

Top managers' career variety and their board tenure: the moderating effect of international education and in-house work experience

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Abstract

Career variety has been increasingly discussed in top management literature. Previous publications have linked top managers' career variety to firm-level outcomes. This paper focuses on the relationship between top managers' career variety and their board tenure. We use the boundaryless career approach, and argue that there is a negative relationship between career variety and board tenure. Drawing on a sample of executive directors in British firms, we provide empirical evidence that higher career variety is associated with shorter tenure. We also reveal that this relationship is further strengthened, if top managers have high international educational experience. Furthermore, we show that in-house work experience mitigates the negative association between career variety and board tenure. By investigating important factors that influence tenure of board members at the individual level, we contribute to the relatively scant literature on the link between top managers' careers and their board mandate, unravelling the effects of career variety on tenure on the board.

Keywords:

Career variety, executive careers, executive directors, international educational experience, in-house work experience, management boards, tenure.