
Editorial

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Biographical notes: Ming Guan is an Associate Professor at the School of Economics in Xuchang University and Henan University. Based on academic background of Bachelor of Science, Master of Economics and Doctor of Management, he has been dipping into multidisciplinary books and papers in the approach of research-based mode of thinking. Luckily, he has published over 50 papers in the discipline of economics, management, construction, health, education and so on.

1 A new journal of residential mobility is born

Residential mobility may be the final outcome of migration, so there is a justification for studying real phenomena from the scientific perspective; there is often a goal to explore research issues that are relevant to migration. After a period of thorough discussions and in depth preparations for a journal associated with migration and residential mobility, we are happy and proud to present to you the first issue of the *International Journal of Migration and Residential Mobility (IJMRM)*. *IJMRM* provides opportunities for publishing residential mobility-oriented manuscripts and book reviews. We are aware of the ever-expanding number of scientific journals and web-based sources of information in our field, but we are convinced that there is a need for this journal: a high-quality publication of relevant scientific information in the field of residential mobility in the broad sense, with a close link to migration and residential mobility. The table of content of this first issue, with its broad variety of high-level relevant articles, is a good illustration of the scope and direction the journal wants to pursue.

2 Research of residential mobility is evolving

Field of migration and residential mobility are growing. We see anecdotal evidence in many venues, outlets, and initiatives. For example, the number of academic and professional conferences related to the migration sector is increasing. Attendance at those meetings seems to be rising. Major academic associations continue to address the needs and interests with respect to the study of migration from disciplinary perspectives. Many countries have witnessed the launch of new migration associations. An increasing number

of faculty members and students profess an interest in the migration sector to meet their academic and career aspirations. The number of relevant journals is expanding. Despite this apparent growth, we lack solid indications of the magnitude, breadth, and scope of migration studies.

It is our ambition to develop the *IJMRM* into a prime journal, with a leading status amongst researchers, clinicians and the industry. *IJMRM* proposes and fosters discussion on the fields of migration and residential mobility, with emphasis on the implications that policy choices have on both the process and law of migration and residential mobility. *IJMRM* also focuses on the physiological, mental and behavioural responses of the people concerned. *IJMRM* offers a platform for publishing research which covers theoretical, methodological, policy and empirical studies spanning a broad range of disciplines and perspectives related to migration and residential mobility. The journal welcomes original studies, reviews on migration and residential mobility management and outcomes. We look forward to publishing clinical trials, residential mobility practice guidelines and consensus documents; especially at the European level the migration and residential mobility journal should be the obvious forum. The key factor in deciding whether or not to accept submitted work in the journal will be the evaluation of the scientific quality and content, through a peer-review process.

Over the past 40 years, the discipline of migration and residential mobility and the body of knowledge associated with it have made enormous advances. In 1970, Harris, J.R. and Todaro, M.P. published the seminal work of 'Migration, unemployment and development: a two-sector analysis', in *American Economic Review*. Since then, migration has become a main direction of regional economists. As relevance and subsequent outcome of migration, the domains of residential mobility that now dominate much of migration scholarship are still embryonic and not yet recognised as the disciplined, theory-based approaches to scholarship and migration practice that they have become. In the 40 years that have followed, questions about migration and residential mobility, and the factors responsible for such behaviour, have been deeply studied by academic scholars, medical workers and policy designers with increasingly published papers. At the same time, there have been improvements in migration and residential mobility and important advances in related social sciences such as psychology, economics, and sociology, as well as advances in research methods, including those in data collection, analysis, and statistical inference. During much of the past 40 years, migration research and knowledge have advanced by borrowing and adapting theories from some disciplines, such as transport, engineering and health. More recently, scholars have begun to develop theories more specific to migration behaviour and have added unique perspectives to those theories borrowed from other disciplines. Migration scholarship has matured as it has more and more translated empirical findings into theories of migration and residential mobility and practices. These advances in conceptual development, and the unique issues associated with contributing to theory and conceptual thinking in the field of migration, are the focus of this editorial comment.

3 Establishment of residential mobility journal

We are very fortunate to interact with a highly dedicated and professional team from our publisher, Inderscience, the largest independent publisher. The associate editor, Bingxue Han, recruited internationally based on their complementary skills and knowledge are a

dynamic and enthusiastic team, with an established track record as researchers. Together with the editorial board, composed of internationally leading researchers in the field of migration and residential mobility in the broad sense, they will shape and guard the high scientific level of journal content. The most indispensable factor in the road to success for a journal are the authors. We would like to invite you, researchers and scientists in our field, from all over the world, to submit your interesting findings to this journal. In addition, to authors the Journal will offer a fair peer-review process, swift decision making and, in case of acceptance, rapid online publication and high visibility and accessibility of your work by your colleagues and peers.

The goal of *IJMRM* is to publish reports of

- a original research
- b literature reviews
- c descriptive studies of problems and issues the field faces
- d advances in research methods.

Research should be interpreted broadly to include any replicable method. Published manuscripts should focus on topics related to residential mobility, as well as on research methods.

4 Trend of residential mobility studies

IJMRM is interested in both theoretical building and theoretical testing. We urge authors of empirical articles to devote considerable energies toward describing causal mechanisms and causal structures.

Empirical studies are very often about a limited number of products and industries. Thus, there is a real challenge for migration scholars to create generalisable knowledge. Good theory building and theory testing are ways to try and achieve such a goal. Good theory does more than describe; it identifies causal structures that provide the basis for forward prediction and control. It provides explanations of migration phenomena – for example, why individuals behave as they do, why different scenarios evolve in particular ways over time, and why specific institutions and practices emerge. They are only better at limiting the tests of their predictions to carefully controlled environments where a test is possible but also bound by the testing environment. Strong theories are simple and elegant, they provide rich descriptions, and they provide the basis for testable predictions in controlled circumstances.

Migration theories builder must provide a rich description in the text so as to explain the underlying causal mechanisms and key processes. A set of boxes and arrows reflect a compelling logic about the reasons why the particular set of variables, their relationships, and the direction of their relationships are supported by empirical research. Journal authors should describe why this particular model is more compelling than any other configuration of variables. Authors could develop the logic behind specific, testable predictions about outcomes. In many respects, modern theories are rather complex, and it is unrealistic to expect a definitive test of a specific theory within the confines of a single journal article. Efforts to develop such theories must be compelling, and there have been few real attempts. However, such theoretical developments represent important and

creative efforts to integrate vast amounts of empirical data; they should not be held to a standard that also requires empirical proof of all relationships.

Strong theory may appear to be a particular challenge in residential mobility which has its roots in application and practice. If residential mobility is to take its rightful place as social science, it must move beyond these applied roots to focus on more general questions. Integration of data and empirical findings across behaviours, situations, specific migration, and specific residential mobility are critical for theory development. The individual scenario or application may be informative, but it does not build theory. Neither does review of numerous individual studies of different migration and applications alone result in a theory. Rather, theory emerges first from the integration of findings and ultimately results from a willingness to step away from the underlying data to take a creative leap that produces insights not to be found in any individual study.

Good theoretical work is far more difficult to do and requires far greater creativity than most empirical research. Migration researchers have made significant progress over the past 40 years, but, if the discipline is to play an important role in the human society and influence human activities, it must accelerate its efforts to create its own unique theories of human and their phenomena. *IJMRM* is a welcoming and nurturing place for such work.

5 Fruit of collective endeavour

We realise that editing a journal is a collective endeavour, one that is entirely dependent on the interest of authors to submit manuscripts for publication, the goodwill of countless people to review them in a timely and expert manner, and the commitment of the authors to work with the reviewers and the editors to revise and improve their manuscripts. We also rely on the ongoing dedication of the publisher to bring all these efforts to timely fruition. We are grateful to past authors and reviewers, and we look forward to your continuing support in submitting your best work to *IJMRM* and reviewing for the journal.

We have had the honour and pleasure to appreciate positive comments and encouragements from editorial board of other journals. Their names appear on the inside cover. With each issue, we will introduce the members of our editorial board, a few at a time, starting in this issue, with a brief introduction to the new editors. This issue marks the beginning of our term as editors of *IJMRM*, and it is with a sense of privilege and responsibility that we start this journey. We hope that you will continue to take a strong ownership stake in *IJMRM*, and we look forward to working with you in advancing the journal. We welcome your comments and suggestions regarding improvement of the journal. We are keenly aware of the myriad ways in which high-quality scholarship can inform and shape.

Providing each of these articles with constructive and timely reviews requires the collective contributions of a strong team of associate editors, editorial board members, and guest reviewers. We are grateful for their clear commitment to the journal and to the field of education as a whole. Thank editorial members for their generous service – we are confident that *IJMRM* will provide a prominent voice in the fields of migration and residential mobility. We also thank those who have contributed their works for publication consideration in *IJMRM*. We appreciate your effort and understanding as we continue to extend the rigor, relevance, and reach of this already noteworthy journal.

The collection of articles included within this first issue of 2014 addresses a range throughout the world. As you will read, these articles reflect just a sampling of the topical and methodological diversity that remains a particular strength of the journal. We encourage you to regularly visit the journal's website (<http://www.inderscience.com/jhome.php?jcode=ijmrm>) to explore the array of forthcoming articles already published in advance online.

Furthermore, *IJMRM* left us enthusiastic and excited about the strength, depth, and breadth of the research undertaken in our field. *IJMRM* had been a wonderful outlet for your work over the years. We are honoured the committee recommended. We are humbled by the responsibility we have to *IJMRM* readers and the organisation. Several outstanding former editors paved the way for our editorship, including Yanling Wang, Yaohui Zhao, Awad Mataria and Rita Giacaman. They gave the field a journal with visibility and impact. We are grateful for their contributions, we acknowledge their outstanding work, and we hope to maintain the quality and relevance of the journal. We began processing manuscripts in February of 2013, the amount of work involved in editing the journal is tremendous.

We have reduced the number of editorial board members and invited new individuals to the board to better represent the methods and the content of our field. We purposefully added early career professionals to the board. We are grateful to all who served in the past and we deeply appreciate those who agreed to continue on *IJMRM*'s editorial board. An outstanding cadre of new associate editors has joined our editorial team: Ana Dammert, Bingxue Han, Marwan Khawaja, Dale Mortensen, Maurice Schiff, Zhijie Yan, and Xiaobo Zhang. They constitute a mix of experienced associate editors and those who are newer to the editorial board. We are grateful to them for being willing to help us in this important endeavour. They will assist the editors and associate editors in judging the adequacy of statistical analyses in submitted manuscripts and will make specific suggestions to authors about their analyses. We are grateful for their expertise and believe it will serve the field well.

6 Authors' attractness of residential mobility

Through *IJMRM*, we have shared valuable research, discussed theories, learned from each other's successes (and, at times, failures), and sparked rich debate with a variety of commentary from experts around the globe. It has been our goal to provide an outlet for our community to connect with one another and looking into 2014 we are making some enhancements to continue to build upon this goal. Prior to publication, engaging titles and abstracts are vital to the review process. The potential academic readership of *IJMRM* may reside in disciplinary silos, and locating relevant articles outside the academic discipline is ever more dependent on title and key words. We are committed to working with authors to provide suggestions for titles and key words for accepted articles to ensure that the article accurately reflects the content of the manuscript as well as increases the likelihood of appearing in electronic data base searches. *IJMRM* was originally established to provide access to review articles summarising the current state of knowledge across every aspect of the migration and residential mobility.

7 Reviewers' contributions is valuable

We offer a blind peer review. This process is time-consuming and puts a great burden on all individuals involved, for both authors and reviewers. Peer review merits reflection. Many of you spend significant time, voluntarily, at the expense of other obligations, conducting reviews and being pressured by editors to respond. Authors devote an enormous amount of time and energy to responding to the queries, suggestions and critiques put forth by the anonymous reviewers. Reviewers are seen as being 'gatekeepers' of what goes into our journal. We expect reviewers to recommend for publication the best research, given our limited space in the journal.

Although the blind peer-review may lead to reviewers behaving maliciously or irresponsibly, and it may insulate reviewers from accountability, it still survives today because like democracy, which although the 'worst form of government', outranks all other forms that have been attempted. Here, especially, is where editors play a key role in monitoring the reviews we receive and in adjudicating when there is conflict or censoring when there is malice.

As editors, we have to make choices. Choice is relatively easy when congruence exists among the blind reviews we commission; for the most part, we accept such unanimous advice, unless we judge the quality of the reviews below average. In this case, we will commission further reviews, much to the chagrin of the authors as it increases the length of time before authors receive decisions. Reviews of a manuscript can range from a summary rejection based on the substantive nature of the content, whereas others suggest a revise and resubmit and provide a long and meticulous list of changes suggested, and yet others recommend acceptance with minor revisions. In this instance, we may either commission another review or make judgments based on our rereading of the paper and the validity and quality of the reviews. Even after the initial reviews have been received, manuscripts will often benefit from a second or third round of blind reviews before they are ready for publication. Yet, we have seen enough to know that the blind peer-review process enhances the quality of the manuscripts we receive for publication in *IJMRM*.

Manuscripts that are more controversial will sometimes provoke belligerent reviews. For scholarly advancement, however, such controversy is indispensable. Debate is the lifeblood of our profession. The culture of 'publish or perish' for academics pushes the supply of papers and impacts the burden of reviewing. As authors and editors, we rely on reviewers, and this relationship instils the norm of fairness and reciprocity of authors to do their share of blind reviews.

8 Details of reviewing process

We are highly cognizant of the fact that the reviewing process goes almost entirely unrewarded. Hence, as editors, we want to set one point straight: We cannot applaud our reviewers enough, we thank you for taking the time and effort in giving us quality reviews which ensure the quality of our journal. In recognition of your efforts, we have decided to award an annual prize at the *IJMRM* conference to the individual reviewer who has frequently, diligently, and promptly provided quality manuscript reviews to *IJMRM*. Thank you again to all our reviewers!

This issue carries many anonymous colleagues who during the last year have volunteered their valuable time and expertise in reviewing manuscripts for *IJMRM*. We thank them for the indispensable service they have provided as referees, and we celebrate their willingness to participate in the intellectually challenging process that constitutes the life blood of scholarly and scientific publication – peer review. We also would like to take this opportunity to demystify peer review at *IJMRM*.

IJMRM has long been committed to the highest standards of peer review. *IJMRM*'s goal is to be the best journal of its kind in the field of migration and residential mobility. We seek to publish the highest-quality articles, reporting the most important and meritorious research, providing the strongest evidence base for policy and practice, and introducing the most innovative ideas, while at the same time serving as a forum for commentary and discussion of critical issues in the field of migration and residential mobility. Making peer review efficient and effective is difficult for all journals and depends on the volunteer service of editors and referees. *IJMRM* faces some unique challenges in conducting peer review because of the breadth of its mission.

The purposes of peer review of manuscripts submitted to *IJMRM* are to select and prioritise articles with promise and then to improve their quality through the peer review process. That process begins when an author submits a manuscript to *IJMRM*. Manuscripts are submitted at the ScholarOne website, which is managed by Inderscience Publications. Each manuscript, whether unsolicited or solicited, is first reviewed by the editorial manager for completeness and to ensure the manuscript meets prescribed style elements and other requirements of submission before going to the editor-in-chief for substantive pre-review.

The next step of the *IJMRM* review process is the selection of referees. Initially, editors can identify potential reviewers from the *IJMRM* reviewer database using keywords that authors enter on submission to the manuscript management system and by searching for the names of scholars whose work has yielded relevant publications on similar topics or populations. Reviewers can note that a paper is of high quality and importance or that it is methodologically strong (or weak) and contributes much or very little to what is already known.

The editor-in-chief reviews each paper and advances to full review only those manuscripts that, in his judgment, promise to make a significant contribution to the scholarship of theory, practice, or policy in behavioural science, health, education, and public issues. Manuscripts are of high quality and potentially more compatible with the scope and mission of the publication.

Editorial decisions are largely dependent on the reviewers' recommendations. Reviewers' comments and criticisms serve both to justify the recommendations and improve the manuscripts. Editors are guided by the reviewers' strengths, weaknesses, and limitations of the strengths of the paper, what the paper contributes to the research and theory base, and why it should or should not be accepted for publication. In general, reviewers should treat each manuscript as if it had been written by a valued colleague, and the comments should be designed to improve the paper so that it has the best possible chance for acceptance. Most authors appreciate constructive criticism that enables them to improve their work, whether or not the paper is ultimately accepted for publication.

Reviewing manuscripts demands a great deal of work, a high level of expertise in the topic of the work, and focused attention to details of writing and methodological strengths and weaknesses. Reviewing can serve to improve the reviewer's own work, by helping him or her to become a more precise writer, to improve the design of his or her

own studies, to develop new ideas, and to expand current working knowledge of the literature. *IJMRM* journal has a proud tradition of publishing high-quality articles, which is due in large part to the commitment of the referees who have reviewed for the journal and a system of peer review. Acquiring high standards and a high impact factor, which has largely trended upward for *IJMRM*, depends greatly on the quality of peer review. But, like most journals, *IJMRM* faces major challenges in identifying enough professionally qualified and available reviewers who are able to respond to our requests. In addition, because of the proliferation of new journals, there are now many scholarly publication outlets and the competition for good manuscripts is intense. Despite these challenges and the shifting landscape of academic publishing, *IJMRM* strives to provide an exceptional and expeditious review experience for both our authors and referees because the quality and integrity of peer review remains the key to our success.

9 Importance of readers' recommendation

Throughout our tenure with *IJMRM*, we will reserve the opening editorial space to provide annual updates on the state of the journal and introduce special topic issues. As we look ahead, we invite readers to recommend ideas for relevant and timely special topic issues. We hope you enjoy the articles that are featured in this issue of *IJMRM* and find them to be informative to your work. And we encourage you to submit your most compelling scholarship to the journal.

We focus on residential mobility to do something rarely done in academia. We are recruiting authors who, for the most part, knew the residential mobility field to comment on specific issues and to give the field the benefit of their wisdom about future directions. We will announce subsequent topical issues in the future issues of the journal. If you want to nominate topics, send them to us. We plan to publish regularly short comment and news on practices. The field of migration and residential mobility contains outstanding scholars who have lines of important work and who have advanced the methods by which research is conducted. We want to publish articles describing those advances. Such papers have been published in *IJMRM* and we think this practice provides us with an outstanding opportunity to improve research in migration and residential mobility specifically as well as the broader fields of movers' behaviours and expectations generally. Thus, if you have developed an advance in research methods (measurement, design, or analysis), please write a manuscript describing the advance and submit it for review. Such manuscripts would be welcomed by the readers who are active researchers rather than practitioners or methodologists.

This first issue for 2014 has a wide coverage of topics and countries. We are excited to let our readers and authors know of some special theme issues of the journal that are now in the planning process. The special issue topics will be as follows: economic, medical and/or demographic issues, health issues, health issues, and policy design. If you wish your manuscript submission to be considered for the next issues, please let us know in your cover letter so that we can be sure to put your effort in the hands of the appropriate guest editor. After acceptance of papers, the journal followed its usual policies for journal style and copyediting.

2014 begins as an exciting year for the *IJMRM*. This *IJMRM* issue is the first published by Inderscience. If you are a migration reader, we hope you appreciate the new look and feel; if you're a new reader, brought to the *IJMRM* pages via Inderscience's

network, we welcome you. Issue 1.1 presents five articles that provide a glimpse at both the breadth and the depth of contemporary residential mobility. Feel free to send us your comments as well as joining us at the editorial board meetings at the annual conference of *IJMRM*. We hope that readers of the Journal will consider *IJMRM* as a potential journal to which they might submit their own original research.

10 Effort of editorial office

We greatly appreciate the time and effort editorial board members and guest reviewers have each invested in increasing the rigor, relevance, and reach of the journal. We thank the numerous authors who turn to *IJMRM* as a compelling venue for sharing their scholarly work with the field. Moreover, we now publish all accepted articles in advance online (<http://www.inderscience.com/jhome.php?jcode=ijmrm>) to ensure rapid dissemination to the field. In the upcoming year, we will showcase a special issue entitled healthy migration. This special issue – edited by Bingxue Han – will provide a forum for leaders in the field to engage in renewed discussion and debate about the methods and merits of migration single-subject research. This special issue will be published nearly a quarter of a century after this debate was first launched in the pages of *IJMRM*. If you have an intriguing idea for a future special issue topic, we encourage you to contact us to discuss your idea. In the meantime, please visit <http://www.inderscience.com/jhome.php?jcode=ijmrm> to explore the many excellent and forthcoming articles already published in advance online publication. We close with an invitation to readers and contributors to provide feedback as we strive to further improve the rigor, relevance, and reach of *IJMRM*.

The *IJMRM* is comprised of seventeen members whose research abilities are of the highest calibre and whose interests are complimentary to those of the editors. Upon request, members of the *IJMRM* provide direct editorial advice within their areas of expertise, thus deepening and broadening the knowledge and experience available to the editorial team, and ensuring that we continue to provide high-quality feedback to authors, and content to readers. The *IJMRM* compliments the strengths of the Editors, so it will likely change along with the editorship of the journal in the future.

In addition to expertise, we have tried to ensure that the makeup of *IJMRM* has a balance of men and women, and shows strong international representation. Members hail from Asia, Europe, Africa, North America, Oceania, the UK, India and South America. On the inside cover you can take a look at the list of *IJMRM* members; we feel they offer both continuity and fresh perspectives. We would like to thank all the members of the inaugural *IJMRM* for stepping into these roles and continuing a culture of support, engagement, and excellence within the Journal. We look forward to refining and improving the functioning of the *IJMRM* in service of the *IJMRM*. This is an exciting time for the *IJMRM*, which continues to benefit from the support not only of the *IJMRM*, but most importantly of our readers, reviewers, and authors.

Our aim is to take the journal forward in terms of its abilities to keep its readership stimulated by original work, kept up-to-date with the residential mobility. For these changes to be effective we would like this to be a two-way process with the readership. We welcome letters about what we publish and will, when possible, publish them. We also welcome your original articles that we undertake to rapidly subject to peer review. While writing this editorial, 2014 has just started and it is a time when many consider

New Year resolutions to incentivise personal change. May we suggest that, regardless of whether you have made a resolution or not you resolve to keep as up-to-date as possible in this rapidly changing area or, better still, share your knowledge with your peers through *IJMRM*. Join us, talk with us, and engage with us as we continue to grow and improve. Our community of readers and authors have been the driving force behind the success of *IJMRM*. We hope you will continue sharing your praises, concerns, suggestions, and ideas – the future of the journal depends on your voice.

11 The journal's future development

Success of a new journal depends on many factors, and builds on help from many different angles. The strong support and commitment from the Editorial Office provide the journal with an indispensable head-start. As Editor, I am committed to working alongside Bingxue Han with authors, reviewers, readers and the editorial board to do all we can to ensure the journal maintains its relevance in this context. I remain eternally grateful to our editorial board members and independent reviewers for being so willing to offer peer review. The journal's Managing Editor Bingxue Han continues to offer essential support and insights, and Inderscience colleagues are a pleasure to work with.

I hope that *IJMRM* has helped to provide a platform for geographers and other researchers to publish and promote work that is publicly engaged and impactful in a variety of ways. Reflecting back on what we have published in 2014, I remain cheered by the diversity of contributions from scholars in the UK and the wider world. It has also been a good year, from my point of view, in terms of residential mobility.

It is one of our goals as editors to raise the impact factor of *IJMRM* and thereby its ranking and stature among journals dealing with social issues. Again, we rely on you, our authors and readers, for sending us your best manuscripts, citing recent *IJMRM* articles in your published research, and promoting our journal and your research at every opportunity: at conferences, at your university and among your colleagues. We all benefit when you do. On behalf of the editorial team, I hope you enjoy this inaugural issue from Inderscience.

To bring new vitality into the journal and build leadership for the journal's future, we consult top researchers and famous editors. We anticipate some of these individuals will become the editorial board, associate editors, and editors of the future.

To ensure that *IJMRM* continues to be the most highly respected scholarly journal, as well as the most widely consulted, we will work to uphold *IJMRM*'s ranking as the top journal in its field, increase its global reach (in submissions and readership), raise its impact factor.

When this journal began publication in 2014, *IJMRM* will feature theoretical and empirical studies in voluntarism. In 2015, due to an increased interest in the field with a concomitant increase in manuscripts submitted, *IJMRM* retains 'quarterly' and will be expanded from four to six issues per year. As we assume the editorship we have a healthy backlog of articles to carry us forward. Indeed the next several issues have been shepherded by the outgoing editors although our names appear as editors.

Finally, we hope you will enjoy this first issue of the *IJMRM* journal and we are convinced that with your submission of high quality contributions this Journal will soon be recognised as an important Journal in what we feel is one of the most interesting and exciting areas in migration and residential mobility. Specifically, we concentrate on

migration theory as it is developed and presented in academic journals. Conceptual and theoretical articles are arguably the most difficult types of scholarship to craft in a compelling fashion that make a significant contribution to the discipline. We would like to see more strong conceptual and theoretical articles published in *IJMRM*, but not at the expense of or as a substitute for strong empirical work. Neither do we wish to suggest that *IJMRM* will be an easy place to publish half-baked conceptual articles. *IJMRM* welcomes strong conceptual and theoretical articles, but these articles will be rigorously reviewed and will need to meet a high standard. Nevertheless, we want to encourage such work, precisely because it is both difficult to execute well and can provide a significant contribution to the field. In this editorial, we offer some suggestions to guide the crafting of such work. In doing so, we rely on our experiences as scholars, editors, and review board members. We begin by discussing some attributes related to ‘strong theory’, and then we describe some common problems associated with theory development. We conclude with some prescriptions regarding the writing, reviewing, and evaluation of conceptual articles that may be of use to journal readers, reviewers, and authors.