



Editor's introduction

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The *European Management Review* has the ambition of being the journal of first choice for scholars interested in the theory and empirical study of management. How does a journal with its origins several decades later than its North American counterparts intend to achieve this goal?

The primary consideration is that the intellectual resources outside of North America have hardly been tapped by the relevant journals. A common criticism of journals such as the *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *Academy of Management Journal*, and the *Academy of Management Review* is that they are too American and narrow in their definitions of research. There is truth to this criticism. There is also an easy riposte that should challenge those who issue all too easily this criticism. As the community of management scholars becomes more international, the journals follow. Indeed, we already see increasing evidence for this internationalization of American journals, such as in the variety of the national origins of editors, board members, and above all contributors and readers.

In many regions of the world, universities have only recently emerged or have only recently supported research. It is not surprising that in these new regions, the educational hierarchies encourage their academics to prove their worth by publishing in the American journals. Or if journals are created, they are often created on the model of their American counterparts, using similar theories and methods, and often published in English. These are great achievements because they represent an enlargement of management research to a global level, something that was achieved in the sciences decades if not centuries earlier. A European journal of management should participate in this evolution.

Of course, internationalization of participants is not equivalent to a diversity of research styles. I agree that it will be hard for many American journals to adopt the intellectual diversity that is found in Europe and elsewhere. Europeans have long recognized this barrier and have launched many successful journals, such as *Organization Studies*, or have preserved national traditions in their journals published in their own language, such as *Gerer et Comprendre* in France.

Diversity in ideas and approaches should be a hallmark of a quality European journal.

A primary element in achieving our goal to become the journal of first choice is that we take diversity to be natural: diversity in ideas, diversity in methods, diversity in areas of application. We also seek to create an inclusive but coherent community and discourse. Surely, a journal such as the *European Management Review* has to steer then between the shoals of too much diversity and too much homogeneity. How will it succeed in making its path between these dangers? What will it do to become a first choice journal?

I would like to propose that the principles are very simple. First, the journal must be devoted to 'quality' above all. Quibble as much as we want on method and approach, we usually agree quickly on what is a quality article. Any new journal faces the problem of attracting quality. The problem is a dynamic one, since quality attracts quality. We of course will rely upon the usual strategy of attracting quality by offering the chance to accomplished scholars to publish rapidly. We will use special issues to co-opt good articles and good scholars to make their contributions. We will invite papers for submission that we know are strong. At the same time, we will say no to special issue proposals that are not devoted to the principle of quality as the primary criteria of acceptance.

Secondly, the commitment to quality attracts a strong board. Under the stewardship of Pierre Dussauge and Niels Noorderhaven, the *European Management Review* developed into an operating journal, publishing excellent articles and creating a community of reviewers. In my accession, I had the luxury of building upon this success to accomplish two goals. The first was to internationalize the board, so that we now have excellent board members in every continent. We want to place the journal on the shelves of academics in China and Argentina, and we also want to attract their contributions. The second goal is to attract high-quality associate editors who will help administer the review process, but to signal that the journal has the backing of excellent scholars. You will find scholars who represent very different traditions, from formal research in strategy to philosophical traditions in knowledge management. We are committed to diversity in our associate editors who share one trait in common: their commitment to quality.

It is our ambition that the *European Management Review* will succeed within the next 2 years in achieving the institutional steps that it must make. EMR will be evaluated and undoubtedly passed by the ISI and other information services' listing of journals, articles published in the journal from Volume 1 forward will be tracked for forward citations, the journal will be found in hundreds if not thousands of libraries globally. We know what milestones must be achieved to realize this ambition and we are committed to meet them.

What does this mean for our contributors and readers in practical terms? Here, I would like to delve more narrowly and deeply into what we seek in an article. The primary quality is 'idea' over 'idea-less saturation'. We want every article that we publish to have an innovative idea. Of course, we are interested in articles that innovatively enter into analysis of a stream of literature and the associated ideas. We are not interested though in articles that saturate the reader with methods that, however excellent, are not joined to an interesting idea.

At the same time, we want articles that are obsessive. Too many articles in management are published in incomplete



form. For qualitative articles, a complete article means that the idea is clearly stated, the research is properly designed, counterfactual logic or comparative methods are considered. We want to see efficient and crisp writing. Qualitative writing requires good writing. For many in our community, English is not a first or second language. In some exceptional cases, we will review articles in a major non-English language if there is a promise to have them translated at the contributor's expense. We will also provide the names of editors to help you. All too often, though, the difficulty is not the translation or the writing in a second language. The difficulty is the writing in the original language is not adequate. As a goal, keep in mind good examples, such as Steven Barley's *The Alignment of Technology and Structure Through Roles and Networks*, in the *Administrative Science Quarterly*.

For quantitative articles, we do not want 'here are six hypotheses, data, and ten regressions'. We all know that empirical testing is often incomplete and we want greater honesty in proving the robustness of results. In the past decade, the economics and finance journals have adopted a format in which the initial results are just that; they are initial. We know how rare journals publish articles that criticize past research or have access to earlier data sets. We therefore want our contributors to play the role of their own critics, to consider other theories, and to find the relevant data, and to test them. An example of an article that tests its own critics is by Raghuram Rajan and Luigi Zingales, *The Great Reversal: The Politics of Financial Development in the 20th Century*, in the *Journal of Financial Economics*. We will also make it easier for our readers to evaluate statistical findings because we will insist that every table and figure be clearly presented with their own text; this presentation is now a standard practice in many journals. We will encourage authors to make available their data and their simulation programs.

We seek articles that creatively mix quantitative, qualitative, formal, and historical approaches. Interdisciplinary research is encouraged (although parsimony is still expected). We want diversity to be an inspiration and a signal for high-quality research.

For those of you who have heard me before speaking about journals and writing, you know that I particularly dislike a practice I call 'proof by citations'. If history is tricks played upon the dead – as Voltaire said, then citations are tricks played upon the living. We want you to cite, of course; references are the way we keep score and pay tribute to each other, but also are a way by which we let our readers know where to go to know more. We will look harshly at citations to 'fancy authors' for no clear reason, or at a cluster of citations within parentheses. If a cited work is very important to you, then you should also explain what it did and showed. But remember, a published work is not a theorem. It should not be used therefore as a premise in a logical statement from which hypotheses are derived. This confusion of logic and empirical evidence lies at the heart of a lot of mediocrity in management research.

One way to test the logic of an argument is to remove all citations in one version of your paper. Have you stated clearly your argument? Can the reader understand the logic and claim? What is the minimal number of premises that you need in order to motivate your argument?

In general, since we are interested in 'the idea', we are not interested in many hypotheses and propositions. One or two will do fine.

Having now stated our principles and the qualities of research we seek, I would like to give a direction to the type of ideas that we would welcome. We are looking for ideas that speak well not just to 'us academics', but also to a wider constituency. We are not a journal of practice and we do not require, or especially desire, an 'implications for manager' discussion. Nor do we want a report on an applied research experience that, however intelligent, is essentially consulting.

At the same time, we encourage research on issues that are important. We do not require that every article considers what the current theory is in order to frame such an investigation, conditional on the choice of topic being indeed *important*. We will not rule out an empirical paper because of some stylized format of what an article should look like, for example, theory (usually citations), methods and data, simple analysis, conclusions. For example, we welcome research that is related to the European project. This research includes the study of migration of workers and professionals, the *meaning* of Europe, the operations of European institutions such as the European Central Bank, standard boards, non-government institutions. We also welcome contributions to the study of poverty and development, of disease epidemics, and international institutions such as the World Health Organization. Since the public sector is large in many countries, we invite research on governmental and parastatal organizations. We are also deeply interested in study of research communities, their productivity, and their accountability to sources of funding and to society.

We would like to contribute to understanding how management contributes to world development and issues. Management journals have a poor record in this domain compared to journals in economics and sociology. In economics, many European voices that offered dissent on transition in Central and Eastern Europe were not heard. We will actively seek diverse voices through articles that are engaged in important questions. We have created an associate editorship to focus on the public policy research questions.

A word of caution, though, is in order. Wanting to research issues of public and even moral importance does not justify lower quality.

Journals are significant forums for career advancement. By our commitment to quality, we will achieve the institutional requisites to help European and non-European researchers 'make their careers' on the basis of solid research. However, we do not desire that career dynamics dominate ideas and community, and we are very wary of the disciplinary fragmentation that hinders the American research communities.

To influence the evolution of our management community, we actively encourage those institutional elements that provide a distinctive and coherent quality to research. A tradition in many European countries is the research institute. Whether independent or attached to universities or to national research centres, these institutes possess formidable human and technical resources. Because of their research mission, they focus often on long-term research



projects. The results of these projects are books, reports, internal documents, and sometimes articles. In other words, the research *artefact* of these European institutes is the *project* over the *article*. We will introduce the innovation to capture these projects by inviting a different institute in each issue to report on the progress of one or two current activities.

The *European Management Review* is a journal of quality research that is focused on innovation in ideas and methods and on the important questions of our times to which management can contribute.

We welcome your participation!

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