The effect of institutional context on project management, department interface and information search in early innovation projects

*Dr. Roman Bartnik, IN-EAST School of Advanced Studies, University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany, Email: roman.bartnik@uni-due.de

Abstract
Japanese and German innovation projects are embedded in distinct organizational contexts. Transferring practices between such contexts may lead to mismatches without careful adaptation. We look at the influence of such contextual differences on project coordination. Based on survey data on 79 firms and analysis in a PLS structural equation model, we find that early departmental involvement has a positive effect on team effectiveness in German firms, but not in Japanese firms. Stronger project managers and more internal information search have indirect positive effects by increasing departmental involvement. By contrast, neither of these effects is significant for Japanese firms. Here, early external information search increases project effectiveness. We argue that the different intensities of internal and external linkages, notably the different role of departments and cross-functional teamwork, need to be considered and carefully analyzed in recommendations on early phase project management in Japan and Germany.

Keywords: New Product Development, Fuzzy Front End, Cross-functional teamwork, National Innovation System, PLS-SEM

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