Thematic issue:
"Responsibility and International Management"

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Living and working together internationally is naturally synonymous with great diversity. This is one of the major challenges of our time for organizations and their employees at both local and international levels, especially in a context marked by the imperatives of ecological, economic and digital transitions, as well as corporate social responsibility (CSR).

In this thematic issue, we want to explore international management from the perspective of responsibility, as opposed to the often-privileged angle of performance. Our objective is to try to better understand how responsible behaviors are established, especially in this period of pandemic and crisis. This leads us to invite contributions that, through the prism of international and comparative management, question individual and organizational behaviors that are eminently responsible at the international level, and therefore recognized as such.

Organizational behavior in the international arena

In Anglo-Saxon research, International Organizational Behavior is a clearly identified and recognized field. This rich field, which was initiated by several major figures such as Nancy Adler (1990), encourages an openness beyond national borders in order to analyze organizational behavior.

On the one hand, this trend has allowed for comparative analyses of cultures and the impact of cultural diversity on organizational behavior in both private and public organizations (Chanlat & Pierre, 2018; D'Iribarne, 1989; Hofstede 1980; Mouillot & Bartel-Radic, 2020; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2004). On the other hand, it has generated truly cross-cultural work in the sense that it analyzes the management of international organizations and teams, with a focus on intercultural competencies as factors for better overall performance (Hajro & Pudelko, 2010). For a long time, this cultural diversity was seen as a barrier or a difficulty for management. However, over the past decade, calls for a more positive and constructive approach have been growing (Bausch, Barmeyer, & Mayrhofer, 2021; Stahl & Tung, 2015).

While it has been recognized that cultural diversity welcomes the paradox (Lewis, 2000) of managing its difficulties as well as its wealth, its management remains insufficiently known. One rich and contemporary stream of research approaches cultural diversity through boundary spanning by studying the actors who "build bridges" across these boundaries, as well as the activities they implement (Schotter, Mudambi, Doz, & Gaur, 2017).

Initially fused within intercultural management, linguistic diversity (Church-Morel & Bartel-Radic, 2016) is also the subject of a prolific and now fully established stream of research within the international management research communities (Brannen, Piekkari & Tietze, 2014).

Management and responsibility

Organizational responsibility, often condensed under the term CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility), is a rich and ambivalent notion, and therefore complex to define. It is still the subject of lively debate (Chapple & Moon, 2007; Payaud & Martinet, 2010; Pesqueux, 2009) and questions the impact of organizational behavior, whether positive or negative, on stakeholders (Freeman, 1984). The latter have become increasingly important both externally and internally, for example in the exposure of scandals involving multinational organizations engaged in unaccountable behavior (Daudigeos, Roulet, & Valiorgue, 2020) or in the implementation of ambitious HR inclusion policies (Mouillot, Drillon, & Montargot, 2018). The current crisis may thus be an opportunity to rethink organizational accountability as a field of research, in the organizational behaviors it supports, and its practices and concepts (Crane & Matten, 2021). This may involve, for example, a redefinition of the priorities of organizations and the risks associated with unfulfilled responsibilities.

Organizational Behavior and responsibility: International Perspectives

The pandemic and the crises that it continues to generate have highlighted the global aspects of CSR, the obvious interdependencies that exist between organizations and states, and the collateral damage of unaccountable organizational behavior. The current context clearly represents an opportunity to rethink responsible governance on a global scale, which involves a careful articulation between organizations themselves and between organizations, governments and society (Campbell, 2007), all of which aid a transnational general interest. The question of the societal impact of the policies and actions of multinational enterprises, whether CSR or more general, deserves much more detailed development, particularly in a crisis or post-crisis context (Asshidi, Bartel-Radic, & Dessaigne, 2021). This requires, in particular, a reflection on the organizational problems inherent to the deployment of CSR by organizations on a global scale (Pestre, 2014). Indeed, successful international collaboration relies, among other things, on the intercultural skills of individuals interacting internationally

(Bartel-Radic & Giannelloni, 2017; Chevrier & Segal, 2011) and on collective intelligence within multicultural teams (Earley & Mosakowski, 2004). These themes can be addressed by mobilizing the different approaches to CSR (functionalist, strategic, political and institutional). The institutional (Campbell, 2006, 2007) and political (Scherer & Palazzo, 2011) approaches in particular allow for an international analysis of the factors that contribute to responsible global governance.

The greatest challenges that humanity faces, such as protecting the climate and biodiversity, reducing world hunger, and reducing plastic waste, can only be addressed through international multi-stakeholder collaborations including individuals, companies, institutions, and governments (Ferraro, Etzion, & Gehman, 2015). Yet, collaborations between multinational corporations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are complex and often fraught with distrust (Berger et al., 2004). Nevertheless, these collaborations have gradually developed since the 2000s, particularly through BoP projects in emerging countries (Hussler & Payaud, 2019) and the development of CSR by multinationals that call on the expertise of NGOs (Jamali & Keshishian, 2009).

Epistemological positions and methodological approaches

The epistemological postures adopted by researchers to explore these themes are diverse. As Romani, Barmeyer, Primecz, and Pilhofer (2018) show: positivism has long predominated the field (Hofstede, 1980; Wolf, 2006), and interpretivism has often taken the opposite approach (D'Iribarne, 2009; Chevrier, 2009). The (post-)positivist paradigm approaches cultural diversity as a barrier when interpretivism sees it as a richness. Postmodernism (Fougère & Moulettes, 2007; Magala, 2009) and the critical approach (Romani, Mahadevan, & Primecz, 2018; Spicer, Alvesson, & Kärreman, 2009) have led to fewer publications, but they are nonetheless gaining in popularity.

CSR is becoming so popular that it has become the spearhead of many actions and even organizational strategies. Nevertheless, the representations of such contributions remain deeply unstable and scattered, to the point of sometimes threatening their very reason for existence and credibility. This thematic issue of the journal Management International invites contributions that approach cultural diversity from a positive, constructive angle, as a richness for organizations and society (Bausch, Barmeyer & Mayrhofer, 2021) - which does not exclude, on the contrary, contributions from the critical paradigm (Romani, Mahadevan & Primecz, 2018). These postures will allow, among other things, to explore and investigate methods of inclusion aimed at supporting diversity in all its international and multicultural components.

Innovative or more rarely used methods will be welcomed with particular interest, such as action research, experiments, or research combining quantitative and qualitative methods (Bartel-Radic, 2019; Guttormsen, Lauring, & Chapman, 2021).

Suggested themes for contributions to the thematic issue

Current events related to the pandemic are relevant to explore the responsibility that is inherent to international management practices. Indeed, social distancing and remote work can be studied as an opportunity to change and improve global performance, quality of work life and innovation. By examining the role of human resources management and the practices implemented in supporting employees, leaders and their teams before, during and after the

pandemic (and more broadly during crises), the contributions to this thematic issue could introduce new perspectives and understandings.

The international dimension will obviously be essential here, especially in terms of identifying, understanding and critiquing existing models and practices, in a comparative perspective or in diverse cultural environments known for their propensity for inclusion or exclusion from the in-group. But cultural diversity is not limited to national cultures alone; it also includes organizational cultures, regional cultures and professional cultures. The links between these different cultural spheres in particular seem to offer an interesting panorama. An international comparative perspective could, for example, be applied to the study of (1) the integration of individuals with high IQs or lots of potential in organizations, (2) generational diversity in leadership, (3) unemployed populations and their soft skills to enable integration, or (4) organizational citizenship behaviors in a comparative perspective.

Critical research on the empirical foundations of inclusion will also be welcome, especially as it explores (1) innovations (in terms of cultural, linguistic and inter-communicational diversity), (2) the deconstruction of harmful practices, which nevertheless persist in many sectors because of tropisms rooted in organizational behaviors, (3) the reception and integration of migrants as responsible behavior but also as an expression of the richness of diversity, and (4) cultural intelligence, among other things in its function as a synergistic bridge between performance and experience.

The works that will compose this thematic issue will propose innovative perspectives and will be part of a constructive transversality between Management Sciences, International Management, Psychology and Sociology of Organizations.

Calendar

Deadline for submission of full papers: June 15, 2022
Typescripts must respect the editorial policy of the journal Management International and be sent to management.international@hec.ca indicating the thematic issue "Responsibility and International Management".
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