

## EDITORIAL

# Management Research: Overcoming the Research/Relevance Gap

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Over the last decades, research in management has been developed with the aim of proposing robust theories to describe, explain and predict managerial phenomena, to produce original knowledge that can infuse and guide actions and decisions in organizations, and to generate insightful ideas that can lead to innovative ideas and practices.

Scholars must recognize that it is difficult, if not impossible, to put all of these elements together in one paper (Carton & Mouricou, 2017). Therefore, researchers are encouraged to disseminate their work and engage with business and society in ways other than research articles, such as writing nonacademic books and participating in radio, television and internet programs (Cummings, 2007; Hambrick, 2005, Hitt, 1998). Great examples of such engagement include Henri Mintzberg's (1998) nonacademic bestseller 'Safari Strategy' and Collins and Porras's (1994) 'Built to Last'. We can also mention TED talks, articles published in *The Conversation* or the videos promoted by Xerfi Canal and IQSOG or by the FNEGE in the French community. These different media offer researchers the opportunity to share the knowledge that they have created with a wider audience. In parallel, the development of sponsored chairs or theses funded by companies very often leads to the creation of actionable or practically relevant knowledge that is particularly appreciated by companies and of robust theories and concepts that are highly valuable in academia. Last, it is important to highlight that students and consequently future managers benefit from updated knowledge and original ideas produced by researchers in their education program.

Instead of trying to achieve the impossible, that is, generate one piece of work to produce knowledge for all audiences, we believe that several formats can be considered, with specific expectations in terms of knowledge production and dedicated to a particular audience. In other words, as scholars, we could benefit from synergies between activities that promote novel and rigorous knowledge and practical implications. As editors-in-chief of M@n@gement, we would like to support researchers in this endeavor over the next 3 years by promoting

a variety of potential outlets to disseminate authors' ideas and knowledge in a single journal. This has led us to slightly reconfigure the editorial line of the journal. The traditional main section of the journal aim remains to develop papers with strong theoretical contributions in line with current societal and managerial challenges. The new *Business Voice* section has been created to encourage the publication of articles offering robust and practically relevant knowledge. Finally, the *Essays* section has been introduced to welcome articles that propose original thoughts and ideas, inspiring researchers, managers and students.

## Developing robust, up-to-date theories articulated with a view to the needs of society

The traditional main section of M@n@gement will continue to welcome papers that aim at developing contributions to management theories. M@n@gement has a long multicultural tradition, reflecting the diversity of the AIMS community. Thus, we believe that theories should take into account the context in which social phenomena occur. Whether qualitative or quantitative, any research should consider time, location, culture, etc., as boundary conditions in which theories are developed. Submissions to M@n@gement are invited to highlight the boundary conditions of their proposed theoretical contributions.

Moreover, although M@n@gement has a long tradition of qualitative research, which has made M@n@gement a friendly journal for qualitative research that seeks to examine the nature of concepts and relationships, we also welcome quantitative designs that tend to explain the relationships between the different concepts. We are particularly supportive of quantitative designs that compare various populations or subpopulations to acknowledge the differences between them. In addition, experimental designs, econometrics, lexicometrics and traditional surveys are welcome in this journal, especially to explain variations of a phenomenon within and across populations.

Finally, we aim to develop scientific research that is in line with current stakes. We believe that management research offers a key perspective to foster changes that may orient decision and action toward a better world. Whether we are addressing issues related to sustainable development, grand challenges, One World, or the Anthropocene, we believe that management theories can contribute to making progress toward a sustainable way of life. We invite researchers who address these challenges to submit their contributions to M@n@gement.

### **Business Voice: An avenue for practically relevant knowledge**

Drawing practical implications from management research has long posed a dilemma. While most researchers encourage reflection on practical outcomes, few journals propose an arena for articulating scientific knowledge development and practical implications. The new *Business Voice* section aims at doing so by disseminating scientific knowledge into the management world, including companies, associations, public administrations, etc.

Articles published in the *Business Voice* section should discuss intriguing managerial phenomena. In fact, managers usually address the world through phenomena. The list of these phenomena is endless: group coordination, coopetition, innovation management, out-of-the-box thinking, meaning management, strategic resilience, etc. Theories are ways of looking at phenomena through a specific perspective, which is why we believe that, in this type of article, theories should explain why they provide a relevant way to enrich knowledge about a phenomenon.

In line with our objective of developing practical knowledge, we encourage the publication of engaged research, be it action research, collaborative research, or other forms of codevelopment of the research project with field actors. In our opinion, for institutional reasons, research too often hides that the knowledge produced comes from collaborative activities with companies, associations, unions, etc. M@n@gement welcomes such modes of research development and seeks to publish scientific knowledge from constructivist, collaborative and reflective points of view. We hope to receive papers that follow this line to make M@n@gement an impactful journal read by researchers and professionals who operate in companies and other types of organizations.

The first 'Business Voice' article will be published in the next volume.

### **Essays: Inspiring food for thought**

The *Unplugged* section of M@n@gement has long been a venue for original ways of thinking. In fact, M@n@gement has

been a leading journal in providing a space for original, unconventional theoretical proposals and institutional points of view. As editors-in-chief, we wish to continue to offer such a place to our community. Nevertheless, in the former *Unplugged* section, submissions were not evaluated in the same way as traditional articles and, more importantly, were not peer reviewed.

We feel that submissions to *Essays* could also benefit from an in-depth discussion with reviewers. In the experience of most of us, constructive discussion with reviewers leads to significant improvements in our articles. Moreover, the status of a peer-reviewed article is different from that of a non-peer-reviewed article. With this in mind, we have decided to rename the section *Essays* without completely changing the philosophy of the articles published in this section. We also encourage the submissions of reflexive notes on our institutional field (universities, business schools, the management research field, etc.).

We welcome research on a particular field, as proposed in this volume by Anouck Adrot. Her paper proposes an original perspective on emergence and an avenue for further developing research that draws on this concept. She explains how promising such a stream of research could be and how researchers may collectively proceed to overcome current difficulties. We believe that the proposition of this kind of perspective is inspiring and can contribute to making M@n@gement a stimulating and inspirational outlet.

### **Conclusion**

M@n@gement has always been a pioneering journal. It was one of the first 100% open source online journals in management research. It proposed the *Unplugged* section with a very original positioning that we aim to perpetuate in the *Essays* section. It offered researchers the opportunity to use videos and other compatible online sources to support their work. Our editorial policy aims to follow in the footsteps of our predecessors who built the journal's pioneering identity.

### **References**

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