

13 Conclusion

The challenges of developing competitive advantage from local and differential logics

Rick Molz, Cătălin Rațiu and Ali Taleb

Introduction

The chronically misunderstood and uneasy nature of interactions between global agents and local actors is arguably the root cause of many political, social and administrative disharmonies across the globe. Existing theories rarely take into account the stakes of both local and global constituencies, making for difficult advancement of knowledge, along with displeased managers scrambling to equip themselves with operable tools for decision making. Understanding the dynamics between local and global offers not only the chance for more munificent relationships between multinational enterprises and their host countries, but also important business opportunities beyond market growth.

We began our journey in this book with the genuine wish to deepen our understanding of the dynamics between the local and the global. We asked contributing authors to consider this issue from the vantage point of their own area of interest, understanding that their approach would also display sensitivity to multidisciplinary integration. As a result, the work presented in this volume looks at this topic from a broad array of perspectives and contributes to a number of important fields, such as business strategy, international management, organizational behavior, sociology, corporate sustainability and more.

What is the picture that is gradually revealed from this celebration of multidisciplinary research work? Is there a homogeneous storyline that is being told by the authors of these chapters? Are there strong themes that appear throughout? Notwithstanding the significant similarities and overlaps, the book has been successful in achieving high diversity of opinions and voices. This is in keeping with our wish to be open in our exploration of this subject. For instance, while some chapters, through broader brushstrokes, consider emerging theories and models needed to understand current realities, and thereby complement existing knowledge on multinationals operating in emerging markets, other chapters have looked at more specific issues and presented evidence to substantiate theory or simply to expose existing practices.

The diversity of perspectives is also apparent from the different types of chapters presented, based on approaches to theory development and methodologies.