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Bauer, Tilman

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Reflections on Standards for Responsible – and High-Quality – Research: A Call for Peace

Tilman Bauer

Peace researcher, Doctoral candidate, Aalto University School of Business

inbox@tilmanbauer.eu

Abstract

The essay explores the concept of responsible research and its principles vis-à-vis standards of high-quality research. Responsible research fulfills standards of high-quality academic research and, at the same time, contributes positively to society. Standards of high-quality research include the definition of a relevant research problem, scientific due diligence, rigor, coherence, validity and soundness, contribution, and readability and style. As for positive contributions to society, I argue that any positive impact, or service, to society can have, in substance, the meaning of contributing to one or more aspects of peace. The expanded concept of peace outlined in the essay offers a transrational consolidation of epistemic and social values. It is, therefore, at the heart of responsible research.

Keywords: Principles of research; Socially responsible science; Business; Peace; Transrationality; New paradigm; Epistemic and social values; Pluralism

Introduction

The essay builds on the "ideal of socially responsible science" (Kourany 2010, 68) and attempts to draw a mental map of the interrelated nature of epistemic/scientific and non-epistemic/social values (Tsui 2016). Responsible research is a "joint satisfaction account of the role of epistemic and social considerations, that is, it is committed to the principle of the joint necessity of evidence and social values" (Brown 2013, 68). In other words, responsible research aims, by definition, to fulfill standards of high-quality academic research and, at the same time, contribute positively to society. As Anne Tsui (2016, 10) explains: "Research in business schools, by necessity, is subject to assessment by both epistemic values (does the research qualify as sound science) and social values (does the research produce useful knowledge)." This is at the heart of engaged scholarship (Van de Ven 2007).

But what exactly does it mean to conduct "responsible research" in the context of business and management scholarship? What is the meaning of, and philosophical basis for, expecting research to be of service to society? How can a study concretize its positive impact in relation to an ultimate benefit to society? What makes research "good," "credible," and "responsible?" To outline possible answers to these questions, I start with an overview of the responsible research concept. Next, I juxtapose responsible research principles with general standards of high-quality research to show their interrelation. Finally, I ask what the requirement of "service to society" means.

Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, the concept of peace may be useful here. With the help of literature from the academic discipline of Peace Studies, a guideline through the responsible science axiom is presented. The aim is to offer peace as a philosophical basis for further improving the concept of responsible research as an alternative to the ideal of value-free science. Hereby, I attempt to outline an answer to Kristina Rolin's (2012) and Matthew J. Brown's (2013) concerns that responsible research, in its current form (Kourany 2010), does not sufficiently define the role and source of social values in scientific inquiry. Peace may provide an answer, as "science for peace" could represent the next step in the evolution of responsible research.¹

Responsible Research: A Brief Overview²

The earliest mention of "responsible research" dates back to the 19th-century German microbiologist and Physiology/Medicine Nobel Prize winner Robert Koch, who acknowledged the help of his colleagues with these words: "Without this many sided co-operation it would not have been possible to have pushed this difficult and *responsible* research so far forward [...]" (Koch 1890, 301, emphasis added). What does Koch's "responsible" characterization mean? In researching remedies for tuberculosis, Koch seems to refer to the societal importance of his research – which cannot be overstated. As the National Research Council (2009, 21) states: "It is not an exaggeration to attribute increased human lifespan and better human health to the research of legions of microbiologists and other biomedical researchers [such as Robert Koch] on the biology of bacteria and viruses and the toxins they produce."

Societal impact, improving human health, and scientific breakthroughs, however, go beyond dictionary definitions of "responsibility," which tend to emphasize accountability, obligation, attributability, rationality, causality, or trustworthiness. The National Research Council defines the researchers' responsibility, in the context of microbiology, merely as "concern for safety and security and implementation of protective measures [in the laboratory] that minimize risk" (ibid., 21-22). We can see that responsible research has indulged in praising societal significance (since Koch) and, on the other hand, a more down-to-earth aspect to it: minimizing risk. Further, in addition to risk minimization, having positive impacts, considering implications, engaging stakeholders, and emphasizing transparency are principles associated with responsibility in research and innovation (RRI), as advocated by the European Union (see, for example, Sutcliffe 2011). Responsible research can be conceptualized in terms of responsible means, ends (intentions), and effects of research.

Fundamental to human responsibility are the assumptions of capacity and free will. Diana Mertz Hsieh (1995), referring to the Aristotelian notion of moral responsibility, states: "Because at least some human action is self-caused, rather than solely a product of instinct or external forces, humans can be held responsible for those self-caused actions." What are those deliberate actions? Aristotle (1999) explores this in his *Nicomachean Ethics*: any deliberate action is the result of a desire. If we generalize human action to the farthest, one can say the ultimate desire of any human action is to increase happiness, or *eudaimonia*.

What we have learned so far is that responsible research is based on the decision to aim at doing good and avoiding harm – and to aim for excellence – because this helps more people to

¹ I'd like to thank the participants of the Responsible Business Research Seminar at Tampere University, Finland, for their helpful questions following my presentation on March 13, 2019.

² The contribution of Farid Karimi to an earlier version of this overview is gratefully acknowledged.

have a good life in the Aristotelian sense.³ Indeed, how research could serve society has been a matter of discussion for much of the 20th century. For instance, since contributions from the scientific community were associated with advancements in the technology of warfare, “there was a strong demand [in the 1960s and 1970s] that science be more effectively organized and mobilized to produce solutions. Hence attention shifted towards mission-orientated, ‘relevant’ research” (Johnston and Buckley 1990, 379; Johnston 1988; Smith 1990).

The question then follows: what research is “relevant” for society? The Vienna Circle, a group of eminent scientists and philosophers (including Albert Einstein) in the early 20th century, advocated a socially engaged science aimed at social reform (Kourany 2003 and 2010). According to Alvin M. Weinberg (1969), research is relevant for society if it is aligned with society’s values. However, it is critical to note that Weinberg discusses the value of research for society in the context of developing criteria for governmental funders’ resource allocation decisions. The implication of this is in contrast with the maxim of free will mentioned above. Another aspect is the ideal of judgment free of personal prejudice. Max Weber (1949) postulates that theories and facts should not be accepted based on one’s personal biases. Weber argues that this part of scientific research should be free of personal interests and values. Whether all steps of the research process can be value-free is a long-standing debate.

Proponents of responsible research (Kourany 2003, 2010, and 2013; Tsui 2016; Kincaid, Dupré, and Wylie 2007)⁴ contest the view that science should be value-free. Omar Swartz (1997) argues in his inspiring book *Conducting Socially Responsible Research* (in the context of communication studies and leftist critiques of capitalism but applicable more generally to humanities and social sciences) that scholars have the ability and obligation to work towards the betterment of the human condition in society. Swartz mentions deconstructing and changing those discourses that foster inequity and exploitation. This means that “such scholarship de-emphasizes ‘theory construction’ as the normative goal for our professional practices and places a greater emphasis on disseminating a sociopolitical critique in outlets designed to reach an audience wider in scope than that of our current journals” (ibid., 2). Such responsible practice starts with minimizing or keeping the use of jargon sensible and avoiding “epistemological totalitarianism,” – “the belief that scholarship is only ‘valid’ if it produces value-free statements describing a mind-independent empirical world” (ibid.). Further, Swartz argues that scholarship can be “systemic” in the sense that it “ground[s] its appeal or claims of validity in a project of transcendence or universal commensuration” (ibid., 3) and that it “should serve as a revolutionary ‘tool’ and seek as its ‘end’ a cultural condition reducing marginality and human suffering” (ibid., 4).

Interestingly, Swartz also claims that “the end of philosophy” (ibid., 33) would allow us to transcend pure rationality and create positive social impacts through research. Swartz’s underlying reasoning is that, for research to be responsible, scholars need to depart from the idea of one truth and recognize “power” as a means to change cultural discourse. For Swartz (who reviewed epistemological trends and cited postmodernists, such as Michel Foucault, Richard Rorty, and Calvin Schrag), this is a detachment of the “one objective truth” in favor of social progress. However, proclaiming “the end of philosophy” does not reject or critique philosophy *per se* but advocates transcending the limits of analytic philosophy. This is in line

³ I owe this thought to the lectures of the Business Ethics course (“Yritysvastuu ja -etiikka”) taught by Santiago Martinez at Aalto University in Espoo, Finland, in January 2019. However, later in this essay, I will distance myself from the Aristotelian notion of the one objective good.

⁴ For defenses of the value-free ideal, see Kaplan (1964), Lacey (1999), and Betz (2013).

with postmodern philosophy and, ultimately, transrationality (Dietrich 2012, see the third section of this essay). Swartz (1997, 41-42) concludes:⁵

In recognizing the cultural contingencies surrounding the relationship between “knowledge” and “power,” disciplinary scholars can begin to recognize the importance research has for serving the ends of human necessity. For Rorty (1989), such academic or professional commitment to society is associated with “moral progress” among the intelligentsia of this country.

Tsui (2016) concludes that, in social sciences, conducting value-free research is neither practically possible, nor desirable. While Swartz develops the concept of responsible research in the context of communication studies, and while Janet Kourany (2003, 2010, and 2013) amends philosophy of science with the feminist quest for equality, the present book (*Responsible Research for Better Business*) concerns the field of business and management scholarship. Here, research should be relevant, useful, and credible; it should contribute, for example, to the UN Sustainable Development Goals or policy goals of the EU. Joyce Tait (2017) argues that this may lead to political bias. The international community for Responsible Research in Business and Management (RRBM) with 85 cosigners, 70 partnering organizations, and 1087 endorsers (as of November 2019), formed in 2014, argues in its Position Paper (Community for Responsible Research in Business and Management, 2017, 1) that research should be “useful [for] address[ing] problems important to business *and* society” (emphasis added). Underlying this is a critique which addresses the “research-practice gap” (Tsui 2016, 13) – that scholars have overemphasized theory construction at the expense of societal relevance.

This discussion distinguishes between research that is merely relevant for business and research that is relevant to wider society. The trajectory entails three stages: first, the decade-long accusation that theory was not relevant to practice (Hambrick 1994); second, the recognition that the research-practice gap should be closed or at least narrowed (Cummings 2007); and finally, the idea that research should be relevant to both business practitioners and society. Thomas G. Cummings (ibid., 359) arrives at this conclusion: “As scientists, [...] it is our duty and responsibility to make sure that our knowledge makes the world a better place.” The RRBM network seeks to re(dis)cover the purpose of business research as being a force for good. *Figure 1* presents RRBM’s seven principles of responsible research.

Figure 1: The seven Principles of Responsible Research⁶ (Source: Author’s creation based on RRBM)

Improve the Usefulness of Knowledge

- Principle 1 — Service to Society
- Principle 2 — Stakeholder Involvement
- Principle 3 — Impact on Stakeholders
- Principle 7 — Broad Dissemination

Improve the Credibility of Knowledge

- Principle 4 — Valuing Both Basic and Applied Contributions
- Principle 5 — Valuing Plurality and Multidisciplinary Collaboration
- Principle 6 — Sound Methodology

⁵ Prof. Omar Swartz states in a personal correspondence on March 28, 2019: “What you wrote [...] is a good summary of my position. Today, I would not talk so stiffly in terms of philosophy [...] but that was certainly true in the context of the book [published in 1997].”

⁶ The seven Principles of Responsible Research are further described on the RRBM website: <https://rrbm.network/position-paper/principles-of-responsible-science>

Standards of High-Quality Research vis-à-vis Principles of Responsible Research

What are the general standards of any research that make it of “high quality?” This section identifies a set of standards that satisfy both the requirements of rigorous academic research practice and those of responsible research. To start with, any research aims at creating new knowledge based on an initial understanding of reality (phenomena), the study of extant literature (prior theory), and the utilization of empirical or non-empirical evidence (data/arguments) and reason. In other words, this requires the following steps:

1. Knowing the field,
2. Understanding what is known, and
3. Using empirical and/or theoretical argumentation.

Just presenting the results (evidence) is insufficient. One must also explain “*why* the observed relationships might hold” (Langley and Abdallah 2011, 210) in order to “deepen understanding” (ibid.) and to offer various possible explanations (cf. “*verstehen*” in Dilthey [1924] 1990).

The above conceptualization of research allows us to recognize that quantitative, qualitative, and nonempirical⁷ research is (in theory) fundamentally based on the same principles and that common characteristics can be found. The primary characteristic that applies to all forms of research is that of rigor (cf. Gioia, Corley, and Hamilton 2013). A critique of (nonquantitative) research lacking rigor can apply to both qualitative and non-empirical research, which distances itself from the traditional quantitative/scientific paradigm in which rigor is presumably ensured through the “objective” nature of it. In qualitative research, there is at least some qualitative data to be analyzed. Non-empirical research, however, rests entirely on the researcher’s ability to present logical arguments. In a way, philosophical researchers are, therefore, even more exposed to critiques questioning rigor as they cannot “hide” behind their data. This does not mean that philosophical research would not itself follow the model of natural sciences to be as “objective” as possible.

Rigorous data analysis allows presenting evidence for, or against, some view. However, this implies that, if the analysis was “rigorous,” the results are “objective,” or “scientific.” Yet, this assumption is questionable, as the researcher’s subjective decisions, interpretations, and research choices can drastically alter findings. Therefore, rigor alone does not guarantee a high quality of research. And yet, rigorous analysis is sometimes used to proclaim objectivity (cf. Morse et al. 2002). Nonetheless, rigor is a requirement for any research (cf. Kaplan 1964; rigor as a trade-off to a study’s usefulness, see Lehmann, McAlister, and Staelin 2011). This also applies to theoretical research, because only a rigorous conceptualization and analysis of thoughts, assumptions, and implications will suffice for the successful defense (or successful rejection) of a hypothesis.

The next question is, then, what are the characteristics of high-quality research? If rigor alone is insufficient, then what makes research “high quality?” The following steps, as frequently stated by business research methods literature (for example, Collis and Hussey 2003; Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2009), are required:

⁷ While there are differences, I consider in this essay “non-empirical,” “theoretical,” “conceptual,” and “philosophical” research as belonging to the same category of research. These thoughts are based on an unpublished paper for the “Qualitative Research: Principles and Practices” course taught by Prof. Johanna Moisander at Aalto University School of Business in Spring 2018.

1. The definition of research questions pertaining to the object of research in theory/practice;
2. The demonstrated detailed attempt to present the status quo and the state of the art regarding existing knowledge related to the research question(s);
3. The rigorous (scrupulously accurate or strict, thorough), systematic, and fearless recognition, analysis, and discussion of all pro and contra arguments, assumptions, and consequences pertaining to the issue at hand;
4. The coherent and complete assessment of the extent to which conclusions can be made regarding the research question(s) and respective answers based on logical insights from pro and contra arguments in order to arrive at a valuable contribution.

To understand what a valuable contribution to knowledge is, we first need to understand the importance of clear “constructs,” i.e. the role and effect of well-defined conceptual abstractions. Roy Suddaby (2010, 346) argues that “constructs are the foundation of theory” and need to be clarified through the presentation of precise definitions of concepts, their scope conditions, their semantic relationships to other concepts, and proof for the coherence of the logical argumentation. Such rigorous “construct clarity” (ibid.) refers to making statements that “hold.” However, there are varying depths of construct clarity. I suggest that *complete* construct clarity means the following:

- The coherence of thoughts and findings is analyzed beyond mere coherence within the study’s own field, and coherence across all available knowledge is sought.
- Implications are not just identified and discussed as consequences of one’s findings; rather, implications are analyzed for second, third, and n^{th} -degree implications (implications of implications). This consistent analysis should aim to identify and reveal the deepest structural premises, axioms, constructions, alternative explanations, ambiguities, causalities, paradoxes, etc. (cf. Baggini and Fosl 2010).

Though perhaps idealistic – as ultimate construct clarity is not realistically possible due to limited time and space – these conceptions offer an inspiring guideline for conducting high-quality research. Yet, Suddaby’s (2010) emphasis on construct clarity is a requirement but not a guarantee for high-quality research. To remedy this, Kevin G. Corley and Dennis A. Gioia (2011) argue that a groundbreaking contribution to knowledge takes place if it has a large “scope” of utility – i.e. high scientific or practical usefulness – and if it can be characterized as having “revelatory” as opposed to “incremental” originality. Revelatory originality refers to something extraordinary, surprising, and transformational. Clearly, high-quality research that aspires to make groundbreaking contributions needs to transcend the limits of extant knowledge as a source of research problems. In the words of Tsui (2016, 12):

Unfortunately, currently most researchers in organizational science parse the texts of research literature to look for “theoretical gaps” to fill (Alvesson and Sandberg, 2011; Davis, 2015; Suddaby, 2014) instead of exploring new research areas in the real world. Using the existing literature as the source of ideas for new research perpetuates the research focus of existing literature, accounting for the continuing domination of a focus on economic outcomes and contributing to incremental rather than ground-breaking research.

Revelatory research addresses fundamental questions related to the grand challenges of our time (cf. Anderson and Linder 2019). Solving these challenges calls for an approach that

identifies systemic consequences and draws coherent conclusions to an unprecedented extent, for which the following model may be useful. While debatable, I contend that the following basic scheme is at the core of such research inquiry aiming to make groundbreaking contributions to knowledge:

1. Critically asking the most fundamental and relevant questions possible (pertaining to the issues at hand and the core belief systems of our time).
2. Expanding (rather than narrowing) concepts and the scope of analysis to venture into the unfamiliar terrain (with greater potential for groundbreaking insights).
3. Applying and combining different concepts in innovative ways to allow for serendipitous (groundbreaking) insights.
4. Answering research questions through rigorous and fearless research, challenging prevailing assumptions and pursuing results to their logical conclusions to contribute to society's progress.

From the above discussion, standards for high-quality research are summarized in *Table 1*. Here, the question arises: to what extent do these quality standards (left column) align with the principles of responsible research (right column) (identified in *Figure 1*)? *Table 1* maps the relationship between top-quality research and responsible research to show that these are fundamentally connected.

Table 1: Standards for high-quality research compared with principles of responsible research (Source: Author's creation)

Standards for high-quality academic research⁸	Principles of responsible research and knowledge creation
Definition of a relevant research problem Is a research question or research problem pertaining to theory and practice defined and presented in a relevant way from the perspective of the study's audience and context?	Usefulness and relevance Research is deemed useful if it is connected to a phenomenon and if it aims to provide a new perspective on it. A researcher should know the existing field in order to ask the relevant questions.
Scientific due diligence Does the study demonstrate a serious attempt to present the status quo and state of the art regarding existing knowledge related to the research question(s), cite all relevant sources, and refrain from any plagiarism?	Credibility Scientific due diligence, aiming at presenting a researcher's understanding of what is known, is a required starting point for creating credible knowledge.
Rigor Is that, which the study aims to do, done, and shown to be done, consistently until the end through rigorous, systematic, and fearless recognition, analysis, and discussion of all pro and contra arguments, assumptions, and consequences pertaining to the issue at hand?	Sound methodology Rigor is the keystone of a sound methodology and, thus, is at the heart of ensuring the credibility of knowledge creation.
Coherence Is the presented argumentation logically correct and based on complete construct clarity, as well as on a rigorous assessment of the extent to which conclusions or generalizations can be made	Impact on stakeholders Coherence and complete construct clarity are basic requirements for identifying and understanding a study's impacts on all stakeholders.

⁸ These standards are a simplified consolidation of standards found in extant research methods literature.

regarding the research question(s) and respective answers based on logical insights from pro and contra arguments?	
Validity and soundness Is the argumentation rooted in <i>demonstrated</i> – credible, proven, observed, <i>or</i> commonly assumed-to-be-true – evidence, and in its meaningful analysis and interpretation?	Sound methodology The analysis and interpretation of evidence and subsequent argumentation forms the crux of designing and following a sound methodology, which improves the credibility of knowledge.
Contribution Are the implications discussed thoroughly? Are the conclusions changing the way “we” – the intended audience – think or speak about something? This includes suggesting new conceptualizations, developing or extending theories, asking new questions, building or breaking consensus, etc.	Service to society The importance of a study’s contribution to theory and practice has been emphasized in academia. The idea that the contribution should be of service to society is at the heart of responsible research.
Readability and style Is the text well written? Does the author show reflection and openness to criticism and debate?	Broad dissemination A study that is not read will not have any impact. Good readability and style will allow for broad dissemination across disciplinary boundaries and into the public sphere.

In *Table 1*, I de-emphasize the importance of justifying choices. More important are the consequences and the precise definition of choices, rather than how or why choices are made. We do not really care how Einstein got his ideas that led to new discoveries. In fact, it is generally believed that he had an unusually penetrating intuition (Isaacson 2017). Finally, the intended audience is a crucial, yet easily overlooked, aspect of research. A high-quality study is one which decisively raises the audience’s consciousness (now or in the future). Consequently, the quality of two separate studies can be compared conclusively only if they are similar in some respects or address the same audience. Importantly, however, the above standards, or epistemic values, for high-quality research are not only most conducive to conducting responsible research, but are also at the core of both empirical and nonempirical research.

The Ultimate “Service to Society:” Fostering Peace Through Research

Having analyzed the notion of, and developed the standards for, responsible and high-quality research, I now examine the “service to society” requirement, which is the first principle of responsible research (*Figure 1*). What does “service to society” actually mean? Fundamentally, what is the purpose of knowledge creation? Should academic insights in responsible business and management research offer value beyond the immediate discipline, as business is expected to create value for society (Porter and Kramer 2011)? In this section, I argue that “science for peace” could be an apt notion. The amalgamation of the responsible research concept with literature from the discipline of Peace Studies allows us to frame the substance of a positive impact in relation to the ultimate benefit for society.

I propose that any positive impact – or service – to society can have, in substance, the meaning of contributing to one or more aspects of peace. To see why this could be true, we need to appreciate that peace is much more than merely the absence of war. Since the establishment of the academic field of Peace Studies in the 1960s, the “father” of the discipline, Johan Galtung (1967 and 1969), coined the distinction between “negative peace” and “positive peace.” Negative peace refers to the absence of physical violence, and positive peace to the absence of

structural or cultural violence and to the presence of justice. Going beyond Galtung's negative/positive peace framework, we see that the peace concept can be expanded further to include any positive value that is deemed useful for society (Bauer 2019a). While it may appear that such a drastic expansion of the concept is overstretching its boundaries, it is conceivable that the absence of the notions that contribute to the smooth functioning of society – such as education, equality, justice, trust, and satisfaction of human needs – would reduce peace, which may lead to dissatisfaction and the escalation of conflicts. Therefore, contributing to the benefit of society can be said to be contributing to peace (cf. Popper 2018). To illustrate this, some examples of service to society – and how they are related to peace – are presented in *Table 2*.

Table 2: Exemplary dimensions of service to society as aspects of peace (Source: Author's creation)

Positive contribution to society ⁹	➡ Connection to peace (excerpts)	Exemplifying references
Security	Peace and comprehensive human and national security or safety are closely associated. Peacebuilding contributes to the promotion of security at the personal, institutional, and structural-cultural levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fontanel and Chatterji 2008 • Wæver 2008 • Dietrich 2012
Freedom	Peace implies freedom on different planes: political and religious freedoms, economic and social opportunities, transparency, as well as freedom from fear and violence. Peace, freedom, and development are linked.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barnett 2008
Trust	Social capital contributes to peacebuilding through trust and dialog. In other words, trust is essential and a type of “currency” in communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cox 2009 • Väyrynen 2000 • Oelsner 2007
Equality	Equality is at the heart of Galtung's positive peace. Inequality significantly contributes to undermining the creation of a shared society and multiplies tension within society by cementing or exacerbating differences. Also, feminism should receive a more prominent role in critical peace and conflict studies. The role of women in peacebuilding is increasingly emphasized.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Galtung 1967 • Adolf 2009 • McLeod and O'Reilly 2019
Health	Optimizing health is considered a means to contribute to peacebuilding; in other words, peace ultimately becomes a result of health promotion activities. This stems from the idea that health is a requirement for, and enabler of, life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adolf 2009 • Arya 2017 • Garber 2002
Justice	Justice and peace go hand in hand. Peace is often defined as the presence of justice. Justice does not just assume looking back at the past, but also provides resources for a better, nonviolent future, thus being an important part of peacebuilding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Galtung 1969 • Sriram 2007
Human rights	The satisfaction of human rights is intrinsically related to, and a requirement for, peace. Treating other human beings with dignity and equality is the foundation of peaceful relations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeong 2000 • Bell 2005
Prosperity	Prosperity and economic development represent important opportunities for building peace. The need and aspiration for access to, and control over, resources can be a cause of conflict. Poverty and severe inequality increase the risk of wars.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Alert 2015
Well-being	Human well-being describes the complex phenomenon of individuals and communities achieving psychological and physical, inner and outer, well-being in an insecure world. Many international political actors have incorporated well-being and human security as part of their mandate and policy agenda, including their peacebuilding initiatives. Well-being is a vital element of peace.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webel and Galtung 2007 • Fox 2014 • Yarnell and Neff 2013

⁹ This list of positive contributions to society is not comprehensive and merely exemplary for possible positive impacts. The purpose, here, is not to argue that each dimension is positive in all cases.

Education	Education contributes to developing the skills for peaceful inter-human relations, good governance, and peacebuilding. Education is capable of building capacity and social relationships for democratic, inclusive, and just conflict transformation by influencing individual and collective understandings, competencies, values, norms, opportunities, etc. Teaching social and emotional learning skills in schools can foster peace. Education is a necessary requirement for peace.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kant [1795] 2013 • Montessori 1949 • Hymel and Darwich 2018 • Danesh 2011
Spirituality	Spirituality and peace are closely related: the wider the definition of peace, the more intertwined it is with the concept of spirituality. There is the idea of introspective spiritual peace of a person: inner peace leads to outer peace. The focus of these practices is a process of individual transformation, which brings positive consequences for society in terms of peacebuilding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bauer 2019a • Curle 1995 • Dietrich 2012
Happiness	Conflict and peace are correlates of happiness. People who feel they have a self-actualized life will be better at transforming conflicts and fostering peace. Moreover, peace has an etymological meaning of happiness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online Etymology Dictionary n.d. • Marcantonio 2017
Sustainability	Efficient environmental management is of great importance to providing stable and sustainable peace. Environmental degradation can be a cause of war. Social sustainability and peace are linked.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shiva 2005 • Brauch et al. 2016
Livelihood creation	Livelihood creation and peace are interconnected, as poverty can be a cause of conflict. Earning a livelihood brings with it a basic satisfaction with life, including economic necessities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lederach 2008
Satisfaction of human needs	Through reducing direct and structural violence, peacebuilding processes contribute to the equitable satisfaction of human needs for security, identity, wellbeing, and self-determination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Galtung 1980
Technological development	Technological development corresponds to the creation of new opportunities for multilateral cooperation for peace, global governance, state-society relations, and sustainable development. A case in point are the notions of “peacetech” and “peace innovation.” As a result of technological progress, new ways of participation in, engagement with, and accountability of societal developments are emerging. All these developments change how people participate in peace processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Miklian and Hoelscher 2018 • Puig Larrauri and Kahl 2013
Mentality	Contributing to a peaceful mentality reduces not only physical but also structural and cultural violence. Peace is also shaped by a person’s view of reality, human nature, purpose of life, and interpersonal relationships. Peace psychology deals with posttraumatic stress disorders, addressing a wider variety of mental health issues, such as grief and depression, along with key psychosocial issues such as family separation, interpersonal and intergroup distrust, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fox 2014 • Danesh 2011
Access to information	Information is at the heart of development, democracy, decision-making, and peace. Conflicts are often caused or promoted by the unavailability of, or wrong, information. Moreover, access to information and knowledge promotes a better understanding between people of different origins, opinions, and beliefs, thus having the potential of preventing or eliminating conflicts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Popper 2018 • Puig Larrauri and Kahl 2013

Table 2 presents an illustrative list of positive dimensions of contributions to society and their relationships with peace. Ethical business can play an important role in all of them (Bauer 2019b). Further, more holistic conceptions of peace include, for instance, inner peace (Fox 2014), systemic harmony (Jeong 2000), and unity-based visions for humanity (Danesh 2011). From this, it is inducible that *any* positive impact that contributes to the functioning of society – whether to the essential minimum or high-level thriving – will likely be linked to peace. The

philosophical basis of this claim rests on the idea that peace could be the ultimate value for society.

With this expanded understanding of peace, it is plausible that the positive impact of responsible business research and practice can, in substance, foster peace (cf. Bauer 2019b). Moreover, if we expect responsible research to be of service to society, then fostering an aspect of peace seems to be a logically congruent outcome. This essentially boils down to the following argument:

- If positive impact refers to any betterment of the human condition or awareness in a sphere of desired human interaction, perception, feeling, or understanding; and
- if such betterment corresponds to contributing to an aspect or dimension of peace, such as health, happiness, spirituality, prosperity, wellbeing, justice, etc.; in other words, if peace is to society as, for example, health to medicine, or money to Wall Street bankers; then
- any research that wants to have a positive impact on society (i.e. be “responsible”) can, for the sake of complete construct clarity (as defined in the previous section), declare fostering (an aspect of) peace as one of its aims.

Another approach to the connection between responsible research and peace brings us to the topic of spirituality (as mentioned in *Table 2*), a subject which is not often brought into academic discussions. Spirituality here refers to a non-materialistic lifestyle aiming for awareness, interrelatedness, a higher purpose, morality, doing good, transformational experiences, holistic nonviolence, and, ultimately, higher consciousness (Zsolnai and Flanagan 2019). Luk Bouckaert and László Zsolnai (2019, 249) write: “A postmaterialistic management paradigm is emerging and characterized by frugality, deep ecology, trust, reciprocity, responsibility for future generations and authenticity.” This puts business on a trajectory of doing good, as current business practice tends to see its *raison d’être* too narrowly and often is inherently violent. An emerging new business paradigm distances itself from profit maximization as the sole purpose of business in favor of a mindset where business can contribute to peace in society (Bauer 2019b; cf. Lankoski and Smith 2017).

This shows how a holistic approach to peace offers a philosophical guideline through the jungle of imperatives for the “ultimate purpose of creating a better world,” as the first principle of responsible research states. The underlying assumption here is that academic research should go beyond *merely not being unethical*, which is, through the above reasoning, distinguished from being *more ethical*.¹⁰ Therefore, I argue that peace can be a helpful guideline for operationalizing “spirituality,” “ethics,” and “responsibility” for business and management research (cf. Bouckaert and Zsolnai 2011; Zsolnai 2004).

According to Michael Gibbons et al. (1994), there are three “modes” of research that underpin the purpose of scientific inquiry. Mode 1 refers to basic research, and Mode 2 is the traditional counterpart referring to applied research. Mode 3, however, is more apt, as it aims to “assure survival and promote the common good, at various levels of social aggregation” (Huff and Huff 2001, 53). This can be interpreted as promoting one of the dimensions of the expanded concept of peace. Mark N. K. Saunders, Philip Lewis, and Adrian Thornhill (2009, 7) explain: Mode 3 “emphasizes the importance of broader issues of human relevance of research. Consequently,

¹⁰ In Bauer 2019b, I define climbing a “ladder of morality” as moving from lower to higher contributions to peace.

[...] the findings of business and management research [in Mode 3] might also contain practical implications, and these findings may have societal consequences far broader and complex than perhaps envisaged by Mode 2.” Thus, we need to address the larger realm and purpose of research as a whole – and its role in contributing to a better world.

Finally, I turn to Rolin (2012) and Brown (2013) who note that responsible research – defined by Kourany (2010) as “Philosophy of Science after Feminism” in the book of the same name – does not define the role and source of “sound” social values. Rolin (2012, 321) explains: “The ideal of socially responsible science [Kourany 2010] suggests that sexist or racist assumptions and concepts are ‘bad’ simply because they reflect ‘wrong’ social values and alternative research programs are better insofar as they are guided not only by ‘sound’ epistemic values but also by ‘sound’ social values.” Rolin (*ibid.*) argues that, in its current form, “the ideal of socially responsible science does not provide us with a satisfactory account of values in science because it remains vague in its answer to two crucial questions: (i) what roles are ‘sound’ social values required to play in scientific inquiry, and (ii) how do scientists identify ‘sound’ social values?” I contend that the peace concept inherently solves this conceptual problem for two reasons: peace may be the most ubiquitous universal value, and, unlike other normative ideals, peace does not preclude the existence of harmony in contentious situations. This is a central tenet of Peace Studies, but it implies a larger, holistic definition of the concepts of peace, which includes inner peace. Therefore, peace as an aim can guide every step of the research process.

According to Wolfgang Dietrich (2012), peace, as well as its postmodern plural form *peaces*, is an umbrella term that includes security, climate issues, the quest(s) for truth(s), transpersonal experiences, and many other issues related to the inner- and inter-personal functioning in society – culminating in “transrational” (*ibid.*) interpretations of peace. To paraphrase Dietrich, transrational peace advocates a dynamic and functional balance based on harmony, justice, security, and truth. Transrationality implies that spirituality is a part of the human experience, without denying rationality. Transrational interpretations of peace require a perceiving subject. According to Dietrich (*ibid.*), there is no one, absolute truth and no objective “good” in the Aristotelian sense (cf. von Wright [1963] 1996). Peace is an inner experience. As Rolin (2012, 327) points out, “there will be a diversity of social values, that is, conceptions of the good life, because the value of liberty urges us to respect different individual choices.” The holistic notion of peace, as well as peace philosophy, takes this into account (cf. Dietrich 2012).

From this, it follows that peace is the result of a dynamic balance of energies (Lederach 2005). Peace is useful as a social value for responsible science because it is not just the absence of conflict. Rather, it effectively screens out all forms of violence (cf. Swartz 1997), including structural or cultural division, discrimination, or deprivation. Moreover, peace and feminism share a significant basis of concern (Jeong 2000), such as nonviolence, equality, and social justice. In the end, if we understand the transrational and pluralistic nature of the scientific peace concept, then we can appreciate research as a device for contributing to the harmonious yet dynamic transformation of social relations and society as a whole.¹¹

What can we conclude regarding the role of social values in responsible research? The view outlined in this essay suggests that responsible business and management research can be connected – explicitly or implicitly – to a theory, model, or idea on how the study, or its direct or indirect implications, foster some aspect of peace. As cultures evolve over time, so do norms and habits. I call for a new responsible research paradigm in which researchers consider the

¹¹ Here, I’m influenced by wisdom research. See, for example, Rooney, McKenna, and Liesch (2014).

wider implications of their work for peace in society, as peace is both sufficiently large and sufficiently inspiring to be of use in any research context. To be clear, what I'm suggesting is not a specific methodology, nor is it unscientific. Rather, it is a mindset to seek opportunities for more peaceful outcomes. Knowledge creation for the sake of knowledge creation may still receive recognition or respect if one is able to explain one's work in simple terms, but it can be complemented by the test of the future: does your research foster peace?¹²

Conclusion: A New Paradigm for Business and Management Scholarship

The responsible research program consists of two realms: the quality and the societal usefulness or relevance of research. Here, the standards for high-quality research are amended with the normative expectation that research should have a positive impact on society. The combination of "epistemic" and "social" values (Tsui 2016) brings forth the notion that business and management scholarship can make a positive contribution to society. This essay argues that this premise can have the meaning of fostering peace. This philosophical statement is based on the idea that peace can be seen as the ultimate value for society. Moreover, transrational peace philosophy (Dietrich 2012) allows for a context-dependent and relational awareness of changing dynamics and values. Such an expanded concept of peace thereby answers Rolin's (2012) and Brown's (2013) concerns regarding the role and source of responsible research values, as peace can be understood as a universal, yet pluralistic human value.

Research that aspires to have a positive impact on society can – for the sake of complete construct clarity – define fostering (an aspect of) peace as one of its (implicit) goals. Connecting a business/management study's implications to an aspect of peace answers the call for responsible research standards that internalize both epistemic and broad social values. In this essay, I have attempted to consolidate such standards. In the Popperian tradition, this does not have any diminishing effect on scientific quality. Rather, science for peace is a useful device if it helps humanity progress towards a higher goal. These insights rest on the correctness of the assumption that society's expectations towards business being sustainable and ethical will remain and grow in importance in the future – and this should be reflected in research. With this call for peace, further research is needed to study the application of these principles in the praxis of business and management scholarship.

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¹² While this statement may appear to be too strong, it serves as an aspirational guideline. The discussion is based on an unpublished paper for the "Professionals at Academic Work" course taught by Prof. Keijo Räsänen at the Aalto University School of Business in Spring 2018.

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