A Vision for Responsible Research in Business and Management
-Striving for Credible and Useful Knowledge

A White Paper by the Community for Responsible Research in Business and Management

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NOTRE DAME
Mendoza College of Business

Anne S. Tsui, University of Notre Dame
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Glasgow, Scotland, June 21, 2017

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- The rrbm.network website is expected to open in late fall, 2017. Please contact Anne Tsui (atsui@nd.edu) for the white paper (consultation version) or for updates on the RRBM project.

White Paper Content (Consultation Version RRBM.NETWORK)

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1. Executive Summary

2. Vision 2030

3. Background

4. Principles of Responsible Science

5. Actors and Possible Actions

6. Current Research Ecosystem

7. Conclusion: Science for a Better World

Vision 2030 (White paper, p. 2)

"In 2030, business and management schools worldwide are the envy of other social science disciplines…..
…Both schools and scholars are committed to the *principles of responsible research*… …
…Policymakders routinely seek the guidance of …
…Focused area of research … Center of excellence …
… **support humanity's highest aspirations**, e.g., poverty alleviation; access to food, clean water, and education; a green environment, gender and social equality; economic growth and fair wealth distribution…
…**Business leaders and government officials** are frequent guests…
…a **transformation** that began in 2017."

- **What is the problem?**

Current Research Ecosystem: Persistent and Systemic Institutional Problems

Entrenched and inter-twined norms, practices and incentive structures at all levels of the business school.

B-school reputation based on faculty publications in journals defined as prestigious based on self-referential criteria.

Within academics, rewards are clear and self-sustaining, but benefits to the public are not so clear.

Pressure to conform – rankings and assessments - hard to change by any one group or any one school.

Research: Closed-Loop System

"External isomorphic pressures and internal path-dependent processes have created self-reinforcing feedback loops. Inputs from broader society – and the "paying public" – are shut out of this closed-loop research ecosystem. As several senior business academics have echoed, this is a self-centered, self-serving, self-feeding process, a form of academic narcissism."

McKiernan, P. and Glick, W.H. 2017. Why care about impact? EFMD Global Focus, 11 (1), 18-21.

Research: Two Core Issues

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We want research results which are credible and reliable.

Instead, we have..

- Rigorous but not reliable, non-reproducible results.
- Questionable research practices, threatening integrity.

We want knowledge which is relevant and useful for practice

Instead, we have…

- Topics of research very distant from practices or challenges in business and society.
- Publication numbers and citation counts as primary measures of success.

"Without the assurance of credible research findings, the question of relevance is irrelevant" (white paper, p. 9)

What should we do?

Propose solutions to change the current research ecosystem

Community of Responsible Research in Business and Management

Community of Responsible Research in Business & Management

- 16 Senior Scholars + 8 Deans + 4 Supporting Institutions
- 5 Disciplines - 23 Universities – 10 countries
- Collectively, they are…
    - Intellectual leaders in their fields
    - Editors of leading journals
    - Leaders of Academy & professional associations
    - Disciplinarily and regionally diversified
    - And…**they contributed to the problem that they are trying to repair!**
- White paper draft completed March 2017 for consultation

Now, many more scholars, deans, schools and academies have signed up. Will this network blossom and eventually lead the changes that will pave the way to Vision 2030?

Community for Responsible Research in Business and Management

University of Notre Dame

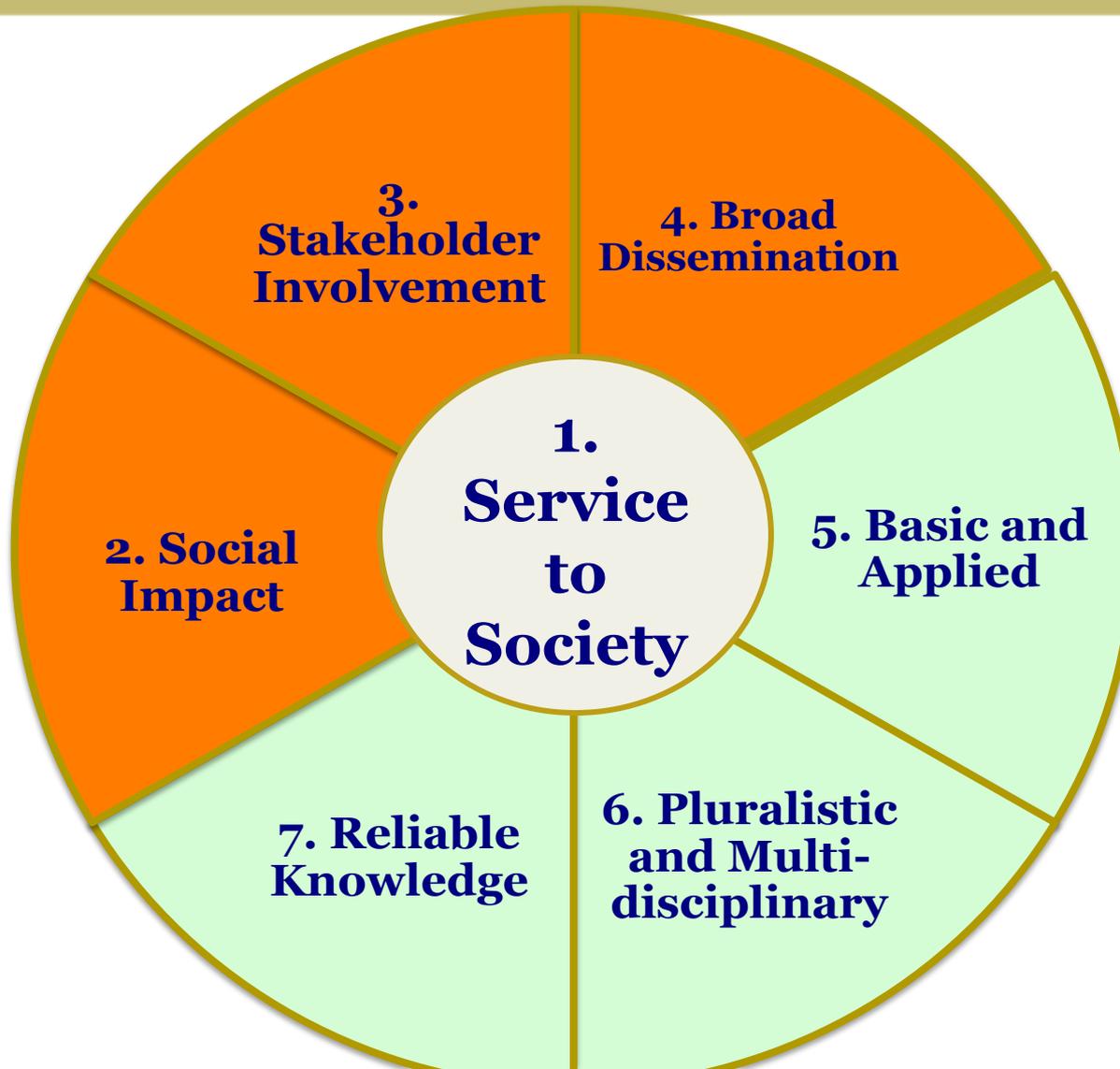|	
Accounting and Finance	Rashad Abdel-Khalik (UIUC), Franklin Allen (Imperial), Ulrich Hommel (EBS), Maureen O'Hara (Cornell)
Management	Mats Alvesson, Jerry Davis, Thomas Dyllick, Bill Glick, Peter McKiernan, Katrin Muff, Howard Thomas, Anne Tsui
Marketing	Mary Jo Bitner (ASU), David Reibstein (Wharton)
Operations Management	Serguei Netessine (INSEAD → Wharton), Chris Tang (UCLA)
Deans	Ingmar Bjorkman, Hongbin Cai, Gerry George, Xiongwen Lu, Ira Solomon, Xiaobo Wu, Bernard Yeung, Sri Zaheer
Institutions	Jonas Haertle (PRME), Dan LeClair (AACSB), Claire Preisser (ASPEN), Matthew Wood (EFMD)

What is Responsible Research in Business and Management?

- Responsible research produces credible and reliable knowledge with either direct or indirect usefulness for addressing problems important to both business and society

- Based on the belief that "business is a means for a better world"

- System level change on the research ecosystem

http://rrbm.network/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/White-paper-Vision2030for-consultation-March202017.pdf

http://rrbm.network/

Principles of Responsible Research

1. Service to Society
2. Social Impact
3. Stakeholder Involvement
4. Broad Dissemination
5. Basic and Applied
6. Pluralistic and Multi-disciplinary
7. Reliable Knowledge

Principles of Responsible Research

1. Service to Society

- *Business research aims to develop knowledge that benefits business and the broader society, locally and globally, for the ultimate purpose of creating a better world.*

2. Stakeholder Involvement

- *Business and management schools value the involvement of stakeholders who play critical roles at various stages of the research process, from selecting problems to creating impact on practice.*

3. Impact on Diverse Stakeholders

- *Business and management schools measure and reward research that has a positive impact on diverse stakeholders, especially recognizing the importance for business and society.*

Principles of Responsible Research

4. Value Both Basic and Applied Contributions

- *Business school deans, journal editors, and other stakeholders respect and recognize contributions in both theoretical and applied research.*

5. Value Plurality and Multidisciplinary Collaboration

- *Business school deans, senior leadership, ... value diversity in research themes, methods, forms of scholarship, types of inquiry, and especially interdisciplinary collaborative research to reflect the plurality and complexity of business and societal problems.*

6. Reliable Knowledge

- *Business research implements sound scientific methods and processes, acknowledging different standards of reliability in deductive and inductive work.*

7. Broad Dissemination of Discoveries

- *Business and management schools value diverse forms of knowledge dissemination that collectively advance basic knowledge and practice.*

Actors and Possible Actions Toward Vision 2030

1. *Journal editors and publishers*
2. *Scholarly association leaders*
3. *Scholars*
4. *University and school leadership*
5. *Business school associations and accreditation agencies*
6. *Funding agencies and governments*
7. *Other stakeholders: alumni, businesses, students*

Possible Actions: Scholarly Groups

1. Journal Editors and Publishers

a. Publish research important to business and society...

b. Emphasize research context, phenomena...

c. Publish replications, negative findings, and non-significant findings ....

2. Scholarly Association Leaders

a. Professional commitment...to a higher aim of service to society...

b. Identify ...opportunities for research with impact...

c. Promote applied and impactful research in their mission statements...

d. Encourage inter-disciplinary research...

3. Scholars

a.   Commit to pursue scholarship that contributes to ...

c. Follow the principles of responsible science in their roles as authors, reviewers, editors, educators, and evaluation committee members...

Possible Actions: Other Groups

4. University Leaders, Deans, Dept Heads, Senior Scholars

a. Develop a vision on responsible research…

b. Design promotion and tenure criteria….

d. Revamp the PhD program….

5. Business School Associations and Accrediting Agencies

a. Include social impact of research in assessment standards…

d. Share best practices…

6. Funding Agencies and Government

a. Broaden the criteria to include social impact for funding decisions …

b. Expand the criteria for assessing research accomplishment…

c. Funding agencies provide grants on studying grand challenges….

7. Business, alumni, NGO, students, society

Coordinated Commitment

- Commitment by all scholar-scientists
  - In all disciplines related to business
  - Join community of scholars on RRBM
- Commitment by all business schools
  - Pioneer or champion schools to lead the charge
  - Share best practices
- Commitment by professional associations
  - Develop and publish guidelines and metrics
  - Encourage problem focused research

If We "Do Nothing"...

Falling behind on the educational mission

- Fail to prepare students for the changing business landscape.

Failing to help businesses to meet the challenges of technology, globalization and emerging markets

- New industries, new organizational forms, new work arrangements, inequality, un- and under-employment, sustainability

Legitimacy and survival of business schools at risk

- Global competition (140K business schools), declining enrollment, increasing cost, MOOCs, corporate universities, talent exit, unclear return on research investment ($400K to produce an A-journal)

Call to Action…

Support …

"Responsible research
for better business
and a better world."

A Difficult Road...

Those who created the problem can solve the problem…

So, if we want to, together we can...

Yes, we can!