

JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES

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Social and Economic Inequality: Origins, Consequences, and Implications for Business and Society

Special Issue Call for Papers *Journal of Management Studies*

Special Issue Editors:

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Social and economic inequality is a major societal concern for those in mature and emerging economies alike. Nations across the political spectrum - from the United States, to Europe, to India, to China, to South Africa - increasingly seek to address the divide between those at the top and the bottom of their societies. The fact that the 85 richest people in the world have as many assets as the world's poorest 3.5 billion people brings today's social and economic divisions into stark relief. Much of this inequality is rooted in the quotidian and often invisible practices of the world's dominant social institutions. Business is not a passive observer in this setting.

Business is a key institutional player, one that may contribute to the phenomenon and certainly one that is impacted by it. Social and economic inequality both challenges business-as-usual and offers opportunities for profit. The opportunities can be seen in the rapid growth of temporary employment agencies, in short-term lending operations that now exist around the world and broadly, in the "race to the bottom" hypothesis that catches such attention. Whether such realized opportunities are good for humanity is an open question.

The goal of this special issue is to examine the nature of social and economic inequality, as well as its origins and consequences. To be sure, some may also offer ideas for change. We welcome considered solutions to any problems we identify. That said, we do not hold any preconceived assumptions that inequality is to be viewed negatively (or positively). Such a view would unnecessarily limit the range of issues we can examine here. We will say, however, that these issues are central to our understanding and conduct of business. Our hope is that by viewing structural inequality as part of, and not separate from, the business research agenda, our work will generate a better understanding of how these problems and opportunities affect business and society.

This special issue of the *Journal of Management Studies* seeks a wide range of papers that draw on diverse institutional settings, theories, and approaches to understand the different aspects of social and economic inequality. The questions asked can include - but are not limited to - the following:

- What are the historical and institutional sources of structural inequality?
- How do we explain the persistence of structural inequality? How is it legitimated? What forms of institutional work normalize it? How might it be changed?
- What role (if any) does higher education play in the generation of, or accommodation to, such inequality?
- Do the consequences of social and economic inequality differ in different institutional settings? What are the implications of these differences?
- How do corporations respond to those possible worldwide differences in inequality? Can corporations profit from social and economic inequality? If so, how?
- How are corporations negatively impacted by the presence of social and economic inequality?
- At a more micro level, what is the impact of social and economic inequality on individuals, perhaps especially as they seek employment or work in a firm?
- How might society address social and economic inequality?
- What role will entrepreneurship play in our future?
- What role can management research and education play in making a better world?

Again, these ideas are suggestive, not definitive. We welcome any manuscript that creatively addresses social and economic inequality. Such papers can include both theory development and empirical investigation. An empirical investigation can be either qualitative or quantitative. We encourage a rich range of submissions from authors who reside in a wide variety of nations.

The authors who receive a “revise and resubmit” editorial decision will be invited to attend a special conference in November 2016. We will gather as a group to learn from each other and to improve our work. While conference participation is not required, it is encouraged. The conference will take place at the Peter B. Gustavson School of Business, University of Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada.

While the JMS's daily operations are housed in the UK, please submit your papers for this special issue to Lisa O'Brien at l.obrien@tcu.edu (between March 15 and April 15, 2016 and in accordance with JMS' style guide). Please note in the subject line that your submission is a special issue submission. In the meanwhile, feel free to reach out to Garry Bruton (g.bruton@tcu.edu), Roy Suddaby (rsuddaby@uvic.ca) or Jim Walsh (jpwalsh@umich.edu) with any questions about the special issue. See [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/\(ISSN\)1467-6486/homepage/ForAuthors.html](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1467-6486/homepage/ForAuthors.html) for the *Journal of Management Studies*' author guidelines.