

Editorials of editorship transition

Accomplishing our mission: another 10 years of experience and renewed aims

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EDITORIAL by Roberto Di Pietra (Past Editor-in-Chief)

Achieving a goal is worth more than measuring a performance, when the measure of a performance is and must remain just one of a number of ways to appreciate the degree to which a goal has been achieved.

One of the methods for measuring the extent of a Journal's distribution is certainly to monitor the movement of a series of "proxy" indicators that express it, i.e. number of subscriptions, number of submissions, number of downloads, etc.

One of the methods for gauging the scientific relevance or possible scientific impact of a journal is to trace a series of (more or less sophisticated) indicators that express it as proxies, such as the total number of citations or self-citations over the course of a year or other period (for example, 5 years).

One of the methods for understanding the quality of a journal is to identify a series of indicators that express quality as proxies, i.e. a series of structural elements (quality in terms of administration) and procedural elements (double-blind process, two or three reviews per paper, rejection rate, duration of refereeing process, existence of a backlog, etc.).

All of the indicators and proxies of quality are assumed to be important in assigning value to a scientific journal. Reference to each of these indicators entails the definition of a strategy and a series of actions that require considerable investment of financial and human resources (intellectual and scientific resources

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first and foremost). The sum total of these indicators presupposes short-term (day-to-day) activities coherent with a long-term vision/mission.

The sum total of these indicators also presupposes constant endeavor aimed at their continuous improvement. Said improvement allows the scientific journal to achieve a certain standing within the ratings or rankings regarding a specific disciplinary sphere or group of disciplinary spheres. Each rating/ranking can be defined at the national level by specific scientific communities or governing authorities or at the international level by a disparate array of subjects.

When an individual scientific journal makes the leap to attain a certain standing in a given rating/ranking, the element of competition among journals comes into play, as does the setting of caps for various levels of quality, this means that individual journals cannot assert their own quality standards for themselves, but must adhere to standards dependent on the values obtained by other journals. In short, a journal acquires value not for and in itself, but because it manages to be better than others within a specific disciplinary sphere. The competitive factor effectively ends up limiting the importance of a few indicators of quality that are presumed to be present, shifting attention entirely to a scientific journal's capacity to acquire, accept and publish articles capable of improving its standing compared to other journals, or more specifically, the number of citations it has, whatever function of scientific utility they may generate. In many academic fields, citation is considered a good proxy for the scientific utility of new knowledge contained in an article. However, this proxy is less reliable in certain fields of knowledge, such as the social sciences, for the most part.

The shift described above entails the dubious replacement of indicators intended as "means" with indicators intended as "ends", a substitution that leads us to lose sight of the true conditions of success achieved by a scientific journal.

The relevance of a scientific journal can be appreciated in terms of its capacity to establish an editorial line along which to develop a robust and extensive body of research. Said research produces important results that become the object of scientific debate engaging numerous scholars in phenomena of innovation, which has significant effects on society. The relevance of a journal can thus be translated into its being one of the vehicles for the development of scientific debate revolving around a given disciplinary sphere of any dimension.

The relevance of a journal depends on its capacity to become a point of interchange in a network through which ideas, knowledge and the results of research carried out in a scientific area pass.

A journal is a vehicle that brings a scientific community (numerically significant, national and international, disciplinary and multidisciplinary) together for discussion and debate.

Its importance as a reference point for a given scientific community means that a journal's existence and activity must beget opportunities for discussion and debate in the form of Conferences, Workshops, Symposia and Round tables. A journal gathers the results of research as they come to light. And it also stimulates research, pointing towards emerging themes and arguments with specific initiatives (editorials, literature surveys, theoretical papers, special issues).

A journal is credible if, in addition to what we have already said, it also guarantees that its articles are selected according to a rigorous refereeing process, which on the one hand can contribute to the development of papers with potential, and on the other, reject papers that fail to reach a certain level of quality of scientific research.

A journal is authoritative if, in addition to what we have already said, it can ensure the ample scientific quality of its administrators (Editor, Associate editors, Editorial Board members, ad hoc reviewers, a well-reputed publisher).

All of the factors for success mentioned above contribute to a journal's performance, measured by means of the indicators listed. This should be the logical process, and we have adhered to this logical process over nearly 10 years of editorship of the Journal of Management and Governance (JMG).

In June 2006, the Board of the AIDEA decided to bestow on me the honor and the responsibility of being named Editor-in-chief of the JMG. That moment of passage was exactly 10 years after the JMG was founded. To mark the start of my editorship, I took the opportunity to publish one of my rare editorials, and I sought to focus mainly on two points.

Firstly, I wanted to underscore AIDEA's commendable strategic decision to launch a journal that was international in terms of language, administrative structure, publisher and logic of operations. Even more important was the decision to launch a journal based on themes of management and governance considered as the multidisciplinary junction between Accounting, Banking, Business Administration, Finance, Management, Marketing, Finance, Organizational studies and Strategy. The difficulty of translating the Italian term "Economia Aziendale" in an international scenario was handled with an inspired and far-sighted solution. From 1996 to 2006, a great effort was carried out to get the JMG underway.

My second point involved a description of changes the AIDEA Board had requested of the Editor and Associate Editors for the purpose of laying out a strategy for the JMG's growth and progressive recognition within the national and international scientific community, putting all of the above-described logics into action.

This strategy required clearer definition of the Journal's Aims and Scope, which were laid out on the basis of a broad view of all the themes and disciplines that can be considered to have any sort of relationship with the term "governance". The idea was to position the JMG at the center of all those communities of scholars interested in themes of governance, whatever their specific discipline or research method, and whether from the private, public or non-profit sphere. The claim attached to this strategy was that anyone interested in governance in any way should be able to find engaging subjects in the articles published in the JMG.

This decision led to the reorganization of the Scientific Committee and the Editorial Board, which were augmented to include a larger number of members and thus to represent the various perspectives that could be gathered around the term governance. The same decision also set in motion a whole series of initiatives (conferences, symposia, workshops, special issues) that bore out the broad scope we sought to lend to the term governance. All of this with the aim of publishing articles that shed light on the multidisciplinary nature of themes of management and, above

all, governance. Over the years, this has allowed us to publish articles that developed the term governance from the perspectives of management, accounting, finance, organization, banking, and strategy studies, among others.

The result is consistent with the DNA of *Economia Aziendale*, and thus with the mandate handed down by the AIDEA. Moreover, it has allowed the Journal of Management and Governance to grow. The choices made beginning in the second half of 2006 and put into action from 2007 on gave the JMG clear visibility on the national and international scene, thanks also to the decision to make the Journal not only a vehicle for the publication of articles, but also a driver of scientific initiatives. From 2008 to today, the JMG has been a constant presence at AIDEA conferences with symposia or round tables, as well as with Editor's panels at the Academy of Management, the American Accounting Association, the Strategic Management Society, the Academy of International Business, the European Accounting Association and the European Academy of Management. The JMG organizes its own conference every 2 years, so far held in Venice (2009), London (2011), Montreal (2013) and Bolzano (2015).

All of the initiatives launched and realized have been the outcome of strong relationships not only with the members of the JMG board, but also with the wider community of AIDEA members and scholars who have increasingly identified and engaged with the Journal. The full commitment of Springer has also contributed greatly to our success. The activities carried out from 2007 to today have been positively received, as reflected in the JMG's performance indicators.

For 2 years now, the JMG has received more than 200 submissions (ordinary submissions and submissions for Special Issues) annually. Since 2012, the number of articles published per issue has been 8 or more. The acceptance rate for papers is around 12 %. Since 2012, the number of downloads per year has held steady at around 60,000, with a geographic distribution leaning towards the European, Asia-Pacific and North American contexts. The number of countries of origin of papers submitted per year is constantly growing, with a clear prevalence of European countries.

Adhering to our initial reasoning, the entire array of activities carried out over the course of the years to shed light on the vast community that revolves around the JMG can be measured by performance indicators, which have progressively confirmed the success of our results, both nationally and internationally. Our 5-year Impact Factor is 1.62, our Google Scholars H-Index is 25 and our SJR is 0.568. The JMG is in the second Scimago quartile with an H-Index of 30. All of these values, when compared with measurements from prior to 2007, confirm the Journal's substantial growth over the past 10 years.

Nationally, both in terms of ANVUR research assessment and National Scientific Assessment processes, the JMG has reached important levels—class B in the former, and class A in the latter. This allows us to assert that the Journal has become a point of reference for the entire Italian business studies community. And this was precisely what had been asked, back in June 2006, of the Editor, the Co-Editors and the entire team of Editorial Board members.

It would be foolish to announce, "Mission accomplished". It makes much more sense to turn that phrase around and alter its tense to "accomplishing our mission".

Because that is just what we are doing. We must continue down the path we have chosen, because the JMG's performance in any case depends in part on us, and in (considerable) part on competition with other journals. It is thus a process of continuous improvement and constant capacity to hit the mark as one of the Journals of reference for our composite national and international scientific community. I am certain that the new Editor, Lino Cinquini, and his updated team of co-editors and editorial board members, in close collaboration with Springer, will continue along this path, accomplishing our mission.

Roberto Di Pietra
JMG Past and Contributing Editor

EDITORIAL by Lino Cinquini (New Editor-in-Chief)

It is a honour for me, and a challenge at the same time, to take the Editorship of the Journal of Management and Governance, the official journal of the Italian Academy of "Economia Aziendale".

As recalled in his Editorial by Roberto Di Pietra, under the "management and governance" umbrella the research topics related to Italian Academy tradition have found the opportunity and possibility to be debated in the international arena, according with the logics by which the scientific debate is built and developed in our fields: this has been—and continue to be—the ultimate mission of JMG.

The past Editor has also drawn the picture of the work made for the Journal so far, and the milestones achieved. It has been a hard and enthusiast work, extremely fruitful for the development of the journal: all the community of scholars of AIDEA is grateful for the service Roberto Di Pietra has rendered in his mandate. In this respect, the experience of his Editorship is a valuable legacy to continue a renew the path of continuous improvement of JMG.

Since my appointment to the Editorship at the beginning of this year, this renewed path of improvement has been designed considering several facets, which are all needed to continuing to build momentum for the journal.

Firstly, a restructuring of the boards has been faced and accomplished, considering the need for a revision of number of components and a reshuffling, since the last one occurred in 2006.

Besides the Editor-in-Chief, the team of co-editors has been increased of one member and the new position of Past and Contributing Editor has been introduced, with the aim to bulid on the experience of the outgoing Editor during the succeeding Editorship. The Editorial Board (now Editorial and Review Board) has been increased of 15 members (from 50 to 65), The Scientific Committee has been replaced by an Advisory Board of 10 members and only one Review and Overview Editor has been settled, instead of the two in the previous JMG chart. In total 83 components now compose the JMG organizational structure (13 more than before).

All the above mentioned boards have been largely reshuffled: 38 new academics over the 83 members (45 %) have joined the journal (17 belonging to Italian universities; 21 from non-Italian). They complement the academics confirmed in

their role within JMG, that constantly have contributed in achieving the milestones mentioned before.

In managing this reshuffling, conducted with the help of the co-editors and the past editor, it has been my major effort to ensure the highest quality of the new incoming academics. The reader can find the new structure fully reported on the JMG website and in the printed issue since this number.

The team of a journal is one of the ingredients to achieve high quality of publications: I am confident that the accomplished restructuring makes the JMG prepared to face the forthcoming challenges in this direction.

Other facets come in consideration, as they constitute the components of the plan of my work in the next years.

The refocussing of the Aims and Scope is another challenge in the renewed search for improvement, maintaining “governance” at the hub of a multidimensional perspective of research on organizations. Considering the recent developments of the research in the area of management and governance covered by the journal, the team of JMG will be required to contribute to redesign the boundaries and the new insights the journal aims to address, and I wish to act to stimulate this process.

In this accomplishment, other conditions are expected to grow: from one side the positioning of the journal in the international arena, from the other side the capability to continue to address relevant topics to the community of researchers, thus benefiting the reputation of JMG.

In this respect, continuing the effort in organizing events by JMG is an aim of major importance to attract scholars, by soliciting the debate around the major and the emerging issues affecting contemporary governance in organizations from various perspectives, as well as the proper use of social networks to enhance the networking around these initiatives and reinforce the discussion on them through the web.

In gaining results along this pathway of improvement in credibility and authoritativeness, I am confident that the support and commitment of Springer and AIDEA will be constant and strong, as they have been so far. Together with the engagement of the members of the JMG board and the community of AIDEA members and scholars, these are the ingredients that makes this path a real possibility for the Journal.

Thus, I can say that the aforementioned search of “continuous improvement and the constant capacity to hit the mark as one of the Journals of reference for our composite national and international scientific community” certainly remains the cornerstone of the mission of the JMG Editor-in-Chief. My personal challenge as the new Editor-in-Chief is to discover and push forward the renewed paths and combinations of the elements previously addressed, which may allow the accomplishment of this mission of JMG in the contemporary-ever changing competitive arena of international academic journals.

Lino Cinquini
JMG Editor-in-Chief

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