

Introduction

The book which you are about to read deals with an important and current phenomenon of operating in a global, multicultural environment. Countries and companies are becoming increasingly interdependent, employees are taking up jobs for companies in different locations (sometimes on a different continent), and managers are facing the challenge of managing a culturally diverse environment. The world has been drawing more closely together since 1990. Integration of flows of goods, people, and capital has increased significantly since then. Although the globalization index differs between countries (see Table 1), globalization is a fact that we all must recognize. It affects nations, organizations, and individuals. Thus, the knowledge, experience, and skills in managing cross-cultural diversity seem to be crucial both for decision-makers and employees.

The book is an attempt at an answer to the need for a scholarly exploration of managing cross-cultural diversity. It is aimed at professionals and researchers in the field of cross-cultural management, and practitioners who require a comprehensive, well-structured publication on the topic. Additionally, it could be useful for students of management or related majors.

This book brings together nine studies into management in the global world and, at the same time, in cross-cultural environments. It is divided into two parts which reflect two perspectives: macro and group-individual one. Part one, *Consequences of Cross-Cultural Diversity – Macro Perspective*, offers an analysis on the macro level. Chapter 1 deals with the problem of identity in the globalized world. The second chapter is closely related to the issue of identity, as it considers the question of the existing European identity; although Europe can be perceived as one entity, in fact it consists of 32 independent countries, thus the answer to the research question asked in Chapter 2 is important both for European and non-European managers. The chapter presents the preliminary results of a project which covers the EU member states (selected according to political and geographical criteria). Chapter 3 discusses aspects of managing in cross-cultural diversity. The author answers several questions: how diversity has been viewed and explained, and what concepts and models explain diversity, solutions available in managing diversity, and forecasts for the future of managing cultural diversity. The business world is affected not only by the globalization process, but also by the increasing role of artificial intelligence (AI); the human workforce is competing with increasingly intelligent machines. The Authors of Chapter 4 present examples of professions that can be replaced by technology and a case where such a replacement has already happened. They try to answer the question whether the human workforce can be universally (globally) ‘disrupted’ by autonomous technologies. The last Chapter analyses the role of *wasta* in developing social capital. *Wasta* is a phenomenon closely related to the culture of Arabic countries which influences many internal organizational decisions and processes.

Table 1. The globalization index 2018

Ranking	Country	Points in the globalization index	Ranking	Country	Points in the globalization index
1	The Netherlands	92.39	24	Greece	62.00
2	Ireland	90.05	25	United States	61.62
3	Belgium	81.83	26	New Zealand	61.61
4	Switzerland	81.48	27	Poland	60.75
5	Luxembourg	79.69	28	Bułgaria	60.66
6	United Kingdom	75.12	29	Latvia	60.40
7	Denmark	75.09	30	Slovenia	60.10
8	Sweden	72.40	31	Romania	59.88
9	Austria	71.94	32	Chile	59.53
10	Finland	70.28	33	Japan	57.97
11	Portugal	69.70	34	Israel	56.92
12	Czech Republic	69.11	35	Turkey	48.80
13	Canada	69.05	36	South Korea	48.66
14	Slovakia	68.51	37	South Africa	47.28
15	Norway	68.27	38	Mexico	46.82
16	Hungary	68.27	39	Indonesia	44.41
17	Estonia	68.02	40	Russia	43.92
18	France	67.89	41	China	42.43
19	Germany	66.36	42	Nigeria	39.58
20	Spain	65.24	43	Brazil	39.45
21	Australia	63.79	44	Argentina	37.19
22	Lithuania	62.93	45	India	31.33
23	Italy	62.93			

Source: A. Sachs, C. Funke, Ph. Kreuzer, J. Weiss, Globalization Report 2020, https://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/fileadmin/files/user_upload/GlobalizationReport2020_2_final_en.pdf (accessed 15.03.2021).

The chapter provides a great example of cultural differences and their influence on understanding people and their behaviour.

The second part of the book, *Human Resources and Organizational Behavior Perspectives on cross-cultural diversity*, offers an analysis of management challenges and solutions from both the group and individual perspective. This part consists of four chapters (6–9). Chapter 6 covers the problem of migration and human resources practices implemented by organizations employing workers from neighbouring countries. The case of Poland and Ukraine presented in the chapter can be treated as a starting point for a similar analysis for other neighbouring countries. Continuing the analysis of the cross-cultural environment and its influence on the management process, Authors of Chapter 7 present methods and tools of multicultural management, offer recommendations for managers, and propose a self-assessment questionnaire testing multicultural management skills. Next, Chapter 8 deals with diversity and inclusion practices in different cultures and verifies similarities and differences in approaches towards those concepts. A literature review and a case study of an international IT company allow to understand the phenomenon and learn a few HRO practices in terms of different cultural environments. Chapter 9 provides an insight into culture and performance appraisal practices and processes in the South African public sector, underlining the core elements of appraisal systems there.

At the end of the introduction, it is worth to underline the fact that the book itself is a result of a multicultural team's work. I would like to thank the Authors for sharing their knowledge and perspectives.

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