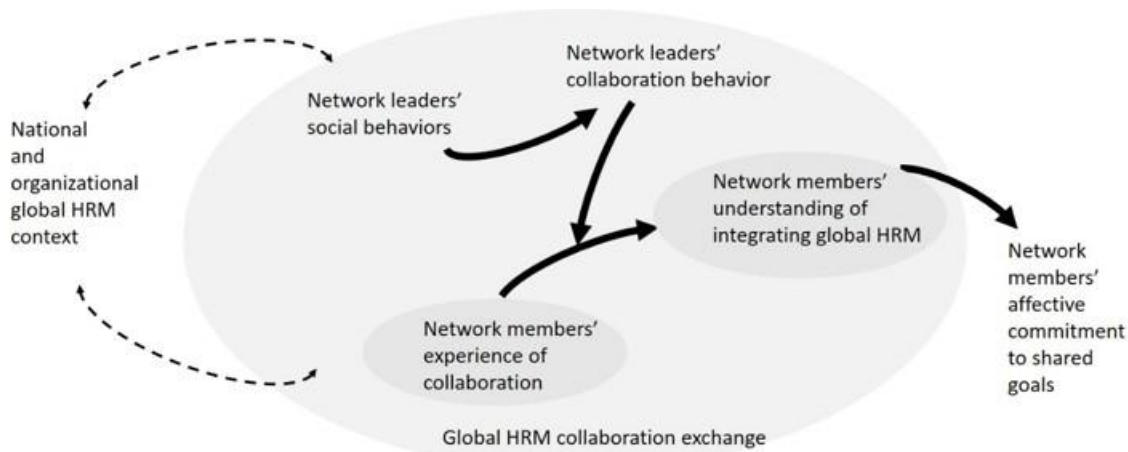


FIGURE 1: Conceptual model of the micro-behavioral process supporting global HRM integration through collaboration

—————→ Hypothesized effect
 - - - - -→ Non-hypothesized effect

Two core dimensions of social capital theory are interdependence and collaboration. We identify two sets of social capital building leader behaviors aligned to these dimensions a) social behaviors defined as the relational and structural behaviors that translate and interpret the benefits of global HRM integration and b) collaboration behaviors defined as joint activity with network members for global HRM integration.

Relational behaviors refer to whether and how network leaders translate and interpret the benefits of global HRM practices, norms or processes. This might involve leaders adapting or renegotiating with network members so that corporate frameworks also meet local expectations. It may require selling and framing benefits to members or seeking feedback and sense-checking with their collaborators. Research finds where leaders interpret and translate the relationship between HRM systems and employee effort this helps to reveal shared benefits to collaborators which heightens the value of working together (Katou et al., 2021; Kilroy et al., 2023). Translating the relevance, value or merits of HRM processes or practices is important because it helps to promote HR resource exchange (Dörrenbächer & Gammelgaard,

2016; Dutton et al., 2002; Ling et al., 2005); increase knowledge integration, knowledge diffusion and induce greater co-operation (Wei et al., 2012); and reduce barriers to the diffusion and adoption of global HRM (Aguzzoli & Geary, 2014; Ferner et al., 2012; Gutierrez-Huerter, 2024).

Structural behaviors focus on the range and frequency of internal and external groups a leader might connect with. Structures work in tandem with relational behaviors in that they can provide routes for new sources of information to flow through a network (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). The more expansive use of structures provides leaders with access to expertise and know-how the translation of HRM systems to local employee expectations, and in turn enhances the quality of relationships and outcomes (Scott & Manning, 2024). For example, leaders may use their expert or advice networks as frames of reference for positioning arguments, building business cases for change that interpret local needs but are sensitive to corporate internal constraints (Dutton et al, 2002; Ling et al., 2005). Research shows that these structures enable leaders to connect with diverse groups, bring in new ideas, learn how to work in a coordinated way, and work across intra-organizational networks (Balkundi and Harrison, 2006; Tortoriello et al., 2025). Within networks, the more frequently members connect the more likely values are shared. This connectivity can help leaders to recontextualize corporate values across different social and geographical contexts (Sverdrup & Ly, 2023) and facilitate understanding between network members (Peltokorpi & Yamao, 2017).

The second set of behaviors we identify are collaboration behaviors defined as joint activity with network members to integrate global HRM. We measure this joint activity from both the perspective of the leader and the network member. Here we explain the leaders' collaboration behaviors. The empirical evidence on global HRM shows that the creation, dissemination, implementation and evaluation of management processes for working together are core activities that determine the harmonization of the HRM system (Smale, 2008; Taylor,

2007; Taylor et al., 1996). However, we argue it is the extent to which these activities are performed by the network leader with the network members that influences the outcomes. For example, network leaders' dissemination of global performance criteria can signal expectations but it does not mean this will then translate to these performance criteria being used in practice (Ferner et al., 2012). Alternatively, network leaders may co-create performance management processes with network members that take account of local employee expectations for reward, promotion and so forth (Katou et al., 2021). Research finds collaboration behaviors can operate as an integrating mechanism that enables network members to link and align their work effectively across units (Scott & Manning, 2024). From a social capital perspective, collaboration provides a social process for negotiation and adjustment, for aligning interests, learning and knowledge exchange (Leana & Van Buren, 1999).

We suggest that there is a close relationship between the social behavior of leaders and their engagement in collaboration for global HRM. Specifically, where network leaders use social behaviors to identify innovations from different countries that can be used across the organization, they are more likely to invest in collaboration behaviors to diffuse HRM innovations and promote adoption. Social behaviors help the leader translate and interpret how collaboration can be beneficial to all parties (Wei et al., (2012), the opportunities that exist and how practices, processes or norms might need to be adapted or evolve (Bedwell et al., 2012; Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). In turn, these social behaviors should drive the extent to which an integrating mechanism such as collaboration behavior is adopted. There is thus a close interplay between leaders' social behaviors and collaboration behaviors such that:

H1: Network leaders' social behaviors are positively related to their engagement in collaboration behaviors.

Next, we consider the effect of network leaders' collaboration behavior on members of the network, and specifically their affective commitment to the network. Affective commitment is defined as the emotional attachment expressed by an individual to an organization, employer or group (Allen & Meyer, 1991; van Wanrooy et al., 2013), where attachment reflects the employee's "identification with, and involvement in the organization" (Meyer & Allen, 1991, p.67). Meta-analyses indicate that affective commitment is core to the wider concept of organizational commitment (see Mercurio, 2015, for a review; van Wanrooy et al., 2013). Theoretically, social capital models of HRM adopt affective commitment as a proxy for reciprocation motivated through social exchanges of obligation and mutual benefits (Taylor, 2007; Zhang & Jia, 2010). Obligation arises from norms that identify benefits and gains that can be achieved through collaboration and defined through the quality and structure of social exchange (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Research shows reciprocal exchanges correlate with engagement in organizational management processes (Kilroy et al., 2023) and in information sharing and helping others (Solinger et al., 2008). Thus, theory and empirical evidence suggest that when employees' experiences enable involvement in the organization in ways that allow them to fulfil expectations of benefits or gains, they are more likely to reciprocate in ways that benefit the organization (Blau, 1964). For example, individuals may reciprocate by demonstrating a stronger affective commitment to the goals of a group, business unit or to their own individual performance goals (Bos-Nehles & Meijerink, 2018). Therefore, a reciprocal exchange suggests an interplay between how a leader behaves and how this is experienced by the network member.

We theorize a shared interaction between network leaders' behaviors and network members' experience of collaboration as the causal mechanism expanding our understanding of global HRM integration. Network members' collaboration experience will be reflected in their perceptions of information exchange within the network and their involvement in

establishing global HRM processes or the diffusion and implementation of corporate frameworks or norms. A network member with limited experience of collaboration on global HRM integration in the network is likely to have low commitment to the global network. At the same time, a network member may have a great deal of experience of collaboration with others in the network that could influence their affective commitment to the network. However, we suggest the network leader's behavior on integrating global HRM also influences network members' affective commitment to the network. Specifically, network members' experience of collaboration can lead to higher affective commitment to the network, but only in the context of reinforcing network leaders' collaboration behaviors. Alternatively, network members' experience of collaboration is not strongly, if at all, related to affective commitment when network leaders' behaviors do not reinforce collaboration. This suggests collaboration, when it is a shared experience for the network leader and member, is a strong integrating mechanism. Thus, within the context of a network, engagement by leaders in collaboration behaviors is important to outcomes. Further, we test if the relationship hypothesized in H1 holds, in that it is the social behaviors of leaders that have an indirect influence on network members' commitment through the leaders' collaboration behavior. To test this relationship, we build two interlinked hypotheses.

H2a: The relationship between affective commitment and the extent to which network members experience collaboration will be stronger when network leaders engage in collaboration behaviors to integrate global HRM, compared to when leaders do not.

H2b: Network leaders' social behaviors have an indirect influence on network members' affective commitment through network leaders' collaboration behavior.

After examining H1a, H2a and H2b in Study 1, we turn our attention to testing why network leaders' social behaviors may have such a profound impact on network members'

affective commitment in study 2. We propose additional hypotheses that augment the hypotheses examined in Study 1.

Social capital theory indicates that reciprocity is fundamental to performance outcomes such as affective commitment. We have theorized that leaders' social behaviors are an important antecedent, because they help establish the returns from integrating HRM, which in turn influences affective commitment. This theorization suggests that network leaders' behaviors help translate the logic of globally integrated HRM. As an illustration, network leaders might demonstrate how the work of members relates to the value or priorities of the firm, or how a common culture and promotion structure that raises equality and diversity standards can smooth talent mobility. Research shows that social behaviors can enhance understanding of reciprocal benefits (Dörrenbächer & Gammelgaard, 2016; Dutton et al., 2002; Ling et al., 2005). Sense-making between collaborators has been found to reduce conflict and resistance to practice sharing and adoption in international firms (Aguzzoli & Geary, 2014; Ferner et al., 2012; Gutierrez-Huerter, 2024). Clarifying performance expectations and linking individual work effort to wider organizational values enhances an employee's sense of investment in them personally, which can be reciprocated in benefits for the organization (Bos-Nehles & Meijerink, 2018). We build our hypotheses (H2c and H2d) to empirically test the theorization that network leaders' behaviors positively influence network members' affective commitment through enhancing members' understanding of the value of global HRM integration. To empirically test if understanding is the mechanism explaining the relationships between network leaders' behaviors and members' affective commitment, we hypothesize that:

H2c: Network members' understanding of the benefits of global HRM integration mediates the relationship between network leaders' collaboration behavior and members' affective commitment.

To empirically test if leaders' social behavior is translating the logic of global HRM as theorized above, we hypothesize that:

H2d: Network leaders' social behaviors influence network members' affective commitment indirectly, first, via network leaders' collaboration behavior and then via network members' understanding of the benefits of global HRM integration.

3 METHODS

The methodology consisted of two stages: First, the development of the questionnaire; second, the testing of the theorized model through Study 1 and Study 2. Taken together, Studies 1 and 2 allow: for ecological validity as both were undertaken in transnational PSFs; enhanced causal inference from the use of multisource data (both Studies) and longitudinal data (Study 1); enhanced generalizability (both Studies); and constructive replication and extension because Study 2 elaborates on the conceptual processes underpinning findings in Study 1.

We focused on UK multinationals with transnational businesses operating worldwide, this retained macro and meso-norm consistency across the participating organizations. To allow diversity amongst the networks we selected those where members spanned a range of geographies to deliver global products and services, were involved in creating or adapting global HRM processes and practices as part of how they got work done, and where involvement in these networks was only part of work activity.

Over a 12-month period 63 interviews were conducted with key informants obtaining 'both retrospective and real-time accounts by those people experiencing the phenomenon of theoretical interest' (Gioia et al., 2013, p. 19). The interviewees described contextualized and causal explanations of the process of delivery global HRM processes and practices, involving translating the relevance of new practices, balancing and adjusting the degree of harmonization and local variation. All interviews were conducted by at least two researchers, recorded and transcribed in line with informed consent protocols. Co-interviewing enabled sense-checking

before and after interviews, and a dynamic interview process through following the flow of the conversations, whilst still adhering to key themes (Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006). The interview schedule was derived from prior theory and semi-structured to enable new issues to emerge. As the interview process proceeded, a qualitative coding framework was developed in tandem, which identified categories of behavior the interviewees reported they used to create, diffuse or establish global HRM; the collaboration structures used; the impacts their global collaborations created for themselves or others (Figure 2). Verbatim phrases were extracted from the interviewees and used as the starting point for questionnaire items. Where areas revealed through the interviews appeared to map meaningfully to pre-existing standardized scales these were adopted or adapted.



Two research members sense-checked the coding of data. The draft questionnaire was sense checked with two key organizational informants and piloted with 10 research participants. The questionnaire development resulted in further iterations e.g. deleting

ambiguous or repetitive items and combining items. Following data analysis individuals and senior organizational representatives were invited to a feedback session to help with the joint interpretation and sense-checking of the findings.

In the following sections, for purposes of clarity, we focus on the methods tied specifically to the testing of the model hypotheses. In Study 1, we report a preliminary investigation into H1, H2a and H2b, thus we investigate the whole causal chain proposed in our research model without examining the network member level mediator (network members' understanding). In Study 2, we investigate the whole causal chain.

4 STUDY 1 (4-wave diary)

Study context

Participants were recruited from three UK multinational companies with global businesses in professional and financial services (ProSer), retail services (RetailSer) and communications and facilities services (FacSer). Networks were identified, with the support of the participating organization. Network leaders were asked about their behavior in creating, disseminating, implementing and/or monitoring new ways of working globally alongside questions on how they did this and the networks they used. Their network members were asked about their experiences of these new ways of working. Members completed the same set of questions once-per-month over a 4-month period, allowing us to consider changes in members' experiences and outcomes. Network leaders provided data at the first wave of data collection. Network leaders and their network members were matched by the researcher.

Informed consent for participation was first sought from the network leaders by the research team. The researchers explained the purpose and relevance of the study alongside the ethical code of conduct assuring informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity of data,

and voluntary participation. The research process conformed to the [anonymized for reviewing] ethical code of conduct. If the network leader agreed the network could be part of the study, then the network members were approached with the same information. Network leaders and members could withdraw from the study at any time. The organization was given no information about which networks agreed or declined to participate. Equally, no network leader was given information about who participated from their network. All participants were sent a summary of the findings by the research team.

A total of 25 networks were included in the analysis. Descriptive details are provided in Table 1 and Table 2. Nine of the network leaders were in a European country, two in the UK, two in Asia and 4 in the Middle East & Africa. No network contained members that solely worked in the same geographical location as others all of the time, consistent with our research design. All 25 networks contained some members that never worked in the same location as others. Organization was controlled in the analysis to account for differences between the contexts within which networks operated. Missing data procedures (see below) were used so that member data could be used in the analyses where leader data were missing and *vice versa*.

Table 1: Study 1 - Descriptives for the 4-wave multi-source survey showing number of leaders and members responding across the three organizations

	ProSer (Professional services)	RetailSer Retail Services	FacSer Facilities Services	Totals
Leaders	4	10	3	17
Members	18	51	10	79
Totals	22	61	13	96
Number of networks	6	14	5	25

Size range (mean) of networks	3 to 55 (mean 26.3 Median 24.5)	6 to 20 (mean 8.7) Median 8	3 to 9 (mean 6.4) Median 8	
Network geographical focus	Regional: East Asia, Caucasus, Africa	Regions: Central Europe, Northern Europe, South Europe, Indo China/North Asia, Central Asia	Regions: Europe	
Some members based in different countries all the time	6	14	5	25
Type of work undertaken within the network	Business development projects, professional services to national and international clients covering legal, resourcing, financial matters	Sales and marketing of retail products and related services to national and international clients	Provision of communication services, office and events facilities for entrepreneurs, innovators, corporate clients and social enterprises, connecting client needs worldwide	

Table 2: Study 1 Descriptives for the 4-wave survey, multi-source: Individual responses at each wave

	ProSer Professional services	RetailSer Retail services	FacSer Facilities & Communications services	Totals
Leader Wave 1	3	9	3	15

Wave 2	3	7	2	12
Wave 3	1	5	3	9
Wave 4	0	4	0	4
Total leader observations	7	25	8	40
Member				
Wave 1	15	38	10	63
Wave 2	11	31	8	50
Wave 3	8	28	7	43
Wave 4	0	25	0	25
Total member observations	34	122	25	181
Total number of networks	6	14	5	25

The modal age of the network members was 30-39 years (range under 30 to over 70), 43 of the sample were female and had been working in their organization for an average of 6.6 years (SD = 6.5). Nine of the leaders were male, with a modal age of 40-49 years (range under 30 to 50-59) and had been working in their organization for an average of 7.4 years (SD = 3.5).

Note: not every respondent will have completed a survey at every time point.

Network members' affective commitment was measured by an adapted three-item version of the organizational commitment scale used in the UK Workplace Employment Relations Survey (Van Wanrooy et al., 2013): I feel loyal to the people I work with regardless of where they work; I am proud to work alongside those I work with; I share many of the values of the people I work with, regardless of where they work. Members were asked to respond in relation to their joint work of the network. Items were rated on a 5-point Likert type scale ('strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'). Reliability was acceptable (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.86$).

Network members' experience of collaboration on global HRM integration activity in their network was measured using three items adapted from Anderson and West's (1998) team climate inventory focusing on international interactions: Members of my network share information internationally, rather than keeping it in one country location; Members of my work group keep international teammates informed about work-related issues; There are real attempts to share information internationally throughout my work group. Items were rated on

a 5-point Likert type scale ('strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'). Reliability was acceptable (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.74$).

Network leaders' collaboration behaviors was measured by four items asking leaders to rate the extent to which they engaged in four behaviors underpinning the process of global HRM integration (creating, disseminating, implementing or monitoring ways of working globally) when working with their network: Creating new work practices or management processes for working globally; Disseminating new ways of working globally by spreading knowledge and understanding of new work practices or management process; Implementing new ways of working globally e.g. ensuring new work practices, management processes or firm values are incorporated into everyday work practice; Monitoring the impact of new work practices or management processes for working globally. Ratings were made on a five-point scale ('To a very little extent', 'To a very large extent'). Reliability was acceptable (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.92$).

Network leaders' social behaviors. Indexed by two separate constructs, relational behaviors and structural behaviors. Relational behaviors associated with sense-making, framing and co-created problem-solving behaviors that enable adjustment, interpretation and reflection on global HRM frameworks. Items rated on the frequency the network leader reported engaging in each behavior in the previous month on a six-point scale (1='Not at all', 2='1-2 times in the past month', 3='1-2 times a week', 4='3-4 times a week', 5='Once a day', 6='Several times a day'). Structural behaviors captured the array of social resources used supporting their network activities e.g. professional and personal networks, task forces or virtual meetings. Items were scored on the same 6-point scale. The items are shown in the Appendix (Table A1). Both relational and structural behaviors demonstrated acceptable reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.83$ and 0.72 respectively). To create an index of social behaviors that recognizes relational and structural behaviors as having potentially different average frequencies of occurrence, both

indices were standardized, summed and divided by two (correlation between relational and communicative behaviors, $r = 0.66, p < .01$).

Analysis. Data were nested, with wave of data collection (level 1) nested within members (level 2) nested within networks with a network leader (level 3). Therefore, we used three-level hierarchical structural equation modelling implemented using the Mplus program. Because of small sample sizes, missing data and skewed data, we used Bayesian estimation with uninformative priors (Muthén, 2010) and data were analyzed as manifest variables. At level 1, network members' experience was regressed onto members' affective commitment. The measure of network members' experience was centered at the member, so that only variance attributable to individual experience at each wave was modelled. That is, we modelled the relationship between variability of each member's experience over time and network commitment. The regression slope of network members' experience at each wave was allowed to vary between members and networks. Leaders' social behaviors were regressed onto leaders' collaboration behaviors (H1). H2a implies an interaction between network members' experience of collaboration behavior and network leaders' collaboration behavior, such that the relationship between network members' experience and affective commitment is stronger (i.e., moderated) when network leaders engage in collaboration behavior. Accordingly, network leaders' collaboration behaviors were regressed on members' commitment and the regression slope of members' experience on members' commitment (H2a). H2b implies network leaders' social behaviors drive the moderating effect of network leaders' collaboration behavior that, when network members' experience of collaboration is high, results in network members' affective commitment. H2b is assessed through the moderation implied in H2a and the regression of leaders' social behaviors onto leaders' collaboration behaviors (H1). To control for differences between organizations, two dummy variables representing the three organizations were regressed onto members' commitment. Leaders' social behaviors were also

regressed onto network members' commitment to create a fully saturated model. Further technical details are available in the online supplementary document.

4.1 Results

Table 3 shows the means, standard deviations and correlations for the variables. Figure 3 shows the results of the structural equation modelling.

Table 3: Means, standard deviations and correlation

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
1. Members' commitment	4.23	0.58	.86	.38**		
2. Members' experience	3.87	0.68	.65**	.74		
3. Leaders' social behaviors	0.56	0.79	-.14	.11	.66	
4. Leaders' collaboration behavior	3.38	1.00	-.04	-.01	.58*	.92

Note * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$. Reliability coefficients shown on primary diagonal. All reliability coefficients are Cronbach's alpha except leaders' social behaviors which is Pearson's r .

Correlation coefficients above primary diagonal are within-person correlations, below primary diagonal are between-network correlations. Between person correlation between the two network member variables is $r = .59$, $p < .01$.

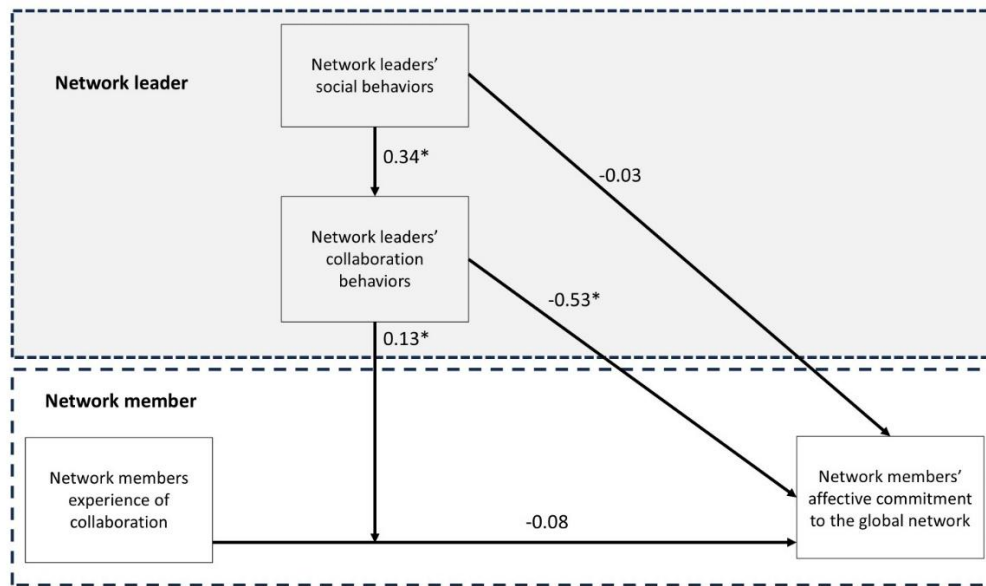


FIGURE 3 Study 1 results

Figure 3 shows that leaders' social behaviors are positively related to leaders' collaboration behaviors, supporting H1. Leaders' collaboration behaviors positively moderate the relationship between members' experience of collaboration and member commitment, supporting H2a. An analysis of the simple slopes at the 20th percentile, median and 80th percentile values for leaders' collaboration behaviors indicates that the relationship between network member experience and commitment was significant at the 20th percentile ($B = 0.20$, $p < .05$) but gets progressively stronger at the median ($B = 0.37$, $p < .01$) and 80th percentile ($B = 0.43$, $p < .01$) of leaders' collaboration behaviors. The indirect effect of leaders' social behaviors through leaders' collaboration behaviors on the relationship between members' experience and members' commitment approached significance (0.04 , $p < .07$), providing some support for H2b. Note however, this is a two-tailed non-directional test although the reasoning underling H2b is directional. Figure 3 also shows a negative direct effect of leaders' collaboration behaviors on members' commitment, that suggests leaders' engaging in

collaboration behaviors is associated with lower members' commitment particularly in the absence of members' experience of collaboration.

5 STUDY 2 - MULTI-SOURCE, MULTI-LEVEL

Study context

Participants were recruited from four UK multinational companies. ProSer from study 1 also took part in study 2, but the networks were different and there was no overlap in participants between the studies, for clarity we refer to this organization as ProSer1 here; a second professional services organization (ProSer2), a technology and communications company providing services to national and international clients (TecSer), and a packaging materials hub (PacSer) supplying and developing sustainable materials for manufacturers nationally and in Europe. The researchers worked with organizations to identify networks consistent with the focus of study 1 and implement a research process that conformed to the [anonymized for reviewing] ethical code of conduct assuring informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity of data, voluntary participation. Network members were sent personal emails by the researchers and requested to complete surveys about their experiences working in the network via a cross-sectional survey. Network leaders completed a separate survey. Network leaders and their network members were matched by the researchers.

In total 152 international network members from 44 networks completed the member survey. Table 4 provides descriptive details. Research participants were asked to think of their behavior in relation to a joint task they were involved with e.g. implementation of a global product strategy, performance management processes or commercial collaboration, when answering questions. ProServ1 included members responsible for financial, regulatory and business development projects for clients nationally and internationally. The networks operated

across Europe and Southeast Asia, with one network leader based in the UK, six in Europe and 10 in Asia. ProServ2 similarly included members involved in providing financial, regulatory, and resourcing support to clients nationally and internationally, operating across America, Europe and Oceania, with one network leader in the UK, two in Europe and two in Middle East & Africa. TecSer networks were involved in sales and technological services for global clients, operating across the Middle East, Africa, America and Europe, with seven network leaders in the UK, two in Asia, two in Middle East & Africa. PackSer networks worked with largely manufacturing firms across the UK & Europe to develop new packaging solutions to meet new customer and regulatory demands around net zero targets. Members include printing technicians, designers alongside sales and dispatch managers, operating across Europe, with 11 network leaders based in the UK. To account for differences between the contexts within which networks operated, organization was controlled for in the analyses.

Table 4: Study 2 - Cross-sectional multi-source international survey responses

	ProSer1 Professional services	ProSer2 Professional services	TecSer Technology & communicat ions	PacSer Packaging development & production	Total
Leader	17	5	11	11	44
Network size by leader					
2 per network	2	1	0	3	
3 per network	6	2	9	5	
4 per network	3	1	2	2	
5 per network	4	1	0	1	
6 per network	2	0	0	0	
Members	66	17	35	34	152
Network size by members					
2 per network	4	2	0	6	
3 per network	18	6	27	15	
4 per network	12	4	8	8	
5 per network	20	5	0	5	
6 per network	12	0	0	0	

Regions covered by the Networks	Switzerland, Belgium, Norway, Austria, UK, Singapore, China, Hong Kong, Kazakhstan, Thailand, Malaysia	Middle East & Africa, America, Europe, Oceania	Global (HR, design), Asia, Middle East & Africa, America, Europe	Europe (France, Germany)	44
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The modal age of the members was 30-39 years (range under 30 to over 60-69), 66 were female and had been working in their organization for an average of 10.1 years (SD = 8.5). All were in professional, managerial or administrative roles. For the 44 leaders 22 were male; modal age of 40-49 years, range under 30 to 50-59; mean organizational tenure = 11.4 years, SD = 8.5.

Network members' affective commitment was measured using the same three items as in Study 1. Reliability was acceptable (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.78$).

Network members' understanding of integrating global HRM. Five items assessed members' understanding of how integrating global HRM frameworks impacted the network member: I receive quality feedback about the international performance standards expected of me; I have a clear understanding about how my work fits with the international needs of the business; I have a clear understanding of the business case for globally consistent ways of working; I have a clear understanding of how the values of the firm fit with how we work globally with other parts of the firm; I have a clear understanding of how the values of the firm fit with how we work globally with customers and/or external partners. Items were rated on a 6-point Likert type scale ('strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'). Reliability was acceptable (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.90$). Given the items comprise a new scale and a sample size more than 140, the items were subject to principal components analysis (PCA), which revealed a single dominant factor accounting for 72% of the variance. Each item loaded above 0.71 on the factor.

Network members' experience of collaboration. To build on the operationalization of respondents' experiences of collaboration beyond information exchange in the network, we asked about their experiences of collaboration on global HRM integration including: Creating new work practices or management processes for working globally; Disseminating new ways of working globally by spreading knowledge and understanding of new work practices or management process; Implementing new ways of working globally e.g. ensuring new work practices, management processes or firm values are incorporated into everyday work practice; Monitoring the impact of new work practices or management processes for working globally. Members rated their involvement on a 5-point scale ('Not at all' to 'A very large extent'). Reliability was acceptable (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.90$). PCA revealed a single dominant factor accounting for 77% of the variance. Each item loaded above 0.86 on the factor.

Network leaders' social behaviors. Indexed by two separate constructs, relational behaviors and structural behaviors. The large sample and cross-sectional design allowed us to enhance our operationalization. The items are shown in the Appendix Table A2. Each index comprised several items rated on the frequency to which the leader reported engaging in each behavior on an eight-point scale (1='Not at all', 2='1-2 times a year', 3='1-2 times a quarter', 4='1-2 times a month', 5='1-2 times a week', 6='3-4 times a week', 7='Once a day', 8='Several times a day'). Both relational and structural behaviors demonstrated acceptable reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.94$ and 0.91 respectively). Relational and structural behaviors were highly correlated ($r = 0.77, p < .01$).

Network leaders' collaboration behaviors. Consistent with Study 1. Reliability was acceptable (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.97$).

Analysis. Data were again nested, with network members (level 1) nested within networks with a network leader (level 2). We used two-level hierarchical structural equation modelling

implemented using the Mplus program and Bayesian estimation¹ (Muthén, 2010). Most data were analyzed as manifest variables except network leaders' social behaviors that were estimated as a latent variable indicated by scores on relational and structural behaviors. Modeling social behaviors as a latent variable enabled us to relax the assumption that each element of social behaviors makes an equal contribution to overall social behaviors. In Study 1, summing standardized scores implies that assumption. At level 1, experience of collaboration was regressed onto member understanding and member affective commitment. The measures of experience and understanding were centered at the mean for each network, so that only variance attributable to individual experience was modelled. The regression slope of members' experience on members' understanding was allowed to vary between networks.

H2c proposes network members' understanding mediates the interaction between network members' experience of collaboration and network leaders' collaboration behavior on network members' affective commitment (H2a). More specifically, the relationship between network members' experience of collaboration and understanding is stronger (i.e., moderated) when network leaders engage in collaboration behavior to integrate global HRM, and understanding is related to affective commitment. H2d in turn implies network leaders' social behaviors drive the moderating effect of network leaders' collaboration behavior that, when network members' experience of collaboration is high, results in network members' understanding and hence affective commitment. Leaders' collaboration behaviors were regressed on members' affective commitment and the regression slope of members' experience on members' understanding (H2a, H2c) and leaders' social behaviors were regressed onto leaders' collaboration behaviors (H1, H2b, H2d). To control differences between organizations,

¹ Given the size of the correlation ($r = 0.58$) and regression coefficient ($B = 0.34$) for the relationship between leaders' social behaviors and leaders' collaboration behaviors in Study 1, we set a prior for the regression coefficient of $B = 0.35$ with a standard deviation of 0.40, implying 67% of coefficient should fall between -0.05 and 0.75. Otherwise, uninformative priors were used.

three dummy variables representing four organizations were regressed onto members' affective commitment and leaders' collaboration behaviors. Leaders' social behaviors were also regressed onto members' affective commitment to create a fully saturated model.

5.1 Results

Table 5 shows the means, standard deviations and correlations for the variables. Figure 4 shows the results of the structural equation modelling.

Table 5. Means, standard deviations and correlations

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Members' commitment	4.77	0.91	.78	.53**	.37**			
2. Members' understanding	4.41	1.09	.61**	.90	.45**			
3. Members' experience	2.79	0.88	.51**	.69**	.86			
4. Leaders' relational behaviors	2.41	0.95	.08	.42**	.25	.94		
5. Leaders' structural behaviors	3.26	1.57	.15	.39*	.34*	.76**	.91	
6. Leaders' collaboration behavior	2.88	1.25	.22	.50**	.36*	.59**	.71**	.97

Note * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$. Reliability coefficients shown on primary diagonal.

Correlation coefficients above primary diagonal are within-network correlations, below primary diagonal are between-network correlations.

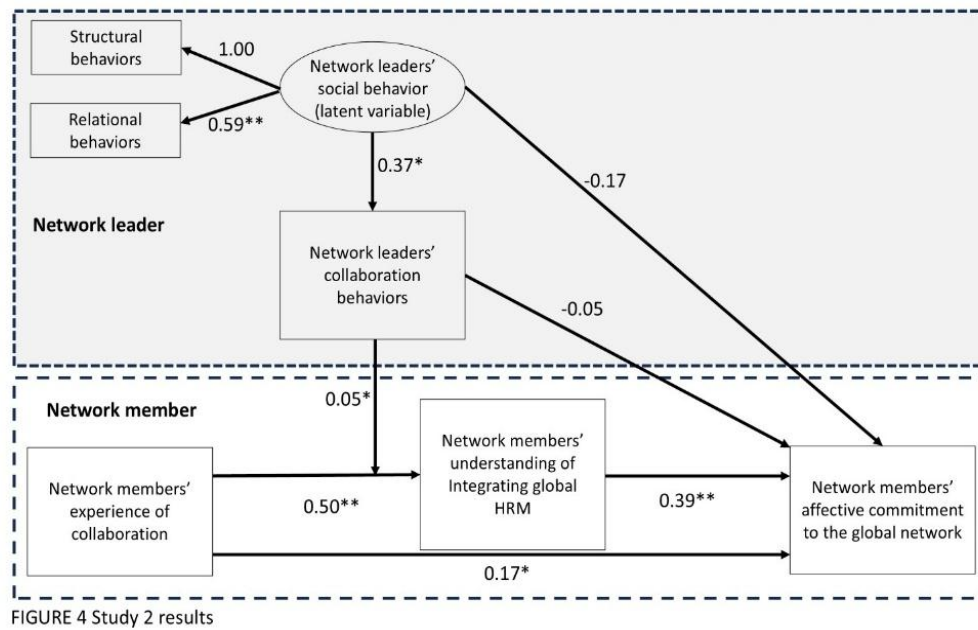


Figure 4 shows that leaders' social behaviors are positively related to leaders' collaboration behaviors, supporting H1. Leaders' collaboration behaviors positively moderate the relationship between members' experience and members' understanding, supporting the first stage of the mediation stated in H2c. An analysis of the simple slopes at the 20th percentile, median and 80th percentile values for leaders' collaboration behaviors indicates the relationship between members' experience and understanding becomes progressively stronger with higher values of network leaders' collaboration behaviors (20th percentile $B = 0.55$, $p < .01$; median $B = 0.66$, $p < .01$; 80th percentile $B = 0.70$, $p < .01$). Further, leaders' social behaviors had a significant indirect moderating effect on the relationship between members' experience through leaders' collaboration behaviors (0.02 , $p < .05$) and also moderated the indirect relationship between members' commitment and experience through understanding (0.01 , $p < .05$), providing support for H2a, H2b, H2c and H2d.

Unlike Study 1, there was no main effect of network leaders' collaboration behaviors on members' commitment. This null result may indicate that controlling for members' understanding may counter-act any adverse direct effects of leader collaboration behaviors on commitment as reported in study 1.

6 DISCUSSION

This research aimed to provide insight on whether and why social processes in transnational networks supported global HRM integration. Two central questions guided the research, firstly, what do networks leaders do and how does this influence members' affective commitment to the global network? Secondly, why are these leader behaviors influential? To address these questions, we unpack the micro-behaviors underpinning the process supporting global HRM integration through collaboration in transnational networks. In addressing the first of our questions, we show that there is an interplay between the behaviors of network leaders and the experience of members that increases commitment to the global network. This finding emphasizes that examining leader behavior in isolation only reveals part of the story. By looking more closely at the social process underpinning outcomes we can consider the question, why are these behaviors influential? Our findings show that increasing members' commitment to the network is conditional on the leader's social behaviors to translate and interpret the relevance of global HRM in a meaningful way; and enacted mutually collaborative ways of working. Further, the results show that network members' experience of collaboration and understanding is stronger when the leader engages in global HRM integration through collaboration behavior. Overall, the results suggest that social behaviors show how local people management processes and norms can be navigated and framed in a way that is meaningful to network members, in turn creating commitment to the global network. With the recognition that complex transnational organizations are constrained in their ability to consistently implement top-down standardized HRM across a vast array of territories, this micro-level analysis sheds light on how those at the forefront of collaboration with devolved responsibilities for global HRM might navigate the corporate-local divide.

The findings reveal several contributions. First, our theorization extends the concept of social capital in global HRM theory by elaborating on individual level constructs and exchange that underpin performance outcomes. In line with social capital theory, our theorization suggests that it is the interpersonal relations across transnational networks that support global HRM integration and increase commitment to shared goals (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). However, by examining individual level constructs we identify and show how two sets of social capital building behaviors operate within a social process creating a collaboration mechanism for integration that cuts across organizational and cultural contexts (Edwards et al., 2025). We elaborate on the details of the social context of interpersonal relations (Parzefall & Kuppelwieser, 2012; Dasí et al., 2026), showing that leaders who can effectively translate global HRM to diverse organizational and institutional interests, in turn achieved greater commitment to a shared goal. Our theorization suggests that leaders can use social and collaboration behaviors to enhance the quality of interpersonal relations between those engaged in global HRM integration by co-creating systems of interpretation and meaning-making amongst the network members. In this way, leaders create a collaboration mechanism for managing competing or conflictual local-corporate interests in diverse transnational contexts (Schotter et al., 2017). Our work shows how individuals might behave in the context of ‘multiple cultural and strategic realities of both global and local levels’ and how to ‘mediate and integrate across this multiplicity’ (Levy et al., 2007; p.344). Through discussion and dialogue the network leaders can narrate and justify corporate interests. At the same time network members can present how local HRM interests intersect, the risks that might arise and mitigations needed. Through this collaborative and contextualized process differences are articulated and reconciled, shared meanings are developed (Meyer et al., 2020; Balogun et al., 2011). The collaboration process that unfolds between network leaders and members is driven

by the leaders' social behavioral capability to translate global HRM to the organization's contextual conditions.

Second, our work is complimentary, yet distinct to research focused on global leaders' individual differences which captures a wide array of cognitive capabilities and traits as antecedents of behavior (Cullen et al., 2015; Fang et al., 2015; Perrewé et al., 2004; Wei et al., 2012). What often remains unclear with such approaches is what individuals do and whether their interactions with others have any effect (Dasí et al., 2026). Our work indicates that what leaders do influences outcomes where motivational factors around relatedness and meaning of global integration can be shaped through collaboration (Lazarova et al., 2023). This is in line with work on ambidextrous leadership which shows employee engagement is enhanced through quality social exchange (Saks, 2019), whereby informational exchange reduces conflict arising from ambiguity (Joplin et al., 2021). The frequency of communications and the diversity of internal and external stakeholders provide an open approach to leadership to gain insight from a range of sources that can enhance effective translation by reducing information asymmetries, aiding understanding of cultural complexities and increasing the emotional attachment amongst collaborators. The significance of structural connections was also reported in recent work on virtual leaders where leaders' structural connections were found to have beneficial effects on employees' engagement by increasing feelings of support and reducing uncertainty (Hill et al., 2024; Dasí et al., 2026). In our work, the findings show it is not only the performance of leadership behavior that impacts outcomes, but how they are experienced by network members. This means that both network leaders and members need to mutually perceive and construct the value of global HRM integration. If this is achieved, then this social collaboration mechanism may be at least as influential as technocratic tools such as performance metrics (Boussebaa, 2017) for managing local-peripheral tensions. In this way

our research suggests that leaders' social behaviors that support contextual translation can facilitate high commitment to transnational collaborations.

Third, methodologically, the paper offers multimethod, quantitative multisource field studies and theory-driven quantitative hypothesis testing together providing ecologically valid findings, subject to constructive replication with enhanced generalizability and causal inference. Our work aims to combine the lessons from both quantitative and qualitative research design on global HRM to enhance our understanding of social processes at play. We move beyond a single actor's perspective (Edwards et al., 2025) and aim to shed light on network leaders and members as 'embedded agents who interpret and enact HRM' (Rofcanin and Budhwar, 2025; p.3). Our diary method acknowledges the fluctuation in members' experience of leaders' collaboration behaviors to integrate global HRM. The global HRM literature base demonstrates resistance and constraints that limit integration of HRM at the implementation stage and largely focuses on organizational level headquarter-subsidary relationships. More recently, research has demonstrated that global HRM implementation is undertaken by a wide range of actors operating across non-traditional command and control structures (Gutierrez-Huerter et al., 2020). This makes the transnational network a research site for examining global HRM integration interesting and under-developed to date (Breunig et al., 2014). Whilst rich qualitative studies reveal social processes and interaction as an important context for global HRM (Almond et al., 2021; Boussebaa et al., 2012), the research method is more limited in its exploration of hypotheses-based relationship testing. Our work can consider the boundary conditions that may influence the social process at play. The present study therefore offers a novel approach to research on social processes in the context of global HRM integration debates by adopting a longitudinal diary method, alongside multi-source data methods. Using the diary methodology allowed us to separate out variance associated with stable differences between networks and network members (e.g., membership

stability, routinized ways of working) and to examine only the variance connected to individuals' experience of collaboration. Preliminary interview work was used to understand the concepts of interest and inform how we assessed those concepts in the quantitative phase. In these ways, we contribute to elaborating on the richness of our micro-models (Rofcanin & Budhwar, 2025).

6.2 Managerial implications

Our focus on behaviors in tandem with multi-source and multi-wave data provides strong evidence for HRM interventions. Our empirical evidence finds members' affective commitment is strengthened through the behavior of the network leader and through the experience of the network members. By identifying social and collaboration behaviors, this work provides insight for behavior-based training. For example, supporting leaders to act effectively through situated learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991) provides organizations with the opportunity to work with design-in learnable social behaviors. This involves not only developing individuals' knowledge of country differences but also developing behavioral routines that ensure expertise is surfaced, tested and adapted around joint working and can feedback to formal organizational practice (Ellinger et al., 2011). With the devolution of responsibility for HRM implementation to managers and leaders (Kurdi-Nakra & Pak, 2023), our work also suggests that leaders can work collaboratively on people-centered management issues as a means of accommodating local needs or persuading actors of their value. Our work would support findings from the HRM implementation literature that adaptation of central HRM frameworks is not necessarily problematic (Brandl et al., 2021). Instead, collaboration offers a space for translation and interpretation which can ultimately increase commitment to the outcomes.

Our work identifies social and collaboration behaviors that can have collective benefits in the context of integrating HRM. Social behaviors that relate expertise to the operational context can help organizational members work with the ambiguity often inherent in the enactment of HRM practices particularly where HRM practice could conflict with national norms (Hill et al., 2024). Further, creating behavioral training and structures for collaboration as an individual's toolkit for relational behavior connects individual and organizational level capability (Tregaskis et al., 2010), providing an important relational bridge. However, Hill et al., (2024) and Dasí et al., (2026) note that leadership in virtual workspaces, can increase stress arising from the reliance on the socio-emotional demands and the needs for increased frequent communications. There are many parallels with those working in transnational networks suggesting greater attention may need to be given to tactics for replenishing and fostering a healthy social context.

There are also opportunities for HRM to formalize performance expectations in relational working through transnational networks. A behavioral conceptualization of global leadership begins to reveal how jobs can be (re)designed to build-in formal expectations around transnational working and to connect individual level actions to organizational level processes and practices. Formalizing role expectations through job design shifts discretionary or voluntary behaviors into key priorities for organizations, in turn creating opportunity to link formal monitoring and reward systems. In the same way, recruitment strategies could consider explicit behavioral criteria reflecting social behaviors, helping organizations to diminish the negative impacts of social influence often associated with leadership organizational politicking (Chan & Pak, 2024).

6.3 Limitations and future research

We acknowledge there are limitations to this study. First, we developed and evaluated a multilevel model involving several variables. The chances of a model being incorrect increase with model complexity (Saylor & Trafimow, 2021). To mitigate this, we evaluated components of the model in two separate samples (Zyphur et al., 2023). Nevertheless, correlational data cannot establish causality. We only have network member affective commitment as the main outcome. Affective commitment is important and predicts a wide range of behaviors, but it would be useful to examine if the effects on commitment are strong enough to influence other important outcomes such as implementation of organizational changes by network members. However, two separate multisource studies were conducted with one of them incorporating multiple waves of data, thereby adding to the robustness of the findings. Using data from multiple sources (network member, network leader, Study 1 and 2) and data separated by time (Study 1) helps to mitigate the effects of common method variance (Podsakoff et al., 2024).

Second, the rich contextual high investment design was dependent on working closely with organizations to reach the networks of interest and gain their commitment to the research process. This approach brings benefits to theory building from field studies and counters some of the limitations of laboratory experimental designs (Grégoire et al., 2025). When combined with the exploration of theoretically derived relationships in context, field studies can be a powerful lever for insight (Rouse et al., 2025) and research impact (Simsek et al., 2018). Alternatively, combining experimental and field study approaches to triangulate finding would enhance the external and internal validity and aid in offsetting limitations of both approaches (Wellman et al 2023).

Third, our research site was institutionally restricted. Further research exploring social behaviors in organizations outside Anglo-Saxon or Western ownership institutional frames of reference would add to our contextual models (Melham et al., 2024). Our work focused on

diverse transnational networks with a global mission, extending the empirical context to groups working with more polarized priorities would provide an opportunity to consider further the influence of social behaviors.

6.4 Conclusions

Global HRM is promoted as a control mechanism that enhances the effectiveness and productivity of work across international borders in complex organizations, but tensions between local context and corporate interests show that implementation unfolds in uneven ways. Our work demonstrates the significance of social capability within networks. The ability of network leaders and members to work effectively on areas of global HRM is derived from the social capital building behaviors of leaders and collaboration experiences of network members. Too often we consider global HRM integration as a top-down process reliant on the competences of a managerial elite. However, our work illustrates the importance of spaces where policies, practices and norms are implemented and the capabilities of those involved. Examining social capital building as a common good concept, beyond the accumulation of individual resources for self-interest, draws our attention to mutual experiences of actors and the quality of those relationships. Our findings suggest social capital building behaviors are a strong collaboration mechanism for integration supporting Global HRM.

7 APPENDICES

Table A1: Social Behavior Measures in Study 1

Relational Behaviors: 7 items were used. Individuals were asked in thinking about	1. gathering feedback from workers directly affected by new initiatives
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their [global new ways of working] to rate the extent to which they were involved in the following behaviors, in the past month: Responses were scored as 1=not at all, 2=one to two times in the past months, 3=one to two times a week, 4=three to four times a week, 5=once a day, 6=several times a day.	2. adapting new practices and procedures to make them suitable to our specific context 3. selling the benefits of new practices to others in my work group 4. explaining performance expectations to those directly affected by new initiatives 5. redesigning the procedures and processes to enable better international collaborations 6. sharing ideas and innovations on international collaborations with other members of my work group at my location 7. sharing ideas and innovations on international collaborations with colleagues from other locations in your organization
Structural behaviors: measured using four items. Individuals were asked, in the past month, how frequently they had used the following behaviors in their global collaboration: Responses were scored as 1=not at all, 2=one to two times in the past months, 3=one to two times a week, 4=three to four times a week, 5=once a day, 6=several times a day.	1. Virtual meetings such as telephone conferencing or Skype; 2. international task forces, working groups or special assignment groups; 3. Personal networks within the firm; 4. Professional networks external to the firm.

Table A2: Social Behavior measures in study 2

Relational Behaviors: Individuals were asked in thinking about their [new ways of working globally/specific initiative/specific innovation], in the past month, to rate the extent to which they were involved in the following behaviors: Responses scored on an eight-point scale (1='Not at all', 2='1-2 times a	1. Gather feedback from employees directly affected 2. Gather feedback from customers 3. Seek out local innovations which could be used globally 4. Negotiate local adaptations to international standardization 5. Sell the benefits to those directly affected 6. Sell the benefits to key decision makers at the top of the organization
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year', 3='1-2 times a quarter', 4='1-2 times a month', 5='1-2 times a week', 6='3-4 times a week', 7='Once a day', 8='Several times a day').	7. Sell the benefits to key decision makers internationally 8. Develop the business case by relating to the economic benefits 9. Develop the business case by relating to the organization's values 10. Develop the business case by relating to the organization's corporate social responsibility agenda 11. Challenge global practice that is unsuited to the local needs 12. Explain the performance expectations to those directly affected 13. Redesign jobs to increase opportunity to use skills and take decisions 14. Redesign jobs to standardize or simplify procedures 15. Share experiences internationally 16. Co-create practice with international colleagues
Structural behaviors: Individuals were asked in thinking about their [new ways of working globally/specific initiative/specific innovation], in the past month, to rate the extent to which they were involved in the following behaviors: Responses scored on an eight-point scale (1='Not at all', 2='1-2 times a year', 3='1-2 times a quarter', 4='1-2 times a month', 5='1-2 times a week', 6='3-4 times a week', 7='Once a day', 8='Several times a day').	17. Use of virtual meetings such as teleconferencing or Skype 18. Use of task forces, working groups, functional groups or special assignment/interest groups 19. Use of personal networks within the firm 20. Use of professional networks external to the firm 21. Global firm conferences 22. Functional or Special Interest Group meetings, seminars or communities of practice

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