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Word from the editor

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Word from the editor

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This back-to-school issue of *Management international* is comprised of seven articles with themes and methodologies underscoring our journal's rich editorial-line.

In the first article - entitled "The impact of cultural differences and moral intensity on ethical decision-making: Evidence from France and China" - Jocelyn Husser, Anne Goujon-Belghit, Lingfang Song and Anaïs Rouanet develop six scenarios meant to embody typical purchasing situations in these two countries. Mobilising a sample of 366 professional buyers (203 French and 163 Chinese), the study is structured around the six characteristics of a decision-making process that Jones delineated in 1991. It reveals that Chinese buyers possess greater general awareness of ethical issues than their French counterparts and intend to act more ethically in one given dimension, namely localism - but that there are three other dimensions where French buyers intend to act more ethically than their Chinese counterparts, namely temporal immediacy, probability of effect and concentration of effect.

The second article's five co-authors - Jie Xiong, Lu Xu, Qian Li, Zhe Yuan, Shubho Chakraborty - have evocatively entitled their piece "Doing good and/or avoiding bad: The ambidextrous view of managing corporate social activities". The goal here is to examine the various orientations by means of which organisations manage corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities, whether this involves pro-CSR and/or anti-CSR (so-called corporate social irresponsibility) actions. Analysis is based on a panel of 5,292 companies drawn from KLD and COMPUSTAT databases and studied over a period of seven years.

Julien Lachuer and Sébastien Jost's paper - "Financial and extra-financial determinants of CEOs' sustainable discourse: A longitudinal analysis on the U.S. market" - uses the prism of alignment theory and instrumental CSR theory to analyse CEOs' moderating role based on the causal links that exist between the introductory discourses in which they engage as part of their accountability relationships, on one hand, and their financial and extra-financial performance, on the other. Applying a Logit model and text analysis, this is a 2014-2019 longitudinal study of S&P500-listed companies operating in three sectors. It finds that CEOs' discourses do in fact correlate with financial and non-financial performance, making this a key element in ascertaining whether CEOs' CSR strategies are relevant to addressing the strategic challenges that their sectors are facing.

Hèla Yousf asks a serious question in the fourth article, entitled "Culture and management in the Global South: Can we break away from modernisation theory?". The lack of consensus regarding the definition of concepts such as "culture" and "development" - together with the dominance of modernisation theory - largely explains why it is so difficult today to identify a clear theoretical framework capable of accounting for the way in which culture influences both economic development trajectories and organisational practices. The author starts with a review of the main controversies marking current

studies of the connections between culture, economic development and management. She then goes on to emphasize the importance of transcending the tradition/modernity dichotomy that is generally associated with modernisation theory, with a view towards further renewing thinking about how culture affects the construction and implementation of effective organisational practices in the Global South.

In their article "Social license to operate: An integrative framework", Sofiane Baba and Jacqueline Dahan note that whereas literature tends to treat controversies about projects' social inacceptability in a generic manner, each of these trajectories is in fact unique and deserves to be treated as such. This demonstration is made using a qualitative analysis of three controversial projects: the Matoush uranium mine (2006-2020); Facebook's cryptocurrency experience (2017-2021); and Covid-19 vaccinations (2020-2021). The analytical framework proposed here conceptualises social acceptability as a dynamic trajectory of legitimation and justification based on eco-traditional, symbolic and technical pillars. The study enriches understanding of social acceptability issues and offers research perspectives operating at the interface between social acceptability, legitimation and institutional logic.

Min Feng and Driss Bourazzouq's "Interactional coping solutions: The case of a French legal firm" offers a qualitative analysis of nine Interactional adaptation solutions (IASs) identified in a French law firm during the post-adoption phase of its information technology implementation process. The study aims to understand how such solutions affect technostress management, with the authors capturing IAS's impact and noting certain limitations within the company that might have affected its technostress management performance. These include insufficient creative interaction between colleagues at the group level and organisational commitment to the digitisation process.

Ching T. Liao and Ana Colovic wrote the issue's final article, entitled "The impact of open search, foreign ownership and market information on SME exporters' productivity". The specific focus here is how the status (e.g. new or old) of a SME exporter affects its ability to realise productivity gains. A regression analysis is applied to a panel of Spanish manufacturing SMEs drawn from the PITEC database. The findings confirm that combining one's status as a former exporter with an open research strategy should enable a SME to raise its productivity levels. The effect is particularly strong where a firm is owned by domestic interests and has acquired market-oriented information.

This issue of *Management international* also includes a tribute to Delmas Lévesque (1933-2023), a passionate and highly intellectual sociology professor with deep roots in his country - Quebec - and a strong commitment to the socio-economic development thereof. The idea for this text comes from Jean-François Chanlat, who was linked to Lévesque in several different ways: as an alumnus, former sociology intern and former colleague at HEC Montréal; and as a professor with a particular interest in the

anthropological dynamics of organisations (Chanlat 2023). *Management international* can only hope that this tribute to Lévesque “will encourage subscribers to re-read some of his writings, which to this day remain a key source of reflection regarding both Quebec society and global socio-economic development”.

The issue ends with Éric Davoine’s tantalising review of a beautiful work written by Jean-Pierre Dupuis and Jean-Pierre Segal entitled “Very distant cousins: French and Quebecois together at work”. The main topic here is obviously the interaction between these two populations but the book’s regularly shifting focus means that it ultimately offers a whole bouquet of original contributions pertaining to French and Quebec management cultures.

Wishing you a great start to the new academic year – happy reading!