

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear colleagues,

It is truly incredible that MOR is in its 20th year of publication! To celebrate this important milestone, I invited our founding editor Anne Tsui and founding senior editors Yanjie Bian, Joseph Galaskiewicz, Yadong Luo, Marshall Meyer, Michael Morris, and Xueguang Zhou; and the second editor Arie Lewin, co-editor Xu Huang, and deputy editor Johann Peter Murmann to write reflection essays, which comprise the ‘MOR & Me’ series included in this issue. Through their essays, we can see how MOR grew and evolved, the struggles and triumphs it has experienced, and what its future might look like. As the current editor-in-chief, I am confident about the unique contribution MOR can make to enrich the world’s knowledge of management, and warmly invite you to become part of the MOR community.

The first paper in this issue (You, Jia, Wang, Liu, & Yin, 2024) demonstrates that in the 20 years since its birth, MOR has been pursuing its original mission of providing ground-breaking insights about management and organizations in the Chinese context and global comparable contexts. The authors compared the articles published in MOR with those published in six leading management journals – AMJ, ASQ, Org Sci, SMJ, JIBS, and JAP, – and examined the extent to which the articles adopt the what, why, and joint contextualization dimensions in their studies. They found that the proportion of articles published in MOR with high contextualized theoretical contributions is significantly higher than that of the six leading journals. On the theory-building dimension, articles published in MOR also scored higher than those of the six leading journals. These findings are encouraging because they indicate 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.

This issue also includes two regular articles that study novel phenomena in Chinese organizations: one focuses on the relationship between CEO early-life poverty experience and their motivation to engage in firm digital transformation; the other examines the relationship between online activism and firm green innovation. Specifically, Hong, Yang, Li, Chen, Yang, and Wu (2024) found that CEOs’ impoverished experiences exert a detrimental influence on their firms’ digital transformation efforts, primarily due to a lack of motivation and social resources necessary for such initiatives. However, this adverse effect can be ameliorated when CEOs gain access to substantial social resources in later life. Meanwhile, Li, Zhang, and Wu (2024) analyzed a Chinese-listed company database with 13,795 firm-year observations over the period from 2011 to 2018 and found that online environmental activism induced cooperate green innovation, which became more effective when the retail investor base held larger shares in total and presented questions with a more intensely negative tone.

The last paper in this issue (Liu & Ding, 2024) provides an evolutionary perspective to view Chinese management research over the past 30 years that has gone through distinct stages of globalization and localization. It raises an important question about whether Chinese management scholars should continue integrating Western theories or capitalize on the opportunity to develop indigenous management theories when China faces new challenges amid anti-globalization trends. The authors discuss the differences in scientific development concepts between China and the West, the historical trajectory of Chinese management research, and the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. They propose that it is essential to sustain international collaboration, deepen understanding of enterprise practices, and cultivate an open academic community while refining the research evaluation system, in order to enhance our contribution to global management scholarship.

I truly hope that you find this 20th anniversary issue of MOR stimulating and inspirational. Thank you for your continuous attention and support!

Truly yours,
Xiao-Ping Chen

 