

Management and Organization Review General Call for ‘Engaged Indigenous Scholarship’ Papers

Call for Papers

Management and Organization Review (MOR) is announcing a renewed initiative that seeks to attract and publish research embodying engaged indigenous scholarship in the context of transforming economies. Tsui (2004: 501) defines ‘indigenous research’ as ‘*scientific studies of local phenomena using local language, local subjects, and locally meaningful constructs, with the aim to test or build theories that can explain and predict ... phenomena in the local social cultural context*’. By scientific studies, she emphasizes the need for high-quality indigenous research as judged by the scientific community.

This scientific community is not monolithic. The Editors of MOR believe that management and organization science scholarship may suffer from perpetuating and replication of western, especially an American brand, of management and organization theories to management and organization phenomena in China and all other transforming economies. While this imitation is understandable and commonsensical for newly emerging research communities striving to learn and gain legitimacy, it can have the unintended consequence of stifling diversity and innovation in management knowledge. To counteract this tendency, MOR seeks to encourage heterogeneity by developing indigenous management theories, methods, and institutions that are sensitive to local contexts.

Engaged Indigenous Scholarship is critically important for the development of management knowledge that expresses and celebrates the unique contexts and settings of different countries and regions. It also provides indigenous scholars a career strategy for building on their strengths because it focuses on studying topics whose origins and meanings arise from the local cultures and contexts that they know best and to which they have direct access. This is a central founding objective of the International Association for Chinese Management Research, and its journal, *Management and Organization Review*.

Engaged Indigenous Scholarship provides a constructive way to undertake original contextual management and organization research. As discussed on this website, Engaged Indigenous Scholarship is a participative form of research that incorporates the views of key stakeholders (academics, practitioners, policy makers) to understand a complex problem in its particular context (Van de Ven, 2012). By

definition, stakeholders are participants who have different stakes or interests in a study topic, and therefore know the indigenous values and local circumstances of the specific context being studied. By exploiting differences in the viewpoints of these key stakeholders, Engaged Indigenous Scholarship produces knowledge that is more penetrating, comprehensive, and insightful.

Engaged Indigenous Scholarship entails a fundamental shift in how we as researchers define our relationships with the topics being studied and the stakeholders (other researchers, students, and practitioners) in the indigenous communities being studied. It begins with the recognition that we often study topics or problems that exceed the limits of our individual capabilities. Because each of us is a product of a certain history, culture, and disciplinary training, we inevitably examine a topic or issue from a limited conceptual lens. We can understand these topics better if we step outside of ourselves and engage other relevant stakeholders in research problem formulation, theory building, research design, and communicating and applying research findings. These forms of engagement require researchers to participate in a collective learning process and to become reflexively aware of whose perspectives and interests are manifested and served in a study. Engagement entails humility in recognizing one's own limitations and profound respect for other kinds of knowledge producers.

This renewed initiative of MOR seeks to attract and feature empirical studies of indigenous phenomena related to management and organizations in transforming economies. MOR welcomes exploratory studies of new, emerging and/or poorly understood indigenous issues that require abductive reasoning and creative hunches rather than testing deductive hypotheses. Data on indigenous phenomena can come from any source, including qualitative and quantitative data from experiments, case studies, field surveys, and ethnographies.

The Deputy Editor leading this initiative is Professor Emeritus Andrew Van de Ven at the University of Minnesota.

REFERENCES

- Tsui, A. S. 2004. Contributing to global management knowledge: A case for high quality indigenous research. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, 21(4): 491–513.
- Van de Ven, A. H., & Jing, R. 2012. Indigenous management research in China from an engaged scholarship perspective. *Management and Organization Review*, 8(1): 123–137.