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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Four years ago, when I took the reins of MOR, the new editorial team had many discussions about what the mission of MOR should be in an era characterized by rapid technological advancement and an ever-shifting geopolitical landscape. To my surprise, although the discussion was lengthy and deep, we reached consensus rather quickly. MOR's mission is to provide groundbreaking insights about organization and management in the Chinese context and global comparable contexts. For that purpose, we have encouraged scholars to conduct phenomenon-based indigenous Chinese management research and published 15 calls for papers on a variety of topics that study novel organizational phenomena in Chinese organizations (for details, see https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/management-and-organization-review/announcements/call-for-papers).

To further facilitate engagement in phenomenon-based indigenous Chinese management research, our editorial team also decided to write an Editorial Series to systematically illustrate what such research is, why we should do such research, how we can do it, what kind of challenges might be related to such research, and potential strategies and tactics to tackle these potential challenges. We plan to publish 10+ short editorials in the next few issues.

This issue publishes the first editorial essay, which is authored by me (Chen, 2025). I adopt an evolution of theories perspective to argue that developing a new theory to explain new management phenomenon in the Chinese context serves as the first step in advancing a new theory to become a universal theory later on, because a majority of the management theories that we consider as universal today started from a theoretical account for a specific new phenomenon a scholar observed in a particular time and space. It's only after being tested across time and space that the theory evolved to become universal.

This issue also publishes an insightful perspective paper by Wang, Lounsbury, Chen, and Ren (2025), who elaborate on the distinct configuration of institutional logics in China, where state logic is more dominant and often directs other logics, thus shaping organizational behavior differently than its Western counterparts. They then propose the need for a broader research agenda on the dynamics of institutional logics in the Chinese context.

The regular research papers published in this issue explore several topics. One topic centers on CEOs and top executives. For example, Du, Tong, Wu, and Wang (2025) examine how CEO's early-life poverty trauma exposure affects firm involvement in poverty alleviation and the prioritization between generic and strategic involvement, whereas Lu, You, and Jia (2025) investigate how CEO humility influences organizational virtuousness and, hence, firm reputation, in the eyes of the government in China when the firm is intensively connected to government intermediaries. Zhong, Ren, and Wu (2025), meanwhile, study whether and when returnee executives influence nonmarket strategic actions, especially enterprise bribery. The other topics include political connections and firm environmental responsible and irresponsible behaviors (Li, Miao, Wong, & Liang, 2025), firm strategy oriented toward growth versus profit (Zhou, Kang, & Park, 2025), and subsidiaries of multinational enterprises regarding their distributive justice, internal embeddedness, and initiatives (Weng & Chen, 2025).

Finally, in the Dialogue, Debate, and Discussion section, scholars continue to offer their commentaries on Zhang and Chen's (2024) perspective paper, which suggested that management scholars might learn from the field of medicine to be open-minded about publishing different kinds of

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scholarly papers. I thank Marshall Meyer and Eric Tsang for their thoughtful writing and Zhang and Chen's responses and deep reflections.

Xiao-Ping Chen



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