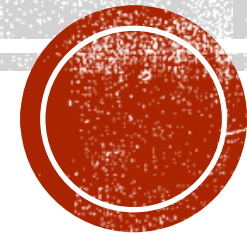


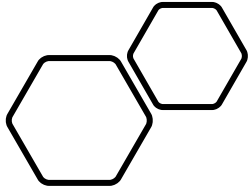
SHOULD MANAGEMENT SCHOLARSHIP ADDRESS AND INFORM SOCIETAL GRAND CHALLENGES?

MAYBE, BABY (AND IF SO, HOW?)



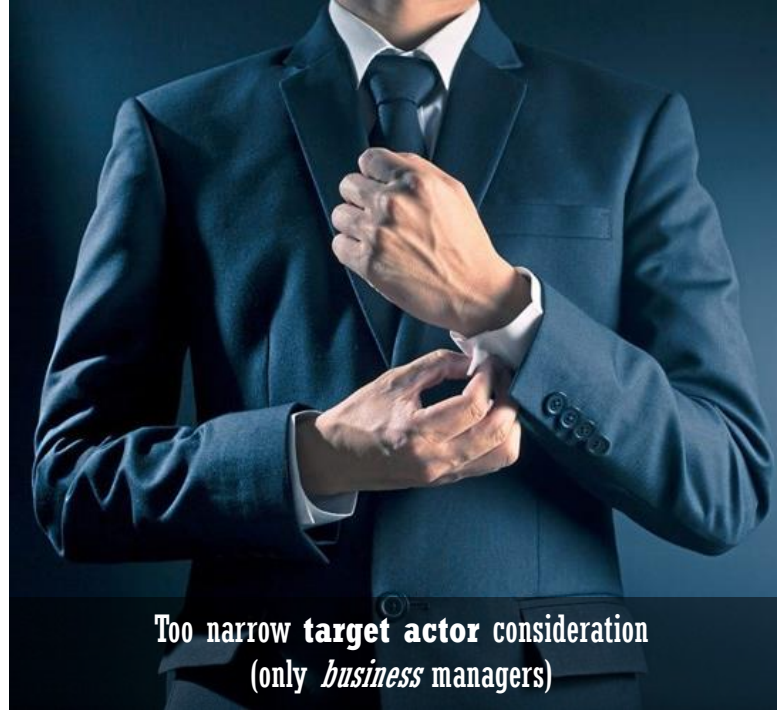
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A few observations on the lack of impactful research in management

- Impactful research is too often understood as that which helps managers run their business more efficiently or effectively!
- This creates three problems:



Too narrow **target actor** consideration
(only *business* managers)



Too narrow focus on **target locality**
(only *business* firms)



Too narrow **outcome orientation**
(Typically financial or other closely related performance measure as main dependent variable)



A myriad of other neglected measures of social or ecological performance!

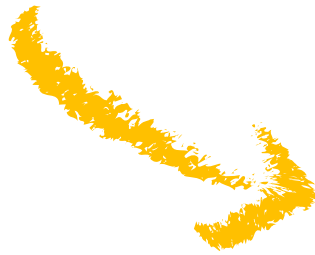


HIRING MANAGEMENT ASSISTANT

Unconventional organizations need to be managed effectively!



Refugee camps also need a manager!



We therefore need to **broaden our understanding** of what constitutes impactful research, for whom it is relevant, and in which contexts, and which goals it may help to achieve.



Grand challenges: What are we talking about?

A **grand challenge** is a “specific critical barrier that, if removed, would help solve an important societal problem with a high likelihood of global impact through widespread implementation”. (George et al., 2016, p. 1881)

BUT... GRAND CHALLENGES ARE COMPLEX AND...

...are
phenomena-
driven

...require
interdisciplinary
perspectives

...span multiple
levels of
analysis

...are multi-
sector and
multi-actor

WELL, CHALLENGING TO RESEARCH

1

Studying GCs may help to revitalize management research, leading to new theoretical insights and directions.

2

But, how to establish theoretical patterns within a situation that may be pre- or proto-theoretical?

3

(1) Identify key empirical questions; (2) Construct general theory; (3) Recognize that within general theory reside nested special theories.

4

(4) Confront the special theory with empirical evidence; where appropriate generalize to the overarching theory.

Example: Study the collective/cooperative behavior within an individual refugee camp to derive some insights regarding broader collaborative action among stakeholders in refugee movements (Chowdury).

1. GRAND CHALLENGES ARE PHENOMENA-DRIVEN

2. GRAND CHALLENGES REQUIRE INTERDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES

- Understanding/studying complex phenomena, topics, and methods is necessary to train managers and academics for the world as it is of multiple disciplines.
- Recent efforts to integrate social science theories into management research have also attempted to use management phenomena to contextualize and reformulate theory.
- New phenomena can/will naturally invite new, innovative theoretical paradigms to explain them, some of which may combine and integrate existing theoretical insights in novel and unexpected ways.
- **Example: Use of policy transfer theory from political science in management to explain policy transfer among public and private actors (Dau, Moore, Doh, Soto).**



Example: Study how foreign and local stakeholders affect adoption of UN SDGs by MNE subsidiaries (Liou & Rao-Nicholson).

3. GRAND CHALLENGES SPAN MULTIPLE LEVELS OF ANALYSIS

4. GRAND CHALLENGES ARE MULTI-SECTOR AND MULTI-ACTOR

- While organizations of all types – will remain focal point of management research, scope must be expanded in order to offer rich/deep insight into interactions between organizations and external environment.
- Focusing efforts on understanding phenomena can also result in greater insight into how cross-sectoral interactions can be shaped and influenced; could contribute to addressing these challenges.
- Grand challenges require multi-actor, multi-stakeholder analyses across subcentral, national and supranational settings.
- **Example: Explore interactions among activist NGOs and firms to better understand how complex GCs are contested across fields and organizations that occupy them (Odziemkowska & Henisz).**

CITED ARTICLE EXAMPLES

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Further
inspiration
available
online...

EDITORIAL

Management Research that Makes a Difference: Broadening the Meaning of Impact

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Abstract

The world is undergoing dramatic transformations. Many of the grand societal challenges we currently face underscore the need for scholarly research — including management studies — that can help us best sort out and solve them. Yet, management scholars struggle to produce concrete solutions or to communicate how their research can help to tackle these grand societal challenges. With this editorial, we want to help scholars seeking to “make a difference” by broadening our understanding of what constitutes impactful research. We examine five forms of impact — *scholarly, practical, societal, policy,* and *educational* — outlining how scholars can systematically extend or enlarge their research agenda or projects to amplify their impact on the challenges societies face. We suggest that each of these forms of impact has intrinsic value in advancing the scientific enterprise and, together, can help to address key societal problems that reach beyond the immediate and traditional context of business management. With concrete suggestions for getting started on these forms of impact, and possible outputs for each, we hope to stimulate management and organization scholars to think more broadly about the opportunities for making an impact with their research and to begin doing so more often.