

Decolonising management studies

*Business schools and universities across the world are being swept up by a diversified array of decolonising movements. **Nimruji Jammulamadaka, Alex Faria, Gavin Jack, and Shaun Ruggunan** explore the practice of decolonising in management and organisation scholarship, challenging the notion of decolonising as a theoretical project. They propose reclaiming decolonising as a radical praxis of '(un)doing academia' that transforms us and the ways we understand and practice management, do research and how we produce and spread management knowledge.*



Business schools and universities across the world are being swept up by a diversified array of decolonising movements in response to the successful recolonisation championed by the neoliberal university since the 1970s. In theory, these movements aim to undo colonial structural, racial and epistemic violences we continue to experience everywhere. There was a brief lull following the political independence of colonies in a post-WWII era of decolonisation. But the five-century-long everyday struggle of the colonised has now connected with the freedom and rehumanising movements of the mid-twentieth century. Decolonising is resurging in the popular imagination, transforming not just society, business and politics, but also the neoliberal, capitalist academia. As Achille Mbembe, the noted de/anticolonial historian and thinker says, “decolonising is back on the agenda worldwide.” Whether you are a professional, school administrator, scholar, or student—and whatever your gender, race, ethnicity, or identity—you cannot afford to disengage from decolonising. Such decolonising is a multifaceted response to the everyday, internalised colonising of living.

Colonising embodies a multidimensional matrix of power that underpins intellectual, military, political, economic and material practices that consolidate and synergistically oppress, racialise, and silence the native, the other, the black, the woman, the transgender, the indigenous—who nevertheless mobilise diverse ways of decolonising. As these oppressed groups stand up to reclaim their humanness, a growing community of academics (chiefly from the Global South) are working to develop decolonial scholarship and initiatives that both decolonise and recolonise.

In our [special issue](#) of the journal [Organisation](#), we explore the practice of decolonising in management and organisation. The articles provide a range of experiences that can inform managers and academics about how they might decolonise. Here, we fundamentally value ‘the doing of decolonising,’ challenging the notion of decolonising as a theoretical project. A notion that is at once subject to Eurocentric domination yet challenges it. Reducing decolonising to a theoretical project embodies a growing diversity of critiques of Eurocentrism which remain Eurocentric even as they appropriate, contain, and thereby recolonise, decolonial ways of knowing/living/being/managing from below. Instead, we propose reclaiming decolonising as a radical praxis of '(un)doing academia' that transforms us and the ways we understand and practice management, do research and how we produce and spread management knowledge.

In our [editorial](#), we provide some answers to practitioners as well as fellow academics who grapple with the question “what do I/we need to do to decolonise?” We challenge the theoretical attitude towards decolonising to urge our colleagues everywhere to embark on decolonising. We propose decolonising movements that move beyond enhancing classroom diversity, tearing down statues, renaming schools and broadening/diversifying/colouring curricula, including:

- There is no magic bullet, or a decolonising quick fix, packaged as a “*best practice*” from the South or from ‘the natives/blacks’ that works in *all*
- *Decolonising is a process, a practice that is discovered and realized in its doing*, and not necessarily commanded by capitalist universities and business schools.
- Diversifying editorial boards and reworking the editorial review process so that the full spectrum of appropriated ideas and voices may—at least partially—be voiced, heard and read.
- Critiquing theory, while necessary, is not sufficient for undoing colonising eurocentrism in management.

- We suggest that decolonising-recolonising requires us to transcend the hierarchical binary split between theory and praxis we internalise (as it privileges white theory and knowledge makers), to the very production of knowledge and its characterisation as knowledge.
- Decolonising is not the 'after' of colonising. Instead, de- and re-colonising happen concurrently through the active mediation of de/colonised scholars like ourselves.
- We advocate for non-colour/racial-blinded relational reflexivity where an embodied person is not only aware of the immediate task to be performed in the instant situation, but also appreciative of the historical reasons and moment in which the particular task is being performed in the particular way and the violences it encapsulates and embodies, and therefore the liberatory potential incipient in the moment.
- Relational reflexivity driven by a commitment to life and caring will unveil to the doers the immediate praxis they need to engage in to foster decolonising.

This [special issue](#) brings forth an interesting collection of articles. The paper on [Governance of Marwari capital](#), offers the intermeshing of religious, economic, and social aspects of living as a mode of governing indigenous capital through unlimited liability. ["Fahlawa" as a research practice](#) advocates for developing an embodied practice towards research as a way of decolonising management research. [Braiding together student and supervisor aspirations](#) suggests developing a mindset of co-existence where unique and diverse attitudes and beliefs of research work side by side to create a beautiful braid. [From 'sick nation' to 'superpower'](#) and [The enemy within](#) emphasise the presence of the de- and recolonising tendencies within the colonized societies itself in their form of nation-states, elites and their practices aspirations. The issue also shines light on how everyday decolonising occurs within the cracks of recolonising management in the pretensions and facades cultivated and practised in workplaces such as ["For the English to See"](#). These articles provide a range of experiences that can inform managers and academics about how they might decolonise.



Notes:

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