

ARTICLE

# Chinese Context and Theoretical Contributions to Management and Organization Research: A Replication and Extension

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## Abstract

We replicate and extend Jia, You, and Du's (2012) study. We added samples from the last 13 years (from 2011 to 2023) and analyzed these new samples using the same methodology as the 2012 article. Our replication found that in the last 13 years, 4 articles in the six leading journals and 16 articles in *Management and Organization Review* (MOR) have the highest degree of Chinese contextualization in concepts (*what*), their relationships (*how*), and the logics underlying the relationships (*why*). The Chinese context continues to contribute novel knowledge. The extension study fully demonstrates that in the 20 years since its birth, MOR has been on the path of pursuing its original aspiration and realizing its mission. On the *what*, *why*, and joint contextualization dimensions, the proportion of articles published in MOR with high contextualized theoretical contributions is higher than the proportion in the six leading journals. On the *theory-building* dimension, the overall degree of the articles published in MOR is higher than that of those published in the six leading journals. This indicates that MOR publishes articles that are not only of high quality and make general theoretical contributions, but also are highly relevant to the Chinese context.

## 摘要

早在2012年，Jia、You和Du曾经收集之前三十年在管理学六个顶级期刊上发表的论文中包含中国情景的文章数量，并从三个维度 -- 概念（“是什么”）、关系（“如何”）和逻辑（“为什么”）来分析论文的中国情景含量的高低。本文的研究沿用了上述论文的方法，加入从2011年至2023年期间发表的基于中国情境的组织管理研究论文，采用复制法进行了分析。结果表明，在过去13年中，那六个管理学顶级期刊中只有4篇论文，但《组织管理研究》（MOR）中却有16篇论文体现出高水平的中国情境特征。进一步的拓展研究发现，《组织管理研究》在其创刊以来的20年中，始终不忘初心、践行使命。MOR的论文不仅在概念、逻辑以及文章整体情境化方面要高于6个管理学顶刊，而且从构建新理论角度看，也高于6个管理学顶刊。这表明MOR发表的论文既具有普适性理论贡献，又更能反映中国的情境特征。

**Keywords:** Chinese context; Chinese management research; contextualization; *Management and Organization Review*; theoretical contributions

**关键词:** 中国情境; 中国管理研究; 情境化; 理论贡献; 组织管理研究

## Introduction

More than a decade ago, when Jia and his colleagues embarked on the research for their 2012 paper (Jia, You, & Du, 2012), China had just become the world's second largest economy. As China had made great contributions to the world's economic development, the authors asked: How had research in the Chinese context contributed to management and organization theory from 1985 to 2010? They were surprised that there was no literature to answer that question, and this became the impetus for the 2012 paper. When tracking management and organization research related to China, we are curious about progress in the past 13 years.

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From 1985 to 2010, the number of empirical Chinese context-based articles published in the six leading journals in the organization management research field (i.e., *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *Academy of Management Journal*, *Strategic Management Journal*, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *Organization Science*, and *Journal of International Business Studies*) was 265 (3.7% of the total number of 7,159 published articles). However, during the shorter period from 2011 to 2023, this number reached 369 (7.1% of the total number of 5,166 published articles). The number of articles in the last 13 years is 1.39 times the number in the previous 26 years, and the share is 1.92 times the share in the previous 26 years. This indicates not only a significant increase in the output of research about the Chinese context but also a growing acceptance of Chinese context-based articles in the global academic fields.

For more than a decade at the turn of the new century, authors were challenged by the question ‘Why China?’ when submitting articles on management issues in the Chinese context to international journals. Thus, Anne S. Tsui and her colleagues founded the International Association for Chinese Management Research and its flagship journal, *Management and Organization Review* (MOR). In its inaugural issue in 2005, the editorial team opened with the title ‘Management and Organizations in China: Expanding the Frontier of Global Knowledge’, declaring that the ‘mission of *Management and Organization Review* is to publish high-quality original research contributing to knowledge of organizations (a) in general and (b) of special relevance to China’ (Editorial, 2005: 2). Currently, the official website declares that MOR is the ‘premier journal for ground-breaking insights about management and organizations in China and global comparative contexts’.

Twenty years later, we are curious about whether MOR has taken an ambidextrous path, both promoting research on managerial issues related to China and contributing new knowledge to global management and organization research. Tsui and Jia (2024) analyzed the publications in MOR and the six leading journals. They found that more Chinese context-specific studies have been published in the 19 years since the launch of MOR in 2005, relative to the 20 years preceding the launch. Their study, however, does not provide details on the type of China-specific phenomena and theories being introduced into the literature.

The purpose of the current study is to fill this gap in Tsui and Jia’s (2024) paper. This purpose led us to conduct a replication and extension study of Jia et al.’s (2012) article, which focuses on the different types of contextualization on China. The replication study is based on the addition of new samples from 2011 to 2023, with the expectation that new Chinese contextualized concepts, relationships, and logics have emerged. We apply the same sampling, coding, and analytical methods used in Jia et al. (2012). The purpose of this replication study is to provide new evidence to answer the question ‘How has research in the Chinese context contributed to management and organization theory?’ The extension study is a comparative analysis using the 19 years of data from the inception of MOR (2005–2023) and 39 years of data from six English language leading journals from (1985–2023), focusing on the similarities and differences in the knowledge contributions of organization and management research about the Chinese context between the articles published in the two sets of journals. The purpose of the extension study is to provide a longitudinal analysis about whether MOR has kept and realized its original mission.

Going beyond Tsui and Jia (2024), which focuses on the general topic of the progress of Chinese management research, the current study specifically uses empirical articles as samples and performs a fine-grained quantitative analysis by focusing on the specific forms of contextualized theoretical contributions and by comparing the overall results between the six leading journals and MOR.

### Theoretical Background: The Two Models in Jia et al. (2012)

As Jia et al. (2012) suggested, the context-emic model and Colquitt and Zapata-Phelan’s (2007) model are two separate approaches to evaluate the theoretical contribution of an article. Highlighting the degree of contextualization on the concept, relationship, and logic in an article, the context-emic model is used to assess how a particular context contributes to the extant theory. As a context-etic framework, on the other hand, Colquitt and Zapata-Phelan’s (2007) model highlights that

theory-building and theory-testing are two dimensions that can be used to evaluate an article's theoretical contribution in a general sense.

### *The Context-Emic Model*

Following previous research, we define a theory as 'a collection of assertions, both verbal and symbolic, that identifies what variables are important for what reasons, specifies how they are interrelated and why, and identifies the conditions under which they should be related or not related' (Campbell, 1990: 39). Whetten (1989) elaborated that *what* refers to the concepts in a theory, *how* describes the relationships among those concepts, and *why* explains the underlying logics of those relationships. For a proposition or hypothesis to be meaningful, it needs to be understood within a certain context (Whetten, 1989). Using this approach, Jia et al. (2012) developed a context-emic model for assessing the degree of contextualization of an article. They explained how scholars can make theoretical contributions by contextualizing the three core components of a theory on *what*, *how*, and *why*.

For each component, scholars may conduct research at one of the three levels of contextualization: low (context-insensitive), medium (context-sensitive), or high (context-specific). The higher the degree of *what*, *how*, and *why*, the higher the degree of contextualization the study has, and thus, the more significantly the context contributes to the theory. Specifically, regarding the contextualization on *what*, the first and lowest degree of contextualization is that a study borrows the same definition and measurement of existing concepts. Despite valid translation (Behling & Law, 2000), the conceptual meaning and manifest indicators do not capture the essence of a context. The medium degree of contextualization is that one borrows an existing concept but improves and/or develops new measurements according to the context in which the study is conducted. Although using contextual measurements, the definition and connotation of the concept remain the same. As Tsui (2007: 1359) suggested, 'the system-level characteristics are essentially etic, or culture-general, and the manifestations of them (i.e., their indicators or operationalizations) may be emic, or culture-specific'. The third and highest degree of contextualization on *what* is that scholars develop a new concept or reconceptualize an existing concept in the particular context. In this scenario, new concepts emerge from indigenous studies, or scholars constructively revise the meaning of an existing concept to capture the contextual natures in their studies. This reconceptualization allows scholars to address the same research question by using contextually relevant concepts and different concepts according to the uniqueness of different cultures (Tsui, 2012).

Regarding the contextualization on *how*, the first and lowest level is that scholars test a well-established relationship among a set of concepts and find similar results. In this case, those replication studies are often deemed uninteresting (Whetten, 1989) because the research contexts barely contribute. The medium degree of contextualization is that scholars focus on the relationship among existing concepts but find novel results in a different context, or they introduce context-free mediators and/or moderators to develop fine-grained understandings about a relationship. For example, by introducing the moderator of top management team (TMT) faultlines, Ou, Seo, Choi, and Hom (2017) examined the contingent effect of executives' humility on the retention of firm middle managers in China. In such case, a general contextual feature, TMT faultlines, shapes novel insights on the relationship. The highest contextualization degree on *how* is that scholars investigate new relationships among a set of novel concepts to capture the nature of a certain context. Focusing on the relationships among contextualized concepts, the *how* describes a context-specific phenomenon that challenges existing knowledge. For example, Li and Piezunka (2020) examined how the indigenous concept of *uniplex third* facilitates intergenerational leadership succession in Chinese family firms. Or, one may introduce a context-specific mediator and/or moderator into the relationship among existing concepts to describe the society and culture in a focal context. For example, Li, Yao, Sue-Chan, and Xi (2011) introduced the *governmental tie channel* as a context-specific mediator to explain the relationship between firm ownership and a manager's governmental ties.

Regarding the contextualization on *why*, the first and lowest level is that scholars use general logics from existing theories to justify the underlying dynamics in their studies. Although they may focus on

novel phenomena, the general justifications are context-free. The medium degree of contextualization is that scholars develop their reasoning by using phenomenon-level descriptions of a focal context, or by using contextualized concepts as their core justifications. For example, Kuruvilla and Zhang (2016) utilized phenomena such as the strike wave after 2008 and labor protection legislation in China to support their reasoning. Although both cases help elucidate indigenous phenomena, they fail to develop formal logics with contextual explanations. The highest contextualization level on *why* is when scholars develop their reasoning based on the logics or theories that emerge from a certain context. This goes beyond description-level justifications, and the logics reflect the ontology, epistemology, and philosophy in the focal context. For example, drawing on Confucian ethics, Zhang (2022) explored the influence of informal institutional legacies on firms' contemporary foreign direct investment (FDI) in China. Together, Jia et al.'s (2012) context-emic model categorizes studies from low to high contextualization degree by jointly considering the dimensions of concepts (*what*), relationships (*how*), and logics (*why*).

### *Colquitt and Zapata-Phelan's (2007) Model*

Besides considering contextualization, Jia et al. (2012) evaluated the general theoretical contribution of an empirical study along two context-etic dimensions, according to Colquitt and Zapata-Phelan's (2007) model. First, the theory-building dimension refers to 'the degree to which an empirical article clarifies or supplements existing theory or introduces relationships and constructs that serve as the foundations for new theory' (Colquitt & Zapata-Phelan, 2007: 1283). A study is scored from the lowest degree of theory-building through replicating an existing finding to the highest degree through introducing a novel construct into an existing theory. Second, the theory-testing dimension captures the degree to which a formal theory has been used as the foundation of hypothesis development. A study scores the lowest degree on theory-testing when it is simple 'inductive or ground predictions with logical speculation' through the highest degree when the study tightly grounds its hypotheses based on an existing theory. As a context-etic model, theory-building and theory-testing dimensions allow one to assess the general theoretical contribution of a study without considering the influences of its context.

Using the two models, Jia et al. (2012) conducted a systemic quantitative review of empirical Chinese context-based articles in six leading journals and in MOR published from 1985 to 2010. For articles in the six leading journals, they found that only a few studies had developed high Chinese contextualized concepts, and no formal Chinese indigenous theories had been added to the worldwide literature of management and organization research, confirming that 'research in Chinese management has exploited existing questions, theories, constructs, and methods developed in the Western context' (Tsui, 2009: 1). Also, the degree of contextualization on *why*, the most important component of a theory, had even decreased over time. That is, for the Chinese context-based studies, it gets harder to integrate into the worldwide literature by highlighting their context-specific logics, though they demonstrated an increased trend of theoretical contribution along the theory-building and theory-testing dimensions (Jia et al., 2012). Articles in MOR had an overall higher degree of contextualization, but the impact of these articles on subsequent research could not be determined due to the short time window of the sampled articles in Jia et al.'s (2012) paper.

### *The Purpose of the Current Study*

The purpose of the current study is four-fold. First, adding a new sample of articles from 2011 to 2023, we assess the new contributions of Chinese context-based research. Comparing articles in two different time periods (i.e., 1985–2010 vs. 2011–2023), this replication provides an overview of the more recent Chinese context-based studies and identifies new Chinese contextualized theories beyond those reported in Jia et al. (2012). Second, we compare the contextualization for articles in two sets of journals (i.e., six leading journals vs. MOR) from 1985 through 2023, to gain an understanding of the unique way that MOR has contributed to management research. This satisfies our curiosity about

whether MOR has kept its original mission of publishing China-specific phenomena and theories. Third, using a citation analysis, we estimate the impact of Chinese context-based research in two different time periods and in two sets of journals. Fourth, we present examples of the new highest-degree contextualization studies (empirical and conceptual) that capture China-specific managerial phenomena.

## Method

### Data

Data in the current study are the empirical articles dealing with the Chinese context published in six leading journals in the management and organization research field and MOR between 1985 and 2023. First, we included the original sample used in Jia et al. (2012) from 1985 to the end of 2010, which has 265 articles from the six leading journals and 63 from MOR. Second, using the same procedure as Jia et al. (2012), we added new Chinese context-based articles published from 2011 to 2023. We reviewed all articles individually and selected three types of empirical studies (i.e., quantitative, qualitative, and descriptive) that consider the Chinese contextual nature in mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Macao (Li & Tsui, 2002). We checked the research design of each article to make sure that at least one sample or case was from one of the four regions of China. From 2011 to 2023, the six leading journals yielded 369 and MOR yielded 197 Chinese context-based articles. Thus, there were a total of 566 empirical studies in the replication study period. Including data from the original study period (i.e., 1985–2010) and the replication study period (i.e., 2011–2023), together, there were 894 empirical articles from 1985 to 2023 (i.e., 634 from the six leading journals and 260 from MOR). The first Chinese context-based article was published in *Administrative Science Quarterly* in 1985. Table 1 shows the distribution of articles across journals and years.

### Coding

Following the same procedure as Jia et al. (2012), we coded the 566 empirical articles in the replication period (369 from the six leading journals and 197 from MOR) based on the context-emic and Colquitt and Zapata-Phelan models.

First, we randomly selected 20 articles, 18 from the six leading journals and 2 from MOR, and 5 trained coders coded them independently. We discussed the results, improved the coding schema, and reached consensus. Then, we randomly selected another 28 articles, 24 from the six leading journals and 4 from MOR, and 5 coders double-blindly coded them with the improved coding schema. In this way, we established adequate reliability: The five-coder agreement reached 74%, 85%, and 82% in coding of *what*, *how*, and *why* dimensions, respectively. The ICC1 and ICC2 were 0.38 and 0.75 and 0.37 and 0.74 for theory-building and theory-testing, respectively. Thus, the reliability of our coding was acceptable (Bliese, 2000). Finally, we randomly assigned the remaining 518 articles to each coder.

As Jia et al. (2012) did, we carefully reviewed the sampled articles sentence by sentence to code the degree of conceptualization on *what*, *how*, and *why* on a scale from 1 as a low degree to 3 as high. For the *what*, we coded an article as 1 if it borrowed the definition and measurement of existing concepts, as 2 if it developed new measurements of existing concepts in China, and as 3 if it introduced a novel concept in China without citation or redefined a concept according to the nature of China. In coding the *how*, we specifically focused on the hypothesis development and results sections of the articles. We assigned a value of 1 if an article tested a well-established relationship and found similar results in China, of 2 if it investigated an existing relationship but found novel results in China or it introduced context-free mediators and/or moderators, and of 3 when an article investigated novel relationships in China or introduced mediators or moderators emerging from the Chinese context. In coding the *why*, we drew on the theoretical background and hypothesis development sections to summarize the core logics underlying the focal article. We coded as 1 if an article used general logics from existing theories, as 2 if scholars developed their reasoning based on the phenomenon-level descriptions or the contextualized concepts in China, and as 3 if an article used China-emerging logics or theories as its

**Table 1.** Chinese context studies in six leading journals (1985–2023) and in MOR (2005–2023)<sup>a,b</sup>

	AMJ	ASQ	JAP	JIBS	OrgSci	SMJ	Subtotal of six journals	MOR
1985		1					1	
1986			1				1	
1987	1			1			2	
1989		1					1	
1991			1	1			2	
1992		1	1			1	3	
1993	1		1	2			4	
1994	1	1		1		1	4	
1995	3			1			4	
1996	2	1		3	1		7	
1997		1		2		1	4	
1998			2	5	1		8	
1999				3		2	5	
2000	5		1	4			10	
2001	1	1	2	5		2	11	
2002	3		1	9	2	4	19	
2003	2			5	2	4	13	
2004	1		2	3	9	3	18	
2005	3	1	2	5	1	4	16	15
2006			1	8	2	1	12	12
2007	6	1	7	14		3	31	12
2008	1		1	12	3	8	25	9
2009	3		4	9	3	7	26	6
2010	3	1	8	21		5	38	9
2011	3		10	4	1	4	22	8
2012	4	1	3	6		1	15	15
2013	1		10	4	3	7	25	12
2014	2	3	6	8	3	7	29	10
2015	6		7	2	1	9	25	21
2016	3		8	5	3	7	26	18
2017	5	3	12	5	2	10	37	17
2018	8		10	9	2	7	36	11
2019	6	2	13	7	1	4	33	11
2020	6	3	6	1	2	4	22	16
2021	8	2	11	8	3	3	35	16
2022	5		9	9	5	2	30	20

*(Continued)*

Table 1. (Continued.)

	AMJ	ASQ	JAP	JIBS	OrgSci	SMJ	Subtotal of six journals	MOR
2023	5	1	15	7	3	3	34	22
Total	98	25	155	189	53	114	634	260

Notes: <sup>a</sup>We include the data in Jia et al. (2012)'s original study: 265 articles in the six leading journals from 1985 through 2010 and 63 in MOR from 2005 through 2010. Our replication study adds new data from 2011 through 2023: 369 articles in the six leading journals and 197 in MOR. To compare the overall results between two sets of journals, we combine data in the two periods: 634 empirical articles in the six leading journals from 1985 through 2023 and 260 empirical articles in MOR from 2005 through 2023. <sup>b</sup>ASQ, *Administrative Science Quarterly*; AMJ, *Academy of Management Journal*; SMJ, *Strategic Management Journal*; JAP, *Journal of Applied Psychology*; OrgSci, *Organization Science*; JIBS, *Journal of International Business Studies*; MOR, *Management and Organization Review*.

foundational arguments. We also coded the theory-building and theory-testing dimensions along a five-point scale from 1 as low degree to 5 as high. Our coding results included half-points in addition to integers, which captured the 'blends of different theory-building and theory-testing components' (Colquitt & Zapata-Phelan, 2007: 1289).

Further, we collected the citation data of each article as of 2024 according to the ISI Web of Knowledge Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI). This is a well-established approach to assess the impacts of a focal article (Li & Tsui, 2002). We also collected information on the year of publication, sample location, and authors of each article as our control variables. Specifically, the *year* of publication for articles in the six leading journals ranged from 1 for 1985 to 39 for 2023; for articles published in MOR, it ranged from 1 for 2005 to 19 for 2023. Given that one article might use multinational samples, the *sample location* was coded as 1 if the sample was drawn only from China and as 0 otherwise. The *number of authors* was the total count of authors in an article. The *author rank* was measured from low to high by the status of the first author: 1 = doctoral student, 2 = assistant professor, 3 = associate professor, and 4 = full professor. Moreover, given the nested nature of our data, we adopted the regressions with clustered standard errors around the three types of empirical articles (i.e., quantitative, qualitative, and descriptive), which allowed us to adequately assess the effect of Chinese contextualization on the article's citations.

## Results

First, we report the contextualization, theory-building, and theory-testing for articles in the periods of Jia et al.'s (2012) original study (1985–2010) and our replication study (2011–2023). Second, as an extension, we compare all articles in the six leading journals from 1985 to 2023 versus those in MOR from 2005 to 2023. Third, we report the results of regression analysis, for both the replication study and the extension study, to show the effect of contextualization on articles' impacts. Finally, we present exemplars of the highest degree of contextualization in *what*, *how*, and *why* as well as the empirical and conceptual articles from 2011 to 2023.

### Degree of Contextualization

Table 2 presents results of the context-emic model. Panel A shows the results for six leading journals and Panel B shows the results for MOR. From 2011 to 2023, nine (2.4%) Chinese-specific concepts (*what*) and six (1.6%) Chinese-specific logics (*why*) were introduced in the six leading journals. However, as the total number of articles increased in that period, the high contextualization on *what* and *why* showed a significantly lower ratio than in the period of 1985 through 2010 ( $\chi^2 = 10.05$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ;  $\chi^2 = 22.03$ ,  $p < 0.00$ ). For the *how*, 41 (11.1%) high-contextualized relationships emerged during 2011 through 2023, not significantly different ( $\chi^2 = 2.60$ ,  $p > 0.10$ ) than those in Jia et al.'s (2012) research.

For articles in MOR (Panel B), 13 (6.6%) Chinese indigenous concepts were developed, 63 (32.0%) relationships were tested, and 35 (17.8%) Chinese-specific logics emerged during 2011 to 2023. Except for the *what* ( $\chi^2 = 11.93$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), there are no systemically significant differences on contextualization along the *how* and *why* dimensions compared to the articles published in 2005 through 2010.

**Table 2.** Coding results: The context-emic model

Panel A. Six leading journals: Comparison between 1985–2010 and 2011–2023							
Degree of contextualization		<i>What</i>		<i>How</i>		<i>Why</i>	
		1985–2010	2011–2023	1985–2010	2011–2023	1985–2010	2011–2023
1	<i>N</i>	157	259			174	237
	%	59.2	70.2			65.7	64.2
2	<i>N</i>	93	101	224	328	67	126
	%	35.1	27.4	84.5	88.9	25.3	34.1
3	<i>N</i>	15	9	41	41	24	6
	%	5.7	2.4	15.5	11.1	9.1	1.6
Total	<i>N</i>	265	369	265	369	265	369
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Comparison between groups		$\chi^2 = 10.05, df = 2, p < 0.01$		$\chi^2 = 2.60, df = 1, p > 0.10$		$\chi^2 = 22.03, df = 2, p < 0.00$	



Panel B. MOR: Comparison between 2005–2010 and 2011–2023

Degree of contextualization		<i>What</i>		<i>How</i>		<i>Why</i>	
		2005–2010	2011–2023	2005–2010	2011–2023	2005–2010	2011–2023
1	<i>N</i>	33	138			15	61
	%	52.4	70.1			23.8	31.0
2	<i>N</i>	17	46	48	134	37	101
	%	27.0	23.4	76.2	68.0	58.7	51.3
3	<i>N</i>	13	13	15	63	11	35
	%	20.6	6.6	23.8	32.0	17.5	17.8
Total	<i>N</i>	63	197	63	197	63	197
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Comparison between groups		$\chi^2 = 11.93, df = 2, p < 0.01$		$\chi^2 = 1.52, df = 1, p > 0.10$		$\chi^2 = 1.34, df = 2, p > 0.10$	

Notes: 1 = Low degree of contextualization: for the *what*, to borrow the definition and measurement of existing concepts; for the *how*, to replicate a well-established relationship in China; and for the *why*, to use general logics from existing theories. 2 = Medium degree of contextualization: for the *what*, to develop new measurements of existing concepts in China; for the *how*, to find a novel result of the existing relationship or to introduce context-free mediators and moderators in China; and for the *why*, to develop reasoning based on the phenomenon-level descriptions or the contextual concepts in China. 3 = High degree of contextualization: for the *what*, to develop a novel concept or to redefine an existing one in China; for the *how*, to investigate a novel relationship in China or to introduce China-specific mediators or moderators into the existing relationship; and for the *why*, to use the China-emerging logics or theories as the foundations of reasoning.

Summing *what*, *how*, and *why*, we also compared the degree of joint contextualization between Jia et al.'s (2012) original study and the replication study. The results are presented in Table 3. In the six leading journals (Panel A), four (1.1%) articles emerged during 2011 through 2023 as the highest degree of joint contextualization (i.e., scoring 8 or 9). In MOR (Panel B), 16 (8.1%) articles were identified as the highest degree of joint contextualization.

### Theory-Building and Theory-Testing

Table 4 presents the coding results by using Colquitt and Zapata-Phelan's (2007) model. For the six leading journals, Panel A shows that the high-degree theory-building research (i.e., articles scoring 4–5) changed dramatically. The ratio was only 7.6% (20 articles) during 1985 through 2010, but it increased to 58.6% (216 articles) during 2011 through 2023. And the difference is significant ( $\chi^2 = 260.70$ ,  $p < 0.00$ ), indicating that Chinese context-based research has made great progress in theory-building in the most recent 13 years, compared to the previous 26 years.

For MOR articles across the two periods of 2005 through 2010 and 2011 through 2023, the result in Panel B of Table 4 shows a similar pattern to that of those in the six leading journals. The high-degree theory-building research increased dramatically from a ratio of 20.6% (only 13 articles) in the period of 2005 through 2010 to 58.8% (116 articles) in the period of 2011 through 2023 ( $\chi^2 = 72.73$ ,  $p < 0.00$ ).

**Table 3.** Joint contextualization in *what*, *how*, and *why*

Panel A. Six leading journals: Comparison between 1985–2010 and 2011–2023					
		1985–2010		2011–2023	
		<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Lowest contextualization	Sum of <i>what</i> , <i>how</i> , and <i>why</i> = 4	93	35.1	195	52.8
Lower contextualization	Sum of <i>what</i> , <i>how</i> , and <i>why</i> = 5	106	40.0	88	23.8
Medium contextualization	Sum of <i>what</i> , <i>how</i> , and <i>why</i> = 6	38	14.3	53	14.4
Higher contextualization	Sum of <i>what</i> , <i>how</i> , and <i>why</i> = 7	18	6.8	29	7.9
Highest contextualization	Sum of <i>what</i> , <i>how</i> , and <i>why</i> = 8	7	2.6	3	0.8
	Sum of <i>what</i> , <i>how</i> , and <i>why</i> = 9	3	1.1	1	0.3
Total <i>N</i>		265	100.0	369	100.0
Comparison between groups		$\chi^2 = 29.17$ , $df = 5$ , $p < 0.00$			
Panel B. MOR: Comparison between 2005–2010 and 2011–2023					
		2005–2010		2011–2023	
		<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Lowest contextualization	Sum of <i>what</i> , <i>how</i> , and <i>why</i> = 4	5	7.9	58	29.4
Lower contextualization	Sum of <i>what</i> , <i>how</i> , and <i>why</i> = 5	28	44.4	48	24.4
Medium contextualization	Sum of <i>what</i> , <i>how</i> , and <i>why</i> = 6	13	20.6	37	18.8
Higher contextualization	Sum of <i>what</i> , <i>how</i> , and <i>why</i> = 7	10	15.9	38	19.3
Highest contextualization	Sum of <i>what</i> , <i>how</i> , and <i>why</i> = 8	2	3.2	10	5.1
	Sum of <i>what</i> , <i>how</i> , and <i>why</i> = 9	5	7.9	6	3.0
Total <i>N</i>		63	100.0	197	100.0
Comparison between groups		$\chi^2 = 19.15$ , $df = 5$ , $p < 0.01$			

Note: The possible total score ranges from 3 to 9; the actual score ranges from 4 to 9.

**Table 4.** Coding results: Colquitt and Zapata-Phelan’s model<sup>a,b,c</sup>

Panel A. Six leading journals: Comparison between 1985–2010 and 2011–2023					
		Theory-building		Theory-testing	
		1985–2010	2011–2023	1985–2010	2011–2023
1 and 1.5	<i>N</i>	50	0	5	0
	%	18.9	0.0	1.9	0.0
2 and 2.5	<i>N</i>	64	3	51	2
	%	24.2	0.8	19.2	0.5
3 and 3.5	<i>N</i>	131	150	83	144
	%	49.4	40.7	31.3	39.0
4 and 4.5	<i>N</i>	19	211	69	92
	%	7.2	57.2	26.0	24.9
5	<i>N</i>	1	5	57	131
	%	0.4	1.4	21.5	35.5
Total	<i>N</i>	265	369	265	369
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Comparison between groups		$\chi^2 = 260.70, df = 4, p < 0.00$		$\chi^2 = 84.32, df = 4, p < 0.00$	
Panel B. MOR: Comparison between 2005–2010 and 2011–2023					
		Theory-building		Theory-testing	
		2005–2010	2011–2023	2005–2010	2011–2023
1 and 1.5	<i>N</i>	5	0	3	0
	%	7.9	0.0	4.8	0.0
2 and 2.5	<i>N</i>	15	1	18	0
	%	23.8	0.5	28.6	0.0
3 and 3.5	<i>N</i>	30	80	26	82
	%	47.6	40.6	41.3	41.6
4 and 4.5	<i>N</i>	13	110	11	55
	%	20.6	55.8	17.5	27.9
5	<i>N</i>	0	6	5	60
	%	0.0	3.0	7.9	30.5
Total	<i>N</i>	63	197	63	197
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Comparison between groups		$\chi^2 = 72.73, df = 4, p < 0.00$		$\chi^2 = 77.41, df = 4, p < 0.00$	

Notes: <sup>a</sup>Half-points represent ‘blends of different theory-building and theory-testing components’ (Colquitt & Zapata-Phelan, 2007: 1289). <sup>b</sup>Theory building: 1 = attempts to replicate previously demonstrated effects; 2 = examines effects that have been the subject of prior theorizing; 3 = introduces a new mediator or moderator of an existing relationship or process; 4 = examines a previously unexplored relationship or process; 5 = introduces a new construct (or significantly reconceptualizes an existing one). <sup>c</sup>Theory testing: 1 = inductive or grounds predictions with logical speculation; 2 = grounds predictions with references to past findings; 3 = grounds predictions with existing conceptual arguments; 4 = grounds predictions with existing models, diagrams, or figures; 5 = grounds predictions with existing theory.

This indicates that there is a significant increase of theoretical contributions in Chinese context-based research published during the past 13 years compared to in articles published in the earlier 6-year period (2005–2010).

For theory-testing, in the six leading journals, Panel A shows that the ratio of high-degree theory-testing articles (i.e., scoring 4–5) was 47.5% (126) in the period of 1985 through 2010 and 60.4% (223) in the period of 2011 through 2023 ( $\chi^2 = 84.32, p < 0.00$ ). For MOR, Panel B shows a similar pattern. The ratio of high theory-testing research is 25.4% (16 articles) in the period of 2005 through 2010 and 58.4% (115 articles) in the period of 2011 through 2023 ( $\chi^2 = 77.41, p < 0.00$ ). Together, Chinese context-based research has experienced an increasing trend of testing existing theories over the past 13 years in both the six leading journals and MOR.

In addition, as *why* is the most important component of a theory (Whetten, 1989), we compare the contextualization on *why* between the high-degree theory-building studies and the high-degree theory-testing studies. Untabulated results show that the mean score of *why* for the high-degree theory-building studies in MOR is 1.95, higher than the 1.72 for the high-degree theory-testing studies ( $t = 2.85, p < 0.01$ ). In the six leading journals, the mean score of *why* for the high-degree theory-building studies is 1.46, also higher than the 1.37 for the high-degree theory-testing studies ( $t = 1.91, p < 0.10$ ). Therefore, as expected, the Chinese context-based research aiming at developing new theories goes deeper in elaborating the indigenous logics (*why*) than that focusing on testing existing theories.

### Comparison between Six Leading Journals and MOR

As an extension, we further compared the degree of contextualization, theory-building, and theory-testing between all articles in the six leading journals (634) from 1985 to 2023 and those in MOR (260) from 2005 to 2023. As our second purpose, this comparison of the two sets of journals over their entire periods is meant to provide a deep understanding of the unique way that MOR has contributed to the management and organization research.

The overall Chinese contextualization is higher in MOR than in the six leading journals. For instance (see Table 5), in the *why*, the most important component of a theory (Whetten, 1989), articles

**Table 5.** Comparison between six leading journals and MOR: The context-emic model

Degree of contextualization		<i>What</i>		<i>How</i>		<i>Why</i>	
		Six leading journals	MOR	Six leading journals	MOR	Six leading journals	MOR
1	<i>N</i>	416	171			411	76
	%	65.6	65.8			64.8	29.2
2	<i>N</i>	194	63	552	182	193	138
	%	30.6	24.2	87.1	70.0	30.4	53.1
3	<i>N</i>	24	26	82	78	30	46
	%	3.8	10.0	12.9	30.0	4.7	17.7
Total	<i>N</i>	634	260	634	260	634	260
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Comparison between groups		$\chi^2 = 15.33, df = 2, p < 0.00$		$\chi^2 = 36.55, df = 1, p < 0.00$		$\chi^2 = 104.84, df = 2, p < 0.00$	

*Notes:* 1 = Low degree of contextualization: for the *what*, to borrow the definition and measurement of existing concepts; for the *how*, to replicate a well-established relationship in China; and for the *why*, to use general logics from existing theories. 2 = Medium degree of contextualization: for the *what*, to develop new measurements of existing concepts in China; for the *how*, to find a novel result of the existing relationship or to introduce context-free mediators and moderators in China; and for the *why*, to develop reasoning based on the phenomenon-level descriptions or the contextual concepts in China. 3 = High degree of contextualization: for the *what*, to develop a novel concept or to redefine an existing one in China; for the *how*, to investigate a novel relationship in China or to introduce China-specific mediators or moderators into the existing relationship; and for the *why*, to use the China-emerging logics or theories as the foundations of reasoning.

in MOR have a higher degree of contextualization than those in the six leading journals ( $\chi^2 = 104.84, p < 0.00$ ). In the six leading journals, only 4.7% (30 articles) were identified as having a high degree of contextualization. For MOR, this ratio reaches 17.7% (46 articles). Also, as shown in Table 6, the degree of joint contextualization for articles in MOR is higher than for those in the six leading journals ( $\chi^2 = 66.33, p < 0.00$ ). In the six leading journals, only 2.2% (14 articles) showed the highest degree of joint contextualization; the ratio was 8.8% (23 articles) in MOR. Statistically, the cross-sample comparison shows that the mean scores of *how* and *why* are 2.30 (the 95% CI is [2.24, 2.36]) and 1.89 (the 95% CI is [1.80, 1.97]), respectively, for the MOR articles, both higher than the mean of *how* (2.13, the 95% CI is [2.11, 2.16]) and *why* (1.40, the 95% CI is [1.36, 1.45]) for articles in the six leading journals. Similarly, the mean score of the joint contextualization is 5.63 (the 95% CI is [5.46, 5.80]) for MOR articles, which is higher than the 4.91 (the 95% CI is [4.83, 5.00]) for articles in the six leading journals.

Using Colquitt and Zapata-Phelan’s (2007) model, as shown in Table 7, we found that MOR contributes more high-degree theory-building articles than the six leading journals ( $\chi^2 = 23.00, p < 0.00$ ): The ratio in MOR is 49.6% (129 articles), and it is 37.2% (236 articles) in the six leading journals. However, there is no significant difference in theory-testing between the two sets of journals ( $\chi^2 = 3.78, p > 0.10$ ): the ratio is 55.1% (349 articles) in the six leading journals, and 50.4% (131 articles) in MOR. The mean score of theory-building for MOR articles is 3.42 (the 95% CI is [3.33, 3.51]), higher than that of articles in the six leading journals (the mean score is 3.12 and the 95% CI is [3.04, 3.19]). In contrast, there is no significant difference along the theory-testing dimension: The mean score is 3.66 and the 95% CI is [3.55, 3.79] for articles in MOR, and the mean score is 3.75 and the 95% CI is [3.67, 3.85] for articles in the six leading journals.

**Chinese Contextualization and Articles’ Impact**

Following Jia et al. (2012) and going beyond, we investigated the effect of Chinese contextualization on articles’ impacts by including the Chinese context-based articles between 2011 and 2023. Specifically, we (1) showed the distinct effects for articles in the six leading journals between the two time periods, (2) compared the differences between articles in the six leading journals versus MOR, and (3) adopted the count-based analysis as a new estimation strategy for testing the robustness of our findings. Table 8 shows the descriptions and correlations. Tables 9 and 10 show the results of regression analysis.

*Replication: Comparison between 1985–2010 and 2011–2023 for the six leading journals*

Table 8 shows that there are negative correlations between the variables of *year* and *what*, *how*, and *why* in both sets of journals. Also, Table 2 shows that the ratio of high-contextualized studies on *what* and

**Table 6.** Comparison between six leading journals and MOR: Joint contextualization

		Six leading journals		MOR	
		N	%	N	%
Lowest contextualization	Sum of <i>what</i> , <i>how</i> , and <i>why</i> = 4	288	45.4	63	24.2
Lower contextualization	Sum of <i>what</i> , <i>how</i> , and <i>why</i> = 5	194	30.6	76	29.2
Medium contextualization	Sum of <i>what</i> , <i>how</i> , and <i>why</i> = 6	91	14.4	50	19.2
Higher contextualization	Sum of <i>what</i> , <i>how</i> , and <i>why</i> = 7	47	7.4	48	18.5
Highest contextualization	Sum of <i>what</i> , <i>how</i> , and <i>why</i> = 8	10	1.6	12	4.6
	Sum of <i>what</i> , <i>how</i> , and <i>why</i> = 9	4	0.6	11	4.2
	Total N	634	100.0	260	100.0
		$\chi^2 = 66.33, df = 5, p < 0.00$			

Note: The possible total score ranges from 3 to 9; the actual score ranges from 4 to 9.

**Table 7.** Comparison between six leading journals and MOR: Colquitt and Zapata-Phelan's Model<sup>a,b,c</sup>

		Theory-building		Theory-testing	
		Six leading journals	MOR	Six leading journals	MOR
1 and 1.5	<i>N</i>	50	5	5	3
	%	7.9	1.9	0.8	1.2
2 and 2.5	<i>N</i>	67	16	53	18
	%	10.6	6.2	8.4	6.9
3 and 3.5	<i>N</i>	281	110	227	108
	%	44.3	42.3	35.8	41.5
4 and 4.5	<i>N</i>	230	123	161	66
	%	36.3	47.3	25.4	25.4
5	<i>N</i>	6	6	188	65
	%	0.9	2.3	29.7	25.0
Total	<i>N</i>	634	260	634	260
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Comparison between groups		$\chi^2 = 23.00, df = 4, p < 0.00$		$\chi^2 = 3.78, df = 4, p > 0.10$	

Notes: <sup>a</sup>Half-points represent 'blends of different theory-building and theory-testing components' (Colquitt & Zapata-Phelan, 2007: 1289).

<sup>b</sup>Theory building: 1 = attempts to replicate previously demonstrated effects; 2 = examines effects that have been the subject of prior theorizing; 3 = introduces a new mediator or moderator of an existing relationship or process; 4 = examines a previously unexplored relationship or process; 5 = introduces a new construct (or significantly reconceptualizes an existing one). <sup>c</sup>Theory testing: 1 = inductive or grounds predictions with logical speculation; 2 = grounds predictions with references to past findings; 3 = grounds predictions with existing conceptual arguments; 4 = grounds predictions with existing models, diagrams, or figures; 5 = grounds predictions with existing theory.

*why* in the period of 2011 through 2023 is lower than that in the period of 1985 through 2010. Table 3 further shows that more low-degree contextualized articles were published in the recent period of 13 years. These results jointly indicate that the degree of Chinese contextualization has decreased over time.

The institutionalization of academic legitimacy in the global research community since the 2010s is key to explaining this finding. Informal institutional pressure comes from the fact that Chinese scholars have largely adopted a rigorous yet decontextualized research orientation since the 2010s, when the University of Texas at Dallas (UTD) journal list was introduced into the academy in the mainland of China and more (young) Chinese scholars received rigorous training on both theory and research methods. As a result, more Chinese context-based research follows the norm and mimics the approach in the global research community. Formal institutional pressure comes from explicit and/or implicit expectations since the late 2010s in both the discipline ranking and promotion review processes in most universities in mainland China that scholars should publish articles in Chinese. This coercive demand has led to more high-degree Chinese context articles being submitted to and published in indigenous Chinese journals. The overall Chinese contextualization thus is lower in the period of 2011 through 2023. To encourage a deeper understanding of the Chinese indigenous phenomenon, therefore, business schools in China may consider putting more weights on the high-degree Chinese contextualization studies that published in both high-quality English and Chinese journals when making their policies of evaluating faculties.

Table 9 compares the articles' impact in the six leading journals in the two periods. Models 1 through 3 show that our predictors are valid to predict articles' citations in the six leading journals: The  $R^2$  are from 0.20 to 0.25, and all Wald tests are statistically significant. The degrees of *what* ( $\beta = 101.21, p < 0.05$ ), *how* ( $\beta = 104.19, p < 0.01$ ), and joint contextualization ( $\beta = 70.81, p < 0.01$ )

**Table 8.** Descriptions and correlations

Panel A. Six leading journals ( <i>N</i> = 634): From 1985 to 2023												
	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Citations	183.42	248.04										
2. What	1.38	0.56	0.19									
3. How	2.13	0.34	0.14	0.19								
4. Why	1.40	0.58	0.08	0.20	0.43							
5. Joint <sup>a</sup>	4.91	1.06	0.19	0.70	0.65	0.79						
6. Theory-building	3.12	0.90	-0.16	0.02	0.12	0.02	0.06					
7. Theory-testing	3.75	1.00	-0.08	-0.01	0.02	-0.09	-0.05	0.20				
8. Year <sup>b</sup>	27.94	7.94	-0.39	-0.08	-0.06	-0.14	-0.14	0.60	0.26			
9. Sample location	0.79	0.40	0.06	0.14	-0.05	-0.11	0.00	0.04	0.11	0.07		
10. # of authors	3.19	1.70	-0.11	-0.15	-0.05	-0.06	-0.13	0.15	0.04	0.26	-0.15	
11. Author rank	2.87	0.91	0.07	0.01	0.02	0.09	0.06	-0.09	-0.07	-0.18	0.04	-0.05

Panel B. MOR (N = 221) <sup>c</sup> : From 2005 to 2023												
	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Citations	29.65	43.31										
2. What	1.41	0.63	0.19									
3. How	2.31	0.46	0.12	0.32								
4. Why	1.86	0.68	0.19	0.38	0.51							
5. Joint	5.58	1.38	0.22	0.75	0.73	0.84						
6. Theory-building	3.53	0.65	-0.18	0.11	0.18	0.10	0.16					
7. Theory-testing	3.78	0.93	-0.14	-0.20	-0.08	-0.25	-0.24	0.19				
8. Year	12.66	4.43	-0.55	-0.32	-0.12	-0.22	-0.30	0.26	0.24			
9. Sample location	0.90	0.30	0.06	0.14	0.09	0.02	0.11	-0.05	0.07	0.01		
10. # of authors	3.05	1.09	0.00	-0.14	-0.05	-0.08	-0.12	-0.03	0.06	0.19	0.02	
11. Author rank	2.82	0.95	0.11	0.07	-0.02	0.05	0.05	-0.01	-0.09	-0.09	0.02	-0.13

Notes: Correlations with magnitude greater than 0.07 (Panel A) and 0.13 (Panel B) are significant at  $p < 0.05$  (two-tailed). <sup>a</sup>'Joint' refers to the degree of joint contextualization in *what*, *how*, and *why*. <sup>b</sup>Year ranges from 1 for 1985 to 39 for 2023 in Panel A; Year ranges from 1 for 2005 to 19 for 2023 in Panel B. <sup>c</sup>Sample size drops from 260 to 221 because MOR entered the social science citation index in 2008.



**Table 9.** Chinese contextualization and articles' impacts in six leading journals: Comparison between 1985–2010 and 2011–2023

	1985–2010			2011–2023		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Constant	−12.54(30.68)	−323.94(33.46)*	−268.89(32.29)*	180.54(4.03)***	133.85(2.02)***	159.74(4.79)***
1. Year <sup>a</sup>	−145.66(29.45)*	−106.91(26.75) <sup>†</sup>	−106.45(35.65) <sup>†</sup>	−180.66(4.31)***	−183.85(4.56)***	−182.44(4.85)***
Year squared	−45.94(14.80) <sup>†</sup>	−37.74(15.88)	−40.08(17.58)	27.34(2.32)**	30.01(2.23)**	28.20(2.47)**
Sample location	94.28(3.81)**	91.80(12.22)*	112.81(2.06)***	−1.07(4.39)	−1.15(3.43)	−1.82(4.01)
# of authors	29.92(3.52)*	21.90(4.72)*	19.17(2.96)*	−2.89(0.32)*	−2.58(0.46)*	−2.45(0.44)*
Author rank	−1.33(7.30)	3.77(5.74)	0.32(7.41)	1.95(1.01)	1.72(0.83)	2.05(1.01)
ASQ <sup>b</sup>	292.27(61.76)*	172.79(59.75)	176.74(47.10) <sup>†</sup>	57.19(2.56)**	40.95(1.57)**	47.44(0.87)***
AMJ	359.84(31.12)**	336.42(29.49)**	338.04(32.83)**	74.48(4.71)**	71.23(3.83)**	72.60(4.37)**
JIBS	−19.20(13.31)	−31.97(14.53)	−39.60(12.74) <sup>†</sup>	−15.69(7.44)	−18.82(8.69)	−19.05(8.53)
OrgSci	43.26(23.59)	24.34(2.27)**	5.94(9.52)	−3.20(3.20)	−8.92(4.46)	−7.25(4.39)
SMJ	82.94(9.42)*	68.14(7.31)*	60.55(8.49)*	−22.97(5.17)*	−26.96(6.64) <sup>†</sup>	−26.64(6.39) <sup>†</sup>
Theory-building	24.11(9.86)	9.06(7.48)	12.53(9.15)	−1.92(2.77)	−2.58(2.84)	−3.45(2.55)
Theory-testing	−17.16(6.89)	−19.48(6.89)	−18.50(5.93) <sup>†</sup>	6.95(2.55)	5.88(2.39)	6.90(2.59)
2. <i>What</i>		<b>101.21(10.26)*</b>			<b>−0.41(2.19)</b>	
<i>How</i>		<b>104.19(5.69)**</b>			<b>25.23(2.32)**</b>	
<i>Why</i>		<b>27.57(18.64)</b>			<b>2.53(3.40)</b>	
3. Joint <sup>c</sup>			<b>70.81(4.25)**</b>			<b>5.87(1.77)<sup>†</sup></b>
<i>N</i>	265	265	265	369	369	369
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.20	0.25	0.25	0.34	0.35	0.35
Wald test <sup>d</sup>	819.79**	102.50**	277.60**	81.73*	60.21*	11.01 <sup>†</sup>

Notes: <sup>†</sup> $p < 0.10$ , \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$  (two-tailed). VIFs range from 2.20 to 3.65. Unstandardized coefficients are reported and standard errors are in parentheses. <sup>a</sup>Year ranges from 1 for 1985 to 39 for 2023. <sup>b</sup>JAP as referent. ASQ, *Administrative Science Quarterly*; AMJ, *Academy of Management Journal*; SMJ, *Strategic Management Journal*; JAP, *Journal of Applied Psychology*; OrgSci, *Organization Science*; JIBS, *Journal of International Business Studies*. <sup>c</sup>‘Joint’ refers to the degree of joint contextualization in *what*, *how*, and *why*. <sup>d</sup>The Wald tests are for additional regressors (for Models 1 and 4, it is the Wald test for the full equation).

**Table 10.** Chinese contextualization and articles' impacts: Comparison between six leading journals and MOR

Panel A. Six leading journals ( <i>N</i> = 634)						
	OLS regression			Negative binominal (NB) regression		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Constant	149.08(8.82)**	−34.71(2.42)**	8.22(16.00)	4.52(0.08)***	3.88(0.10)***	4.08(0.05)***
1. Year <sup>a</sup>	−135.84(2.55)***	−130.55(3.80)***	−131.76(2.92)***	−1.19(0.03)***	−1.17(0.03)***	−1.17(0.03)***
Year squared	−37.50(10.02) <sup>†</sup>	−38.09(9.79) <sup>†</sup>	−39.72(10.02) <sup>†</sup>	−0.41(0.01)***	−0.41(0.01)***	−0.42(0.01)***
Sample location	31.42(4.93)*	23.97(1.07)**	33.54(3.57)*	0.11(0.05)*	0.11(0.03)***	0.10(0.04)**
# of authors	3.60(0.59)*	5.71(0.58)*	4.75(0.47)**	0.02(0.00)***	0.02(0.00)***	0.02(0.00)***
Author rank	−1.09(5.05)	0.53(4.55)	−0.92(5.07)	0.04(0.02)*	0.04(0.01)**	0.04(0.02)*
ASQ <sup>b</sup>	113.20(42.05)	57.80(36.28)	53.80(36.54)	0.60(0.04)***	0.38(0.06)***	0.41(0.06)***
AMJ	157.08(2.24)***	149.49(4.51)***	143.25(4.75)**	0.50(0.03)***	0.44(0.02)***	0.44(0.02)***
JIBS	−50.68(8.69)*	−60.26(9.05)*	−70.03(9.15)*	−0.36(0.07)***	−0.43(0.05)***	−0.42(0.06)***
OrgSci	−7.17(19.17)	−21.72(10.77)	−33.49(14.91)	−0.31(0.09)***	−0.45(0.05)***	−0.46(0.06)***
SMJ	−10.00(10.09)	−23.12(8.55)	−30.93(9.51) <sup>†</sup>	−0.13(0.05)*	−0.20(0.04)***	−0.20(0.04)***
Theory-building	11.57(5.10)	4.29(5.08)	4.02(5.25)	0.11(0.04)**	0.08(0.04)*	0.09(0.04)*
Theory-testing	−5.30(3.18)	−6.02(3.25)	−5.19(3.00)	0.03(0.01)***	0.03(0.01)***	0.03(0.01)***
2. <i>What</i>		<b>64.07(1.45)***</b>			<b>0.07(0.01)***</b>	
<i>How</i>		<b>60.38(9.99)*</b>			<b>0.27(0.03)***</b>	
<i>Why</i>		<b>−1.51(12.15)</b>			<b>0.08(0.05)</b>	
3. Joint <sup>c</sup>			<b>36.18(2.35)**</b>			<b>0.12(0.01)***</b>
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> (Pseudo <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> ) <sup>d</sup>	0.27	0.30	0.29	0.07	0.07	0.07
Wald test <sup>e</sup>	28.51*	1540.70***	237.96**	273.16***	36.72***	64.28***

Panel B. MOR (N = 221) <sup>f</sup>						
	OLS regression			Negative binominal (NB) regression		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Constant	17.90(21.74)	-2.11(22.89)	4.26(23.74)	3.47(0.67)***	2.97(0.63)***	3.12(0.72)***
1. Year <sup>g</sup>	-52.38(13.62) <sup>†</sup>	-55.05(15.08) <sup>†</sup>	-51.62(14.43) <sup>†</sup>	-1.05(0.18)***	-1.13(0.23)***	-1.03(0.20)***
Year squared	13.24(9.41)	17.18(9.90)	14.57(9.32)	-0.79(0.12)***	-0.67(0.14)***	-0.75(0.12)***
Sample location	7.14(13.17)	6.05(14.50)	5.11(14.24)	0.04(0.54)	0.01(0.56)	0.00(0.55)
# of authors	3.92(1.17) <sup>†</sup>	3.77(1.12) <sup>†</sup>	4.01(1.17) <sup>†</sup>	0.07(0.02)**	0.07(0.02)***	0.08(0.02)***
Author rank	3.23(0.86) <sup>†</sup>	3.27(0.91) <sup>†</sup>	3.20(0.79) <sup>†</sup>	0.06(0.03) <sup>†</sup>	0.05(0.03) <sup>†</sup>	0.05(0.02)*
Theory-building	0.20(3.94)	-0.75(3.60)	-1.37(3.94)	0.06(0.10)	0.05(0.12)	0.02(0.12)
Theory-testing	0.51(1.65)	1.60(1.79)	1.52(1.92)	-0.04(0.04)	-0.02(0.04)	-0.01(0.04)
2. <i>What</i>		<b>-3.03(1.44)</b>			<b>-0.09(0.06)</b>	
<i>How</i>		<b>5.66(3.16)</b>			<b>0.17(0.13)</b>	
<i>Why</i>		<b>5.70(1.59)<sup>†</sup></b>			<b>0.12(0.06)*</b>	
3. Joint <sup>c</sup>			<b>2.83(0.54)*</b>			<b>0.07(0.02)**</b>
R <sup>2</sup> (Pseudo R <sup>2</sup> ) <sup>d</sup>	0.34	0.35	0.35	0.11	0.11	0.11
Wald test <sup>e</sup>	14.12 <sup>†</sup>	14.08 <sup>†</sup>	27.88*	75.48***	42.97***	8.80**

Notes: <sup>†</sup> $p < 0.10$ , \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$  (two-tailed). VIFs range from 1.44 to 1.45 in Panel A; VIFs range from 1.85 to 1.89 in Panel B. Unstandardized coefficients are reported and standard errors are in parentheses. <sup>a</sup>Year ranges from 1 for 1985 to 39 for 2023. <sup>b</sup>JAP as referent. ASQ, *Administrative Science Quarterly*; AMJ, *Academy of Management Journal*; SMJ, *Strategic Management Journal*; JAP, *Journal of Applied Psychology*; OrgSci, *Organization Science*; JIBS, *Journal of International Business Studies*. <sup>c</sup>'Joint' refers to the degree of joint contextualization in *what*, *how*, and *why*. <sup>d</sup>The R<sup>2</sup> are for the OLS regressions (Models 1-3) and the Pseudo R<sup>2</sup> are for the NB regressions (Models 4-6). <sup>e</sup>The Wald tests are for additional regressors (for Models 1 and 4, it is the Wald test for the full equation). <sup>f</sup>Sample size drops from 260 to 221 because MOR entered the social science citation index in 2008. <sup>g</sup>Year ranges from 1 for 2005 to 19 for 2023.

enhance the citations to the articles published in 1985 through 2010, consistent with Jia et al.'s (2012) findings. However, although all regressions are still valid for predicting our dependent variables in the sample from 2011 through 2023 (Models 4 through 6), we found that only the *how* ( $\beta = 25.23, p < 0.01$ ) and joint contextualization ( $\beta = 5.87, p < 0.10$ ) bring more citations, while the *what* no longer has such a positive effect ( $\beta = -0.41, p > 0.10$ ).

#### *Extension: Comparison between the six leading journals and MOR*

Extending Jia et al. (2012), Table 10 shows the distinct effects of Chinese contextualization on article citations for the six leading journals over the period of 1985 through 2023, and for MOR over the period of 2005 through 2023. As shown in Model 1 of Panel A, taking JAP as the baseline (Jia et al., 2012), articles in AMJ had an average of 157.08 more citations, while those in JIBS had 50.68 fewer. Considering the Chinese contextualization (Model 2 in Panel A), a one-unit increase in the *what* and *how* brings 64.07 and 60.38 more citations to each article, respectively. Further, the joint contextualization shows a similar result: A one-unit increase results in 36.18 more citations per article (Model 3 in Panel A).

As shown in Panel B, we examined how Chinese contextualization influences citations for articles in MOR. As for articles in the six leading journals, our control variables were valid (Model 1 in Panel B). In contrast, Model 2 in Panel B shows that a one-unit increase in *why* can bring 5.70 more citations to each article, but the *what* and *how* do not have the same effect. This is a complementary pattern with the result from the six leading journals. The joint contextualization, as expected, is positively and significantly correlated with citations: A one-unit increase results in 2.83 more citations per article (Model 3 in Panel B).

Further, we go beyond Jia et al. (2012) and adopt a negative binomial (NB) regression as a new estimation strategy. This is because our dependent variable, *citations*, is a count, and the data are highly dispersed (Blevins, Tsang, & Spain, 2015). For the six leading journals, the mean citation is 183.42 and the variance is 61,521.74. For MOR, the mean citation is 29.65 and the variance is 1,876.00. The NB regressions yielded results as consistent as those of the OLS regressions.

For the six leading journals (Panel A of Table 10), the Wald test for the coefficients equaling zero in Model 4 was significant ( $\chi^2 = 273.16, p < 0.001$ ), indicating that our control variables were valid. In Model 5 of Panel A, the Wald test was significant ( $\chi^2 = 36.72, p < 0.001$ ), indicating that the newly added dimensions of *what*, *how*, and *why* had a significant effect on predicting the article's citations. Specifically, articles that had a higher degree of contextualization on *what* ( $\beta = 0.07, p < 0.001$ ) and *how* ( $\beta = 0.27, p < 0.001$ ) received significantly more citations, but not those that scored higher on *why* ( $\beta = 0.08, p > 0.10$ ). Moreover, the total scores of *what*, *how*, and *why* had a positive effect on citations ( $\beta = 0.12, p < 0.001$ ) and the Wald test was significant ( $\chi^2 = 64.28, p < 0.001$ ), indicating that articles that were jointly high-contextualized were significantly more cited.

For MOR, the same new pattern as those in the OLS regressions emerges. Panel B of Table 10 shows that Wald tests of all models were significant, indicating that the regressors were valid in predicting our dependent variable. However, Model 5 in Panel B shows that only a higher degree of Chinese contextualization in the *why* can generate more citations ( $\beta = 0.12, p < 0.05$ ); there is no such effect for the *what* and the *how*. Model 6 in Panel B shows that articles with higher joint contextualization scores receive more citations in MOR ( $\beta = 0.07, p < 0.01$ ).

Together, our results support a positive relationship between the degree of Chinese contextualization and an article's impact in both sets of journals, in a different yet complementary manner. For those in the six leading journals, Chinese contextualization at the description level (i.e., *what* and *how*) enhances the articles' impacts. But for MOR, which highlights Chinese contextual relevance, more citations require a higher degree of contextualization at the explanation level (i.e., *why*).

#### *The Highest Degree of Contextualization from 2011 to 2023*

As shown in Table 2, there were 9, 41, and 6 articles from the six leading journals (Panel A) coded as the highest degree of Chinese contextualization in *what*, *how*, and *why*, respectively, and 13, 63, and 35 articles from MOR (Panel B).

### *The highest degree of contextualization in what*

*What* refers to the concepts being studied. From 2011 through 2023, for instance, five indigenous concepts originated from the Chinese context. Li and Piezunka (2020) proposed the concept of *uniplex third* based on the traditional norms of Chinese families, highlighting the role of mother in elucidating the mechanism of intergenerational leadership succession. Zhang (2022) conceptualized and operationalized the concept of *institutional legacy* that based on the unique history of China to explore its influences on firms' FDI behaviors in the context of China's Treaty Port Era (1842–1943). Jing and Van De Ven (2014) introduced the concept of *shi* (势), a situational momentum created by the interplay between *yin* (negative) and *yang* (positive) forces, to explain the organizational change processes in China. Wei, Bilimoria, and Li (2017) developed the concept of *xin* (heart-mind)-based *social competence*, the integration of individual emotional and cognitive elements, to understand leadership effectiveness in China. And finally, drawing on traditional Chinese culture, Feng, Liu, and Jiang (2019) developed the concept of *parochialism* (*xiao nong yi shi*, 小农意识), a mindset of closed-mindedness, self-protection, and in-group relationships, to explain paradoxical managerial behaviors in China.

### *The highest degree of contextualization in how*

*How* refers to the nature of the relationship between two or more concepts. For instance, Wei et al. (2017) used *xin* (heart-mind)-based *social competence* to understand the novel relationship between leadership effectiveness and Chinese competency-relevant social interactions. In addition, others introduced mediators or moderators that are unique in the Chinese context. Mediators included Chinese institutional evolution (Li, Wei, Cao, & Chen, 2022) and *guanxi* quality (Bu & Roy, 2015). Moderators captured the political environment of China, such as government support within the liability of privateness (Liang & Gong, 2017), or reflected Chinese culture, such as collectivism (Kuruville & Zhang, 2016; Liu, Gong, & Liu, 2014).

### *The highest degree of contextualization in why*

*Why* refers to the logic underlying the relationship between concepts. Studies whose logics were derived from Chinese features are considered the highest degree in *why*. Examples include the integration of *guanxi* with the institution in China (e.g., Bu & Roy, 2015; Li, Wei, et al., 2022). Also, the logics draw from Chinese traditional culture (e.g., Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, *yin-yang*) for their theorizations. For instance, Tang, Nadkarni, Wei, and Zhang (2021) used the *yin-yang* balance logic to explain why gender diversity of top management teams may influence individual psychological safety and the firm's ambidextrous strategic orientation.

### *Exemplars of Deep Contextualization Studies from 2011 to 2023*

We present 20 empirical studies with deep contextualization, 4 from the six leading journals (Table 11) and 16 from MOR (Table 12). We also present five conceptual articles, one from the six leading journals and four from MOR, as good exemplars.

In the six leading journals (Table 11), three deep contextualization studies adopted the 'inside-out' approach that highlighted the features particularly salient to China, and one adopted the 'outside-in' approach that focused on the phenomenon in existing literatures while discovering novel results in China (Tsui, 2006). For instance, Zhang (2022) employed Confucian ethics to explain how treaty port policies influenced contemporary inward FDI of Chinese firms. Also, Xu, Zhou, and Chen (2023) conceptualized the board chair's ideology in Chinese state-owned enterprises (SOEs) based on Maoist communist principles, thus explaining the CCP-member board chair's patenting behaviors. Using the 'outside-in' approach, in contrast, Li, Assche, Li, and Qian (2022) explained how *guanxi* plays an important role in the cognitive decision-making process of a firm's internationalization.

In MOR (Table 12), 10 deep contextualization studies employed the 'inside-out' approach. For instance, Kuruville and Zhang (2016) reconceptualized 'collective bargaining' in China, highlighting it as the enhanced capability of Chinese workers as their economic demands increase. Drawing on

**Table 11.** Four deep contextualization studies from six leading journals, 2011–2023

Contextualization in <i>what</i>		Contextualization in <i>how</i>		Contextualization in <i>why</i>	
Li and Piezunka, 2020, ASQ	<i>What</i> = 3 Developing a novel concept of <i>uniplex third</i> in the context of Chinese family firms.	<i>How</i> = 3 The uniplex third facilitates role transition across multiple domains, enabling successful intergenerational leadership succession in Chinese family firms.	<i>Why</i> = 2 Children are expected to obey their parents in the traditional Chinese culture. And the mother plays an important role in coordinating the relationship between father and son in a traditional Chinese family. Using these arguments to explain how fathers and sons may smooth intergenerational succession in Chinese family firms.		
Li, Wei, et al., 2022, JIBS	<i>What</i> = 2 Developing measures of the primary and secondary political participation according to the particularities of China's political system.	<i>How</i> = 3 According to the nature of Chinese institutional evolution, self-perceived status and resource acquisition are introduced as mediators.	<i>Why</i> = 3 Integrating <i>guanxi</i> into institutional and cognitive decision-making theories as the basis of hypothesis development.		
Zhang, 2022, JIBS	<i>What</i> = 3 Conceptualizing and operationalizing the concept of institutional legacy in the context of China's Treaty Port Era (1842–1943).	<i>How</i> = 3 Introducing Cultural Revolution as the moderator that reflects the political and societal features in China.	<i>Why</i> = 3 Developing hypotheses based on the insights of Confucian ethics and <i>guanxi</i> arguments.		
Xu et al., 2023, AMJ	<i>What</i> = 3 Conceptualizing and operationalizing the ideology of a firm's board chair according to the insights of Maoist communist ideology in China.	<i>How</i> = 3 Examining how communist ideology influences the patenting activities of Chinese SOEs.	<i>Why</i> = 2 Using the 'secondhand imprinting' logic and the descriptions of Maoist communist ideology to explain why the CCP-member board chair conducts certain patenting activities.		

**Table 12.** Sixteen deep contextualization studies from MOR, 2011–2023

	Contextualization in <i>what</i>	Contextualization in <i>how</i>	Contextualization in <i>why</i>
Li et al., 2011, MOR	<i>What</i> = 2 Contextualizing the measurements of government membership channels and government ties in the SOEs of China.	<i>How</i> = 3 Introducing governmental tie channels as the mediator between firm ownership types and the number of government ties possessed by a manager.	<i>Why</i> = 3 The <i>guanxi</i> -based arguments support hypothesis development: Managers in SOEs possess more channels because they have more memberships in the governmental affiliations.
Pan et al., 2012, MOR	<i>What</i> = 3 Reconceptualizing and operationalizing the four-factor Structure of Chinese Cultural Traditions model by integrating five schools of Chinese cultural traditions.	<i>How</i> = 3 Examining the enduring impact of five major Chinese cultural traditions on contemporary management practices in China.	<i>Why</i> = 3 Using the five schools of Chinese cultural traditions (i.e., Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, legalism, and <i>The Art of War</i> ) as the core logics for theorization.
Jing and Van De Ven, 2014, MOR	<i>What</i> = 3 Introducing new concepts of <i>shi</i> (势, a situational momentum created by the interplay between <i>yin</i> and <i>yang</i> ).	<i>How</i> = 3 Exploring the processes and actions of organizational change using the concept of <i>shi</i> .	<i>Why</i> = 3 Using the logics of <i>yin-yang</i> balance to understand why <i>shi</i> is important for organizational change in China.
Guo and Giacobbe-Miller, 2015, MOR	<i>What</i> = 2 Improving the measurement of the concept of organizational justice in the Chinese context.	<i>How</i> = 3 Investigating the influences of Chinese traditional culture on individuals' justice judgments in organizations in China.	<i>Why</i> = 3 Utilizing insights from Confucianism to explain the influences of national culture on organizational justice.
Bu and Roy, 2015, MOR	<i>What</i> = 3 Extracting <i>guanxi</i> quality as a distinct concept from <i>guanxi</i> process and developing its measurement.	<i>How</i> = 3 Revealing the differences of <i>guanxi</i> practice (e.g., gift giving) between the ties of B2B and B2G in China.	<i>Why</i> = 3 Employing affective attachment and felt obligation in <i>guanxi</i> practice for theorization.
Chen et al., 2015, MOR	<i>What</i> = 2 Developing a novel measurement of team conflict according to the contextual feature of paternalistic leadership in Chinese firms.	<i>How</i> = 3 Considering the social and cultural features in China, and introducing team conflict as the mediator between CEO paternalistic leadership and TMT decision effectiveness.	<i>Why</i> = 3 Establishing hypotheses by using logics rooted in the Chinese culture such as <i>shi-en</i> (施恩, favor granting), <i>shu-de</i> (树德, serving as a role model), and <i>li-wei</i> (立威, demonstrating authority).
Xing and Liu, 2015, MOR	<i>What</i> = 3 Conceptualizing the four-layer meaning of poetry to unpack the concept of ambiguity.	<i>How</i> = 3 Exploring the relationship between Chinese poetry and contemporary business leadership practices.	<i>Why</i> = 3 Drawing on the logics of appropriateness and ambiguity to illustrate why poetry is an effective method of communication in practicing leadership in Chinese firms.
		<i>How</i> = 3 Investigating relationships between	<i>Why</i> = 2 Utilizing Chinese phenomena, such as the wave

(Continued)

Table 12. (Continued.)

Contextualization in <i>what</i>		Contextualization in <i>how</i>	Contextualization in <i>why</i>
Kuruville and Zhang, 2016, MOR	<i>What</i> = 3 Reconceptualizing the concept of collective bargaining in China.	workers' economic demands, labor unrest and collective bargaining capability.	of strikes after 2008 and protective labor legislation, to support the arguments.
Han and Zheng, 2016, MOR	<i>What</i> = 2 Distinguishing and measuring five types of SOEs according to national characteristics during the state socialist and market reform period in China.	<i>How</i> = 3 Examining the influences of corporate founding ownership on labor and environmental protections in China's historical institutional changes.	<i>Why</i> = 3 Integrating arguments of labor regulations and emerging environmentalism with imprinting theory for hypothesis development, in the context of state socialism and market reform.
Liang and Gong, 2017, MOR	<i>What</i> = 3 Reconceptualizing perceived government support and introducing new measurement in the context of Chinese private business.	<i>How</i> = 3 Introducing perceived government support as a moderator based on the liability of privateness in transitional China.	<i>Why</i> = 2 Using institutional theory, strategic choice theory, and descriptions of the liability of privateness to develop hypotheses.
Wei et al., 2017, MOR	<i>What</i> = 3 Developing a new concept of <i>xin</i> (heart-mind)-based social competence based on Chinese thinking of <i>yin-yang</i> .	<i>How</i> = 3 Highlighting how <i>xin</i> -based social competence promotes social interactive practices such as <i>guanxi</i> building and empowers others in China.	<i>Why</i> = 3 Utilizing the <i>yin-yang</i> view to argue why balancing the emotion and cognition of social competence is important.
Burt and Opper, 2017, MOR	<i>What</i> = 2 Improving the measurement of the relational strength of network members, including emotional closeness, duration, frequency, and trust.	<i>How</i> = 3 Introducing the mediator of <i>guanxi</i> qualities to reflect the influence of entrepreneurs' early network events on their subsequent networking behaviors.	<i>Why</i> = 3 Using <i>guanxi</i> as the core mechanism underlying the influence of early network events on entrepreneurial success.
Zeng et al., 2017, MOR	<i>What</i> = 3 Reconceptualizing dynamic capabilities as a firm's meta-capability.	<i>How</i> = 3 Highlighting that one key for developing a firm's dynamic capabilities is to build extended <i>guanxi</i> networks.	<i>Why</i> = 2 Utilizing the descriptions of Chinese smart manufacturing industry to explain the three stages of dynamic capability development.
Feng et al., 2019, MOR	<i>What</i> = 3 Developing the concept of parochialism of Chinese managers with the meaning of <i>xiao nong yi shi</i> (小农意识, a mindset of closed-mindedness, self-protection, and in-group relationships).	<i>How</i> = 3 Investigating how parochialism of leaders hampers firms' globalization and R&D investments in China.	<i>Why</i> = 3 Utilizing arguments such as <i>guanxi</i> , centralized political system and small-scale farming economy to explain how parochialism works.

(Continued)



**Table 12.** (Continued.)

	Contextualization in <i>what</i>	Contextualization in <i>how</i>	Contextualization in <i>why</i>
Ren et al., 2022, MOR	<i>What</i> = 3 Reconceptualizing and developing new measurement of the concept of implicit voice delivery and face concern in China.	<i>How</i> = 2 Investigating the relationship among subordinates' other-face concern, supervisor's self-face concern, and subordinates' implicit voice deliveries.	<i>Why</i> = 3 Applying the arguments of face logic to explain that employees adopt implicit voice delivery for minimizing leaders' perception of their face being challenged.
Wan et al., 2022, MOR	<i>What</i> = 2 Refining the measurement of the development of factor markets according to regional development features in the Chinese context.	<i>How</i> = 3 Introducing business entertainment spending as a moderator, according to the institutional voids in China.	<i>Why</i> = 3 Integrating <i>guanxi</i> -based arguments into institutional theory to explain the motivations of business entertaining in China.

the cultural features of China, Pan, Rowney, and Peterson (2012) formulated a four-factor Structure of Chinese Cultural Traditions model by integrating five schools of Chinese cultural traditions (i.e., Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, legalism, and *The Art of War*). In contrast, six articles are deep contextualization research based on the 'outside-in' approach. For example, Li et al. (2011) suggested that managers of Chinese SOEs possess more political ties because they have easy access to governmental officials through unique means such as *guakao* (挂靠), the affiliated connection based on the contract between the focal SOE and the governmental agency in China. Chen, Yang, and Jing (2015) examined how paternalistic leadership affects conflicts within top management teams based on traditional Chinese insights such as *shi-en* (施恩, favor personalized caring), *shu-de* (树德, set role model of virtuousness), and *li-wei* (立威, demonstrate authority). Finally, Han and Zheng (2016) analyzed the effects of SOEs' type on labor and environmental protection by extending the imprinting theory in the state socialist and market reform background of China.

Beyond Jia et al.'s (2012) focus on empirical studies, we present five illustrative examples to show conceptual articles between 2011 and 2023 that were identified as deep contextualization studies. Such research typically develops indigenous concepts and logics based on the social, cultural, or economic features of China. Despite lacking empirical testing, scholars often developed a formal theory with a set of propositions to explain the particular Chinese management phenomenon. We coded these conceptual articles by using the same procedure as for the empirical studies, while put more weights on the contextualization of definition and theorization (instead of the operationalization) of a Chinese indigenous concept (i.e., *what*). Such theory emerges from the Chinese context and contributes to the global management and organization research field.

For instance, Chen and Cole (2023) conceptualized *moqi* (默契), the tacit shared understanding and agreements between two counterparties, as a dyadic-level concept to understand the organizational behaviors manifested saliently in China. By developing its nomological network, the authors articulated a broader view on *moqi* by highlighting its impacts on the relationships within and across status tiers and the cultural backgrounds supporting communications. This work thus has both indigenous and global theoretical implications. Similarly, building on Confucian ethical traditions, Liang, Wu, and Zhang (2018) developed the indigenous concept of *jiangyiqi* (讲义气), a self-sacrificial norm, to understand the strong non-kin interpersonal relationships in China. The authors further developed seven propositions to theorize how *jiangyiqi* can influence individuals' behaviors in the workplace. Moreover, drawing on the Chinese philosophy of *yin-yang*, Fang (2012) reconceptualized culture as possessing inherently paradoxical values and encompassing opposite traits of any given cultural dimensions. The author developed four propositions to explain why multiple values can coexist in a culture and how the culture guides human beings' social actions.

In addition to the social and cultural perspectives, Li, Assche, et al. (2022) recently developed a political-economic framework of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI, 一带一路倡议) launched by China. By theorizing the legitimacy gap of Chinese SOEs in a host country as the core mechanism, the authors offered five propositions to predict how institutions and geopolitics influence the likelihood that host firms would be selected in the BRI projects. Also, Lin (2011) developed a novel concept from the economic perspective, *centrally managed capitalism* (CMC), to unpack the unique developmental path of capitalism in China. The author explained the nature of CMC and theorized how it could help to understand China's transformation toward *xiaokang* (小康, moderate prosperity) and the feasible paths toward an indigenous ideology of democracy, *datong* (大同, universal harmony).

## Discussion

The past decade has witnessed a rapid growth of Chinese context-based research, and the number of articles published has increased dramatically. The proportion of Chinese context-based studies in the six leading journals during the period of 2011 through 2023 is 1.92 times that during the period of 1985 through 2010. To update the evaluation of the contribution of Chinese context to management and organization research, the current study first replicates Jia et al. (2012) by using new data from the

years of 2011 through 2023 from the six leading journals and from MOR. Further, although Jia et al. (2012) tried to evaluate the contributions of articles published in MOR before 2011, the small sample size limited the generalizability of the findings. At the 20th anniversary of the establishment of MOR, the current study assesses the contributions of MOR by adding additional Chinese context-based articles.

From this replication and extension study, we found 9 new indigenous concepts (*what*), 41 indigenous relationships (*how*), and 6 indigenous logics (*why*), as well as 4 deep contextualization studies related to China, in the six leading journals. Further, there were 20 highest-degree contextualization articles published from 2011 to 2023 (see Table 3). They are also the high-degree theory-building studies: the mean score of theory-building was 4.15. Therefore, the Chinese context continues to contribute novel knowledge to the global community of management and organization research.

The findings from the articles in MOR, 20 years after it was established, suggest that it has delivered on its original mission: to contribute knowledge of management and organizations in the Chinese context. According to Tsui and Jia (2024), MOR has published a total of 431 research articles between 2005 and 2023, 71.2% (307) of which were relevant to China, including theoretical or empirical research. In contrast, the six leading journals have published a total of 12,325 research articles (theoretical and empirical) between 1985 and 2023, only 5.2% (639) of which were relevant to the Chinese context.

Our analysis reveals that the overall degree of contextualization is higher in MOR than in the six leading journals. During 2011 through 2023, MOR contributed many new indigenous concepts (*what*), relationships (*how*), and logics (*why*) as well as deep contextualization studies related to China. Clearly, MOR made a stronger contribution to knowledge about the Chinese context than did the six leading journals. Therefore, we suggest that MOR is an ideal journal to publish Chinese context-specific studies and an important platform to share Chinese context-specific knowledge. Thus, scholars can be more confident – and even ambitious – in developing novel indigenous concepts, relationships, and logics based on the Chinese context.

Furthermore, our analysis shows that a majority of Chinese context-based articles published in MOR contributed to both theory-building and theory-testing dimensions. From a context-etic perspective, MOR has more contributions in the theory-building dimension and no fewer contributions in the theory-testing dimension than the six leading journals do. This finding indicates that MOR has become an important channel, or a gangplank, to bridge Chinese contextualized studies to the global management and organization research community. An important implication is that scholars can extend Chinese contextualized studies to a global context to make general theoretical contributions. We further suggest that scholars not only pursue publication in MOR but also engage in collective academic dialogues on the journal's platform, which will accelerate the formation of the legitimate knowledge system of Chinese context-based research (Jia, You, Liu, Zheng, & Li, 2015).

Finally, Chinese contextualization has a positive effect on the number of citations of articles in both sets of journals, indicating that contextualized studies have attracted more research attention. This is because, as Tsui (2004) suggested, high-contextualized studies not only arouse indigenous scholars' interests but also attract scholars in the global research community to test their findings. Because such context-embedded research allows scholars to develop context-specific knowledge into global knowledge (Tsui, 2004), high-contextualized studies receive more citations. Also, our findings show that in contrast to the positive effects of the *what* and the *how* on an article's impact, the contextualization in MOR articles enhances article citations through the *why*. It implies that MOR articles reveal a deeper understanding of the cultural, societal, and institutional features in China (than do the articles in the six leading journals). Therefore, in contrast to the large number of citations, Chinese contextualization at the description level (i.e., *what* and *how*) can generate in the six leading journals, obtaining high citations for articles in MOR requires high contextualization at the explanation level (i.e., *why*). Overall, the results suggest that MOR has kept and should maintain the intent of its original mission: to contribute to global management knowledge by highlighting the Chinese context. This positioning

not only allows MOR to gain advantages in the competition among high-quality journals but also shapes its unique influence on attracting the research interest of China.

### Future Research Directions

We suggest three major directions for future research. First, although we extended our samples over a longer time period, future studies could expand the sample size to a larger set of journals published in both English and Chinese. To ensure the scientific rigor of articles, we selected the six leading journals and MOR as the targets, following Jia et al. (2012). The current study might have overlooked some rigorous Chinese context-based articles published in other (English and non-English) journals, which limits the generalizability of our findings. Drawing on new technologies such as AI-based search tools and natural language processing, future research can comprehensively assess Chinese context-based research according to our context-emic model by both expanding the sample size and ensuring the scientific rigor of the articles.

Second, expanding the sample size also allows future studies to describe a more comprehensive developmental trajectory of the contextualization degree for articles in MOR. Our results may limit the generalizability for evaluating articles published in the most recent decade, since we have data only for the first three years of the 2020s. Future research should continue to track the trajectory, examine its robustness, and identify fluctuation as more MOR articles relevant to China become available.

Third, our findings show that, since its founding, MOR has achieved its original purpose of contributing to global knowledge on management and organization research by highlighting Chinese contextual relevance. Though not the purpose of the current study, MOR also has published articles on general theories or universal phenomena (see Tsui & Jia, 2024, for an analysis of both general theories and China-specific theories in articles published in the six leading journals and in MOR). Future research can elaborate in more detail on how MOR can balance both purposes and how MOR articles contribute to the general theories.

### Conclusion

Through the replication of Jia et al. (2012) using an updated sample of articles from 2011 through 2023, we affirm that novel knowledge related to China has emerged and that the legitimacy of Chinese context-based research in the global management and organization research community has increased. More importantly, as MOR celebrates its 20th anniversary, we show through comparisons with the six leading journals how it has remained true to its original mission. Our study shows that MOR has significantly contributed to global knowledge by highlighting specific Chinese contextual relevance. For scholars and readers who are interested in management phenomena in China, MOR offers an ideal dialogue platform through publishing studies using both the context-emic and context-etic approaches.

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