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Editorial

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Proceedings of Critical Research and Responsible Business

EDITORIAL

Tuomo Takala, editor-in-chief

This special issue focuses on critical research, an approach that has gained more ground in scientific circles over the past decade. Phenomena like globalization, colonialization and ultracapitalism have served as catalysts for critical research. In the field of business studies and management research, however, paradigmatic thinking has become rather fragmented instead of converged. The term “fragmented adhocracy” describes this disintegration of management studies into smaller and smaller, more or less isolated clusters. Now that the 21st century is well under way we can see that this tendency continues unabated. The ability or willingness of different research paradigms to communicate among themselves has not improved at the rate hoped for; the dialogue between them could be much more intensive.

On the other hand, the postmodern polyphony of voices has increased. A functional managerial research approach

is no longer the only form of “official” management science. Critical research and research on business ethics, age management, female management and diversity are now equally approved as “official” fields of research. In other words, the mainstream of management studies has expanded.

This is a good thing, as stiffness and formalism tend to erode and narrow down the transforming science of management. Creativity and fresh, innovative scientific solutions will be in a key position both in society as a whole and in academic research in the coming years. But critical research itself must also be ready to transform.

The articles in this special issue offer a good picture of the intersections and common ground of critical research and responsible business. Social responsibility, consumerism and a philosophical perspective form the hard core of the critical paradigm.