

Starting Engaging Conversations: Introducing the Interview Section

Journal of Management Education
2022, Vol. 46(3) 431–438
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DOI: 10.1177/10525629221090680
journals.sagepub.com/home/jmd



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In our (almost) 12 months as JME co-editors, we have had a wonderful time exploring various aspects of the journal and implementing new ideas and ventures to keep JME up-to-date and relevant to the management education community. Some of these initiatives include invigorating our social media presence, offering more hybrid and online workshops in new places around the world, and moving to inviting Special Issue proposals on a rolling basis. We are delighted to see that many of our readers have embraced these opportunities with vigor and we look forward to offering more in future.

Another key part of our role as new co-editors has involved reviewing each section of JME and considering whether changes need to be made. As most of our readers will be aware, we publish six main sections—research articles, theoretical and conceptual pieces, essays, rejoinders, instructional innovations, and instructional change in context papers—and each has specific requirements. We believe that the breadth of articles published in JME is one of the journal's major strengths and one of the reasons that we continue to have such a high submission rate. Although empirical and theoretical pieces continue to comprise most of our manuscripts, it is pleasing to see that we have a healthy number of submissions across all sections.

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While we are very gratified with the quality and number of submissions to date, it is clear that not all the issues relevant to us as management educators and practitioners can be captured in the six sections currently available. For example, sometimes we receive manuscripts about important issues that are likely to be of interest to our readership, but they are not sufficiently developed to be sent out for review. In other cases, authors approach us with ideas for articles based on their own experiences that have the potential to be very impactful, but they do not fit any of the existing JME sections. There have also been times when we have heard about people in industry doing exciting work relevant to management education that we would love to highlight in the journal but there was no clear place where it could be published. After careful consideration and discussion with our editorial teams, we feel that there is a need to offer another section to allow authors to explore issues relevant to teaching and learning in a different format.

Thus, we are excited to introduce a new section in the journal in which authors can submit articles based on interviews. At JME, we believe that interviews will provide an opportunity to discuss important issues that cannot be captured in any of the existing sections of the journal. Many readers will likely be aware that *Academy of Management: Learning & Education* published a similar section for many years and featured a range of different articles, including discussions with scholars doing impactful work, as well as conversations with prominent figures from academia and industry. We welcome contributions about any issue relevant to management education that is likely to be of interest to JME readers, and we offer some ideas about potential topics and interviewees later in this editorial.

In creating this section, we especially want to offer a space for authors to discuss topics that are challenging to discuss openly. In this respect, Baker (2004) discussed the importance of conversational learning in the management classroom, noting that it is important to find ways to talk about challenging and controversial issues—which she termed “undiscussables”—to encourage deep learning and new insights. We suggest that the same is true for us as management educators. In the only major JME interview piece published to date, Gundars Kaupins shared his experiences as an educator with Asperger’s Syndrome, providing a powerful insight into a topic rarely addressed in the management education literature (Wright & Kaupins, 2018). Overall, we believe that it is through sharing our experiences that we can gain new and meaningful insights about ourselves, our students, and each other.

In this editorial, we begin with some general advice for authors interested in submitting to this section, including some examples of topics that could be explored. We emphasize that this is not an exhaustive list, however, and prospective authors should contact us with a proposal before conducting an

interview. We are very open to hearing creative ideas outside of the ones proposed here! Following this, we introduce the articles in this issue and offer some concluding thoughts.

Advice for Prospective Authors

Choose an Interesting Topic and Interviewee

When assessing proposals for interviews, one of our major considerations is whether the topic is likely to be of interest to the JME readership. As our audience is comprised almost entirely of management educators and practitioners, naturally the topic must be one that is relevant (or clearly emerging as relevant) in the management education literature. Beyond this, we want authors to choose topics and interviewees that they are passionate about and can offer readers new insights and understandings. Below are some general suggestions about the kinds of interviews we could see in this new section.

Interviews with impactful management scholars. One of the main reasons that we decided to offer a section for interviews in JME is because we wanted a place to highlight some of the inspiring work of our colleagues. While some of our sections allow this to an extent, we often miss out on personal stories about how educators progressed and succeeded in their careers. Perhaps more importantly, we rarely hear about their struggles and failures, and the interview section is a place where all aspects of one's career can be explored. We encourage readers to think about educators who have an interesting story that would engage the JME readership and consider interviewing them for an article. This could be a prominent management scholar who has had a significant impact on the field, or a relatively new educator who is doing especially interesting and perhaps provocative work. We especially encourage interviews with award-winning management educators to highlight their outstanding practices.

Interviews with influential individuals in industry. As our readers will be aware, management educators frequently use case studies of important people and events in industry to capture the attention of our students and teach them about how important concepts play out in the "real world" of business. Influential figures in industry can provide unique insights into how the concepts that we teach are enacted outside of the classroom, highlighting gaps between theory and practice. Importantly, those in industry often have valuable advice to offer about what we need to teach our students so that they can be effective, ethical managers once they move into business. In such an example, Beenen and Pinto (2009) interviewed Sherron Watkins, a prominent whistle-blower who

spoke up about organizational corruption at Enron. Framed in the business ethics literature, they interviewed Watkins about her experience and developed a framework based on her insights and the existing literature to help people resist corruption in organizations. Similarly, in this new section we welcome interviews with industry figures who can offer new and interesting perspectives into management education.

First-person lived experience interviews. In addition to suggestions above, we also see the interview section as a place where we can explore topics not usually discussed in the management education literature and understand the lived experiences of our colleagues. For example, we know that educators often fail to disclose distressing experiences, such as manuscript rejections, receiving negative teaching evaluations, and the difficulties of working as an academic with a disability or an invisible illness. We believe that increasing attention to well-being in academia as well as mental health in the business classroom (El-Oddi & Knoop, 2021) means that this is a fertile area for interview articles. In JME specifically, Quijada (2021) offered a moving story of her struggle with mental illness while on the tenure-track, explaining her personal journey and the challenges faced along the way, a topic that could have been addressed in the form of an interview.

We also suggest that authors could consider interviewing colleagues about their lived experiences with diversity, equity, and inclusion. Concerns about diversity in business schools continue to attract attention in academia and the media alike (e.g., Grier, 2021), and there is a need to understand more about the experiences of colleagues from marginalized and minority groups. As mentioned earlier, we have only published one major JME interview piece in the past, in which Gundars Kaupins shared his experiences as an educator with Asperger's Syndrome (AS), a recognized form of neurodiversity. In the article, Wright and Kaupins (2018) note that JME editors "wanted to learn more about how AS affects the implementation of engaged learning practices, with the view to exploring some of the teaching challenges educators with AS face and ideas to overcome those challenges" (p. 200). After a brief discussion of relevant literature, the authors share the transcript of the interview and follow with a commentary about its major themes and suggestions for future research. Along with the interview articles published in AMLE, we suggest that this paper provides a useful starting point for authors interested in submitting to this section.

Ensure Relevant Literature Grounding and Structure

At the outset, we want to make clear that authors must build a case for the relevance of their topic to JME's aims and scope. We continue to be guided

by the central question underpinning the peer review process at this journal: “*Will this contribution have a significant impact on thinking and/or practice in management education?*” Authors must also ensure that they integrate appropriate literature at the beginning of the article to frame the conversation. In other words, an interview article consists of more than just the transcript of the discussion between interviewer and interviewee; like all JME submissions, there must be a clear rationale for the topic and a review of relevant literature. Following the transcript, we also expect to see a commentary and critique of the findings, including some discussion of the implications of the interview for management educators. Authors should also be aware that they are welcome to present selected excerpts from the interview, and an entire transcript is not required.

Understand the Methodology

Finally, we recommend that authors interested in submitting to this section familiarize themselves with resources about how to conduct effective interviews, particularly if they do not have previous experience with using interviews as a data collection tool. For example, it is important that authors spend time developing their central questions of interest and corresponding interview guide or protocol, build good rapport with interviewees, and be prepared to adjust one’s approach if needed (McGrath et al., 2019). There are also important ethical considerations to be mindful of when conducting interviews (Allmark et al., 2009), particularly when interviews address sensitive or potentially distressing topics, as well as the role of culture and power dynamics in interview settings (McGrath et al., 2019). Overall, there are some excellent resources available to those interested in refining their skills, and we suggest that authors utilize these to guide an interview process that follows current research ethics and best practice standards.

In This Issue

As usual, we are pleased to present a variety of excellent articles in this issue of JME that showcase the various sections in the journal. Firstly, in “An Approach for Humanizing Leadership Education: Building Learning Community & Stakeholder Engagement”, Khilji details the conceptual basis for a master’s level graduate degree of Organizational Leadership and Learning. The program blends critical leadership studies (CLS) with humanizing principles and humanistic leadership. This article will be of interest to critical management scholars for the unique fusion of CLS with humanistic principles. Likewise, Program Directors of leadership-focused degrees will appreciate and receive inspiration from Table 1 that maps the theoretical

models with pedagogical goals and learning objectives, as well as from Table 2, which details the assessment process for parts of the program. Finally, most readers will be interested in the discussion about the Learning Objectives focused on fostering responsibility, a culture of equity, and social impact.

Faculty, Deans, and Program/Course Directors will appreciate the empirical study by Buchanan and Bharadwaj, “Crossvergence in International Management Education: Acquisition of Skills and Career Outcomes” with the ongoing emphasis within many business schools to internationalize and expand their global reach. The bi-cultural study used a distinctive sample of international MBAs with training in both the US and India. The authors tested a range of theoretical perspectives such as colonialism, convergence, crossvergence, and hybridity using survey results from graduates to examine four hypotheses related to skill acquisition and various career outcomes (i.e., job mobility, promotability). Cross-cultural management education researchers will want to review the suggestions for future research for suggestions to test hybridization trends in other cultures and geographic regions.

“Balancing ‘Critique for Improvement’ with ‘Critique for Emancipation’ in Management Learning and Education” by Wallo, Martin, Sparrhoff, and Kock is the second article in this edition that draws upon the rich heritage of critical management studies literature. The authors develop a conceptual model to blend two seemingly distinct critiques—improvement and emancipation—by linking them to developmental learning (Ellström, 2001). The article educates readers unfamiliar with these approaches by outlining the fundamental premises within each critique approach and then extends our knowledge by identifying three strategies to balance each of these within management education at the curricular, course, and topic level. The suggestions offered provide management educators new approaches for broadening our students’ critical thinking by distinguishing these critique frameworks that support operational and sociological analysis.

The only instructional innovation of this edition covers an increasingly important skill for international business (IB) and most business and management students, global virtual teams (GVTs). “Learning Laboratory: An Integrative Learning Design for International Business in a Complex Dynamic World” describes a “learning laboratory,” a series of strategies challenges for students on GVTs from five different countries, developed by Zetting, Aleem, Majdenic, and Berry, all colleagues at the University of Turku in Finland. The lab is designed to build conceptual knowledge, develop sociocultural practices in multinational organizations, and enhance students’ self-awareness and reflective competencies. Instructors seeking to leverage their personal or institutional networks for inter-institutional learning will benefit from reading about

the structured model and the honest appraisal of the resources need for such collaborations.

The first essay in this edition argues for the introduction of student-edited practitioner-focused journals as a co-curricular activity in management education. Theeke and Hall propose that student-edited journals, common in law education, address the research, teaching, and practice gap. Other potential student learning benefits include building highly valued career skills like written communication, honing critical thinking, and demonstrate work ethic, among others. In an era of increased emphasis on undergraduate research in the academy, student-run business and management journals seem like a logical experiential education innovation.


In the final essay Balkin, Trevino and Straub recap the common areas where women management educators are likely to face gender inequities: (1) student-faculty interactions; (2) student evaluation of teaching; and (3) interactions with faculty peers. The authors spend over half the essay focused on solutions and actions steps to create a more equitable environment for teaching management. The three main areas—faculty evaluation standards and awards/recognition, faculty training for teaching management, and culture and values related to civility and inclusion—address gender inequity and rely on active involvement from Academic Administrators, Teaching and Learning Developers, and faculty at all career stages. Given the ongoing massive “she-cession” resulting from pandemic burnout and stressors in the broader workforce, implementing “smaller, incremental changes mixed with some bold and unprecedented changes” that target inequity is needed now more than ever.

Conclusion

In closing, we look forward to receiving proposals for interview articles in the coming months, and we have a team of Associate Editors ready to review pitches! We hope that this section will provide a space for conversations about important issues in management education, such as new and innovative practices, personal stories of influential educators and industry figures, challenges in the classroom, and open discussions about important and under-acknowledged issues in our field. We believe that there are many individuals who have important, impactful stories to share and we want to provide a place for their voices. As mentioned, if you are interested in submitting to the new section, please send a short proposal (400 words maximum) for an interview article to the co-editors at editor@mobts.org. The proposal should clearly outline the topic of interest, the proposed interviewee(s), and the relevance of the work to management education. We cannot wait to hear your ideas!

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