

Preface

Globalization—an increasingly driving force behind the vibrant economies throughout the world since the last decades of the twentieth century—is shaping a new era of interactions among various political, cultural and economic groups. As a result, it is increasing the contacts between people across various boundaries—geographical, political and cultural. When people say that ‘the world is becoming smaller every day’, they are referring not only to the increased speed and ease of transportation and communications but also to the increased use of international and intercultural market to buy and sell goods. Today, the interactions among people with different national and cultural identities are deeper than ever before.

There is no doubt about the increasing awareness of the importance of cross-border transactions in our daily life. An increasing number of companies are now relying on production chains that straddle many politically and culturally distinctive areas. Raw materials and components may come from different linguistic or religious areas and be assembled in another, while marketing and distribution take place in still other venues. Consumers’ decisions in, for example, New York or Shanghai may become information that has an almost immediate impact on the products that are being made—and the styles that influence them—all over the world. The overall heightened presence of foreign goods, foreign producers and even foreign-owned assets causes many to question the impact and desirability of all international and intercultural economic transactions.

In this book, we assume that, due to the existence of various border barriers, production factors (such as labor, capital, technology, and information) cannot freely flow across, and are unevenly distributed between all sides of borders. This creates inequalities, disagreements, tensions and even armed disputes among various stakeholders. This book considers various types of borders. In brief, the objectives of this book are:

- To clarify whether existing management theories and methods can be effectively applied in an entity (which can be defined as either an independent state, a region, a community, a culture, or a firm) after the latter is increasingly interactive with the rest of the world;

- To develop qualitative and quantitative methods by which to help make optimal decisions for the entity and, in the meantime, to maximize the positive (or minimize the negative) effects of the decisions on the rest of the world; and
- To design workable cross-border cooperation plans and conflict-management schemes by which policy-makers can better cope with the challenges and problems resulting from the increasingly interactive world.

Along with the increasing interactions between different parts of the world, the application of existing traditional theories and methods may become less effective, if not ineffective. This is particularly so when policymakers and practitioners want to seek rational and optimal solutions to complicated cross-border tasks.

This book intends to present a new approach to managing the increasingly interactive world. The use of the word “new” has two meanings. The first relates to the intent that I prefer a new definition of borders (which are natural, institutional, functional, or mixed) to the traditional definitions of them. The second concerns the fact that in this book I will apply (and, where necessary, develop) analytical tools, methods and models that are different from those used in other similar books.

A truly cross-disciplinary title, this book covers various disciplines of the social sciences as well as those of natural and environmental sciences and information technology. In brief, the key features of this book include the following:

- Develop a so-called ‘cross-border’ framework by which to solve the bilateral and multilateral problems and challenges stemming from the increasingly interactive world.
- Measure—qualitatively or quantitatively—various effects of borders on global and local economic activities.
- Provide various solutions or options to an efficient cross-border management, many of which cannot be found in other books.
- Adopt end-of-chapter case studies in parallel with shorter, boxed examples in the text, all of which are focused on the current situations of and the recent progresses towards cross-border management.

This book is not intended to serve as a standard textbook for a specific discipline or course. Instead, it is a multidisciplinary text. Specifically, I hope that this three-in-one book will satisfy the needs of students and specialists coming from the following three disciplines:

- i. business administration
- ii. international relations
- iii. regional planning and resource management

Frankly, it is a challenging task for me to write such kind of book. And students of each discipline may not be interested in some chapters of this book—even though I believe that, given that the world is becoming increasingly interactive, students of one discipline will need more knowledge of other disciplines. In this book, Chaps. 4, 11 and 18 are not for students of regional planning and management; Chaps. 10 and

12 are not written for business administration students; and Chap. 15 is not for international relations students.

Throughout this book, both customary and metric systems are adopted. This is intended to help readers to have knowledge of the diversity of the real world—an issue with which cross-border management should deal. A table of conversion from some US customary units to metric units is provided in Pages 401 and 402 at the end of this book.



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Theory, Method and Application

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