

# A Synthesis and An Analysis of Definitions of Management

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## Abstract

This paper offers a streamlined synthesis and analysis of Management definitions extracted from twenty authoritative textbooks. Employing qualitative content analysis, the study identifies fifty-four distinct characteristics within these definitions, which are then consolidated and organized into six thematic categories: process-related, people-related, resource-related, environmental and contextual, responsibility and accountability, and disciplinary and occupational categories. Findings indicate that despite differences in wording and focus, the definitions converge on a shared conceptual core portraying Management as a continuous, systematic, and goal-oriented process involving human coordination, effective resource utilization, and adaptation to contextual factors. Based on this thematic integration, the paper proposes a comprehensive synthesized definition of Management. The results contribute theoretical clarity to academic research and offer valuable insights for Management education. Ultimately, the study concludes that Management is a multifaceted discipline marked by relational complexity, environmental responsiveness, and accountability for organizational outcomes.

**Key Words:** Characteristics, Definition, Management, Organizational Management, Synthesized Definition

## Introduction

We are all people who have numerous needs and wants to be met and achieved. We have various needs without meeting which, we do not have the ability to survive. Needs are what we fulfill essentially, and they are the things such as food, water, shelter, sleep, safety items, basic health necessities which are indispensable for our survival and basic functioning. In Wants, in contrast, are what we desire to obtain for our comforts and enjoyments. They are desires and expectations which are not indispensable for our survival and basic functioning, but they are desired by us to enhance our quality of life and happiness of life. Non-fulfilling needs constantly for a considerable time leads eventually to physical and/or mental ailments

and death whereas non-fulfilment of wants leads to disappointment and unhappiness. During primitive times, people had largely needs, but people living in modern times have both needs and wants. Of course, if stated more accurately, most people have wants the number and nature of which seem never-ending and ever-evolving.

Various products, i.e., goods and services are to be produced by various organizations in order to meet those various needs and wants of the people. Various forms or organizations are engaged in producing and providing various goods and services. There is one thing which is a common phenomenon existing in all these various organizations regardless of ownership, size, and industry is “Management”. Many years ago, Szilagyi (1981) asserted that Management and performance are strongly and positively related. Sound Management results in sound performance while mal-management results in mal-performance. As per a classic author in Management literature, namely Hodgetts (1985) management is a universal consideration, and firms in the private sector continuously strive to increase their managerial efficiency and effectiveness, as do organizations in the public sector. No organization survives or progresses without efficient and effective management. No personnel in the public or private sector organization can work together to achieve its vision, mission, and goals without efficient and effective management. Groups of employees, whether in public or private organizations, can work collectively to achieve vision, mission, goals, or strategic objectives only when appropriate management is in place.

Management can alternatively be named Organizational Management (OM), and compared with other functional fields of OM, Human Resource Management (HRM) has more attachment or relates to Management to a higher extent. One reason is that defining Management as the art and science of getting things done through other people and working with other people indicates that Management is more about dealing with other people by a certain group of people namely managers within an organization. Further a classic and popular analysis of the term *Management* given by an Indian Doctor of Philosophy in Management, namely Davar (1991) is: MANAGEMENT as “MANAGE MEN TACTFULLY”. According to him, Management is not anything else other than HRM. The purpose of this analysis is to highlight the overwhelming importance of HRM and not to underestimate other aspects or fields of Management (Opatha, 2009). Another Indian classic writing in HRM (Tripathy, 1992, p. 3) is: *“Basic managerial functions—planning, organising, motivating and controlling—are common to all managers including personnel managers and are performed by all of them. That is why it is said that general management and personnel management are one and the same.”* Personnel management is now known as HRM which is the human aspect of Management, and therefore without sound management an organization will suffer from human problems including employee turnover, dissatisfaction, demotivation, absenteeism, conflicts and grievances, presenteeism (this involves an employee working while being sick, working more than the required time, working without engaging in work fully, working on something else not the work assigned, and working over actively or hyperactively in the assignment according to Werapitiya, Opatha, and Fernando, 2015), and quiet quitting (a working situation where employees disengage from extra-role behaviors at work without formally resigning from the job).

This non-traditional research article focuses on Management, particularly on synthesizing and analyzing definitions of the term *Management*. At present, an exclusive and systematic theoretical study that synthesizes definitions of Management, particularly using classic and modern textbook authors, is not widely available. Such exclusive studies appear absent in Sri Lanka and Asia, and perhaps globally as well. This gap justifies the undertaking of a rigorous definitional inquiry into the field of Management, which is foundational to organizational studies.

In 2021, the first author of this article wrote and published a research article titled *A Simplified Study of Definitions of Human Resource Management* which became useful for my students and some researchers. Its clarity and simplicity, combined with systematic synthesis, resulted in noticeable academic impact, demonstrating the value of definitional studies. This positive reception is one of the motivations for writing the present research paper by using a similar method, style, and analytical logic. Management has long been a well-recognized and established academic discipline as well as a well-recognized and established professional field. Management as a social science subject is popularly studied by a considerable number of students at bachelor's, master's, and doctor's degree levels. The subject is broad, theoretical, practical, interesting, exciting, and challenging for the learner as well as the teacher. Indeed, it is a compulsory course for all the bachelor's degrees, master's degrees, and doctoral degrees in Management, Business Administration, Public Administration, and Management-related field locally and internationally. Further, management is being taught as an auxiliary course for certain degrees in Engineering, Sciences and Arts. It is seen that apart from degrees there are professional programs in Management. Consequently, it is true that at any given time in Sri Lanka or abroad a substantial number of students, employees, and professionals are studying Management.

In an earlier publication (2021, p. 17) Opatha wrote: *"It is indispensable for the learner to secure a good and right knowledge of the introduction to HRM. Each academic or teacher in HRM is supposed to give an introduction to HRM to his or her students at the outset of teaching a course or a subject, and it needs to be right, adequate, and understandable. It has generally been accepted that a definition of HRM which is clear needs to be given by the teacher to the students to learn in the act of introducing. According to my observations of HRM teaching performed by academics and professionals, some utilize several definitions of HRM and others do not. Based on my understanding obtained by teaching HRM for 35 years to the students at Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral levels in various universities it is a best practice to give at least several definitions made by foreign authors, local authors, and professional institutes. Another best practice is to give an own definition with an adequate analysis to it in addition to a discussion of few definitions given by other experts, scholars, authors or institutes."* Though originally written for Human Resource Management, these arguments are equally valid and directly applicable to the Management subject as well. Therefore, Opatha's previous scholarly reasoning further strengthens the justification for writing this research paper.

Definitions of Management are highly useful for both students and teachers because they provide intentionally formulated statements that convey the essential meaning of the term in a clear and structured manner. As Flowerdew (1992) states, two key functions of a definition are: (1) to signpost the logical or discourse structure of a subject or lecture, and (2) to maintain comprehension as the discourse unfolds. A major function of a definition, in general, is to clarify a term and reduce ambiguity (Jaroongkhongdach, 2014). A definition of Management helps the learner grasp with clarity the meaning of the term and obtain an initial understanding of its content, nature, scope, and overarching purpose. Through an analytical examination of definitions, the learner is able to identify and list the core characteristics, domains, and conceptual boundaries of the field of Management.

Further, formulating and studying definitions of Management is instrumental in building appropriate intellectual orientation, professional attitudes, and intrinsic motivation in learners. For lecturers, a deep understanding of definitional components enhances the clarifying dimension of teaching behaviour, which has been shown to produce a significant positive impact on students' satisfaction and learning effectiveness (Opatha, 2020). Moreover, several additional purposes of defining Management may be noted: enabling conceptual precision for research; ensuring terminological consistency across literature; facilitating theory-building; supporting comparative analyses among sub-fields; and offering a foundation for curriculum design and pedagogical sequencing.

There remains a theoretical and empirical gap in systematically synthesizing and analyzing a set of definitions of Management, particularly within the Asian context, and arguably at the global level as well. Given the long history, interdisciplinary richness, and evolving nature of the discipline, a rigorous inquiry into how scholars have defined Management is both intellectually stimulating and academically valuable. Therefore, undertaking a synthesis and analysis of definitions of Management is not only timely but also contributes meaningfully to the strengthening of theoretical foundations in the field.

### **Objectives**

The specific objectives of this research paper are:

1. To identify and present definitions of Management given by twenty authoritative textbooks.
2. To analyse the selected definitions in order to classify the major components, themes, and emphases.
3. To prepare a consolidated list of Characteristics of Management.
4. To construct a synthesized definition of Management grounded in the definitional analysis.
5. To contribute to theoretical clarity and enhance pedagogical understanding of the concept of Management.

## Method

The methodology of this study resembles the approach used in my 2021 paper *A Simplified Study of Definitions of Human Resource Management* and is adapted appropriately for the subject of Management. This is a conceptual, theoretical, and qualitative study based on a desk research approach. It involves collection, synthesis, and systematic analysis of definitions of Management.

This research employs two non-scientific methods of knowledge acquisition: authority as the primary approach and intuition to a limited degree. Authority, defined as a non-scientific method, entails obtaining knowledge from recognized experts on a given subject (Davis and Cosenza, 1985; Nazario-Romero, 2016). A desk research strategy was implemented, whereby, to fulfill the first objective, definitions were systematically sourced from highly qualified authors in the discipline of Management. A descriptive methodology was adopted, eschewing critical or prescriptive perspectives. Only Management textbooks published in English and physically accessible to the researchers were employed; scholarly works lacking essential foundational elements or failing to meet requisite academic standards were excluded.

Management textbooks encompassed both generalized volumes addressing core Management principles and specialized texts concentrating on sub-disciplines such as Strategic Management and International Management, alongside functional domains including Leadership, Motivation, Organizational Theory, Design and Change, Organizational Communication, and Management Control. The present study incorporated exclusively generalized Management textbooks. Every qualified author of authoritative Management textbooks proffered a definition of the Management concept. Exhibit 1 delineates the textbooks utilized, furnishing particulars on author(s), year of publication, and country of publication.

**Exhibit 1. Information about the Textbooks used for this Study**

No.	Author/s	Year	Country of Publication
1	Hitt, Middlemist, and Mathis	1979	USA
2	Szilagyi	1981	USA
3	Longenecker and Pringle	1981	USA
4	Hodgetts	1985	USA
5	Chandan	1987	India
6	Donnelly, Gibson, and Ivancevich	1987	USA
7	Oldcorn	1989	UK
8	Prasad	1989	India
9	Rue and Byars	1992	USA
10	Bovee, Thill, Wood, and Dovel	1993	USA
11	Stoner, Freeman, and Gilbert	1995	USA
12	Griffin	1997	USA
13	DuBrin	2000	USA

14	Dessler	2001	USA
15	Newstrom	2013	USA
16	Daft	2014	USA
17	Certo and Certo	2019	USA
18	Jones and George	2019	USA
19	Kinicki and Williams	2020	UK
20	Robbins and Coulter	2021	USA

A qualitative content analysis method was used to identify and consolidate the fundamental characteristics of Management. Twenty authoritative definitions from classical and contemporary scholars were examined. Each definition or defining in the 20 textbooks was segmented into conceptual units (keywords, phrases, or statements). These units were then coded into initial categories (characteristics) based on their conceptual meaning. Subsequently, overlapping or synonymous codes—such as “attaining goals,” “achieving objectives,” and “goal accomplishment”—were merged to create higher-order categories (consolidated characteristics). This process resulted in 30 unique, non-overlapping characteristics. Codes (characteristics in terms of statements) with strong conceptual similarity were grouped into six categories.

### Definitions of Management and Their Analysis

The concept of Management has been defined by every appropriately qualified author or group of authors who produced recognized textbooks. Each source is introduced prior to presenting its respective definition. It must be emphasized that no critical analysis of these definitions is undertaken; in deference to all authors, a strictly descriptive approach is maintained, eschewing both critical and prescriptive evaluations.

Three authors namely Hitt, Middlemist, and Mathis wrote a textbook titled *Effective Management* published in 1979 defined that *Management is the integration and coordination of resources in order to move effectively towards desired objectives*. This definition focuses on the use of resources to move effectively towards objectives, and it is important to integrate and coordinate various management activities. These integration and coordination are to be done by managers. Management involves bringing together various types of resources such as human, financial, physical, informational, and technological and ensuring they work harmoniously. Integration means combining these different resources, so they support each other, while coordination means organizing their activities in a way that prevents overlap, conflict, and inefficiency.

Szilagyi (1981) defines Management in his book titled *Management and Performance* as the *process of integrating resources and tasks toward the achievement of stated organizational goals*. Thus, Management is concerned with three things (1) resources, (2) tasks, and (3) goals. Further, he considered Management as a process and this means a systematic and organized way of doing things. As per this defining, Management is a process by which employees,

technology, job tasks, and other resources are combined and coordinated to accomplish goals of the organization.

Longenecker and Pringle (1981) in their fifth edition of the textbook titled *Management* presented a definition. It is: *“Management is the process of acquiring and combining human, financial, and physical resources to attain the organization’s primary goal of producing a product or service desired by some segment of society.”* Longenecker and Pringle’s definition of management highlights Management as a systematic process centred on resource acquisition and integration to fulfil organizational goals. The definition focuses on two key activities: acquiring and combining. Acquiring means obtaining the necessary resources—human resources (employees), financial resources (capital, and funds), and physical resources (equipment, materials, tools, and facilities). Combining refers to integrating these resources effectively, so that they work together seamlessly rather than in silos, optimizing productivity and effectiveness.

A classic authority of Management, namely Hodgetts wrote a textbook in 1985, and he gave a definition of Management (he named this as the operational definition of Management). It is: *“Management is the process of setting objectives and coordinating the efforts of personnel in order to attain them”*. He further writes that by its very definition, Management involves getting things done through other people, and manager must be a planner, communicator, coordinator, leader, and controller; and most of all the manager must be a facilitator smoothing the way for subordinate performance. The defining given by Hodgetts (1985) indicates that Management is a process that includes basically two major works, i.e., to set objectives and to coordinate the efforts of employees to achieve the set objectives. “Its very definition” means the essential and precise meaning of Management. In other words, the most accurate meaning of Management. It is getting things done through other people. Thus, it suggests that the person who gets things done through other people is the manager.

An Indian author whose name is Chandan wrote and published a textbook the title of which is *Management Theory and Practice* in 1987. Chandan himself has not given a definition but has given a definition given by Kreitner in 1980. The definition is: *“Management is a problem solving process of effectively achieving organizational objectives through the efficient use of scarce resources in a changing environment.”* He (1987, p. 4) writes: *“This definition, though comprehensive, must be amended to include the goals being achieved through the co-ordinated efforts of others.”* Chandan, (1987) refers to a definition by Kreitner given in 1980 highlighting Management as a problem-solving process concerned with achieving organizational objectives effectively. According to Kreitner, management involves making the best use of scarce resources in the face of a constantly changing environment. This emphasizes three critical aspects: (1) The problem-solving nature of Management, where managers must continuously identify, analyse, and address challenges to keep the organization moving forward; (2) The focus on the efficient use of limited resources—such as time, money, machines, materials, and personnel—to meet goals without waste; and (3) The acknowledgement of a dynamic, ever-changing environment, meaning managers must adapt strategies and decisions as internal and external conditions evolve. Chandan (1987) suggests

that this definition, while broad and comprehensive, needs enhancement. He emphasizes the importance of recognizing that organizational goals are achieved not by managers alone but through the coordinated efforts of others—meaning teams, departments, and employees working together under managerial guidance. This amendment highlights two aspects: (1) The collaborative dimension of Management, stressing coordination, communication, and teamwork as essential functions; and (2) That Management is inherently a social process, where directing and harmonizing the efforts of others is crucial to overcoming obstacles and attaining goals effectively. Overall, Chandan's interpretation refines Kreitner's definition by reminding us that Management is more than individual problem-solving and resource allocation; it fundamentally involves leading and coordinating personnel toward shared objectives within a changing environment.

Donnelly, Gibson, and Ivancevich were classic authors in Management and defined Management in their textbook titled *Fundamentals of Management* published in 1987 (the sixth edition) as the process undertaken by one or more individuals to coordinate the activities of others to achieve results not achievable by one individual acting alone. Further they mention that the process of Management should be studied by anyone planning to become a successful manager. Donnelly, Gibson, and Ivancevich's definition of Management emphasizes both the collaborative nature of management and its importance as a discipline for aspiring managers. The definition defines Management fundamentally as a process, which means it consists of a series of ongoing, interrelated activities. These activities are carried out by one or more individuals who assume responsibility. The core of Management is coordinating other people's efforts, i.e., aligning, directing, and combining their work to accomplish common goals. This coordination is necessary because certain outcomes cannot be reached by an individual working alone; teamwork and structured cooperation are essential to leverage diverse skills and efforts.

A British author namely Oldcorn (1989) has not given a specific definition of the term of Management. However, he (1989, p. 1) writes in the introduction: *"Good management is about creating opportunities for the organization and making sure that these opportunities are realized as efficiently and effectively as possible. As Chester Barnard wrote many years ago, the executive task is not only to describe the purpose of the organization, but also to 'secure the essential effort' needed for its achievement. My aim in this book is to identify the skills and functions that are necessary for managers to be able to secure that essential effort, and to describe the ways in which the managerial task can be accomplished efficiently."* The author focuses on describing the essence and purpose of good management. In his introduction, he emphasizes that good management involves creating opportunities within an organization and ensuring these opportunities are realized in the most efficient and effective manner possible. Oldcorn echoes earlier thoughts by Chester Barnard, who highlighted that the role of executives goes beyond simply defining the organization's purpose. Executives must also "secure the essential effort" required to achieve that purpose. In other words, management is about obtaining, organizing, and leading people to ensure that the organization's goals are met. Rather than giving a strict definition, Oldcorn presents Management as a practical and



dynamic activity focused on opportunity creation, goal attainment, and effective utilization of resources, primarily through skilled leadership and managerial functions.

Another Indian author namely Prasad (1989) in his fourth edition of the textbook titled *Principles and Practice of Management* has given certain definitions of Management. He (1989, p. 2) writes: “*Thus management can be defined as the process of getting things done by others. Management is invariably defined as the process of ‘getting things done through the efforts of others’, ‘getting from where we are to where we want to be with the least expenditure of time, money, and efforts’, or ‘coordinating individual and group efforts toward superordinate goals’.*” Prasad (1989) presents several interrelated definitions of Management that emphasize its core nature as a process involving other people. His descriptions share common themes that help clarify what management fundamentally entails: (1) *Getting Things Done by Others*: This phrase captures the essence of Management as not just personal effort, but the ability to accomplish objectives through the coordinated efforts of other individuals. It highlights that managers achieve results by directing and utilizing the contributions of their teams; (2) *Process of Achieving Goals Efficiently*: Prasad emphasizes management as a process that moves an organization from its current state (“where we are”) to its desired state (“where we want to be”). This journey must be undertaken with the least possible expenditure of resources such as time, money, and effort, which echoes the importance of efficiency and effectiveness; (3) *Coordinating Individual and Group Efforts*: The idea of coordination underlines the role of Management in aligning the activities of both individuals and groups, ensuring their efforts are harmonized and working towards overarching or superordinate organizational goals. This recognizes the social and collaborative nature of management.

Rue and Byars (1992) define that *Management is a form of work that involves coordinating an organisation’s resources—land, labor, and capital—towards accomplishing organizational objectives*. Rue and Byars (1992) provide a definition of Management that frames it as a specific type of work focused on coordination of organizational resources towards achieving organizational objectives. A key characteristic or part of Management is bringing together diverse resources—land (physical assets and real estate), labor (human workforce), and capital (financial assets, machinery, technology)—and ensuring they are aligned and used effectively (in the way that achieves organizational objectives). Coordination means making sure these resources interact smoothly and support each other rather than working in isolation or conflict, thereby optimizing their productivity. The ultimate aim of this coordination is to achieve the organization’s goals. These objectives could range from profitability, growth, product development, or service delivery to social or community aims, depending on the type of organization. Management, therefore, is goal-driven, constantly steering resource utilization toward meeting predefined targets. This definition highlights the practical nature of management as a task of organizing and harmonizing essential inputs to realize the intended outcomes of the organization. It stresses both the operational and purposeful aspects of managerial work.

Bovee, Thill, Wood, and Dovel published a textbook titled *Management* in 1993. In their textbook, they defined that Management is *the process of achieving organizational goals through planning, organizing, leading, and controlling the human, physical, financial, and information resources of the organization in an effective and efficient manner*. Further, they write that by this definition, Management is a distinct process, a set of ongoing, coordinated activities that managers engage in as they pursue the organization's goals. As per their writing, a manager is someone who actively participates in the management process through the four functions of planning, organizing, leading, and controlling the resources of the organization.

Three authors namely Stoner, Freeman, and Gilbert in their six-edition published in 1995 provide a definition of Management. It is: *"The process of planning, organizing, leading, and controlling the work of organization members and of using all available resources to reach stated organizational goals."* Further, they write that Management is a specialty in dealing with matters of time and human relationships. Management activities involve time and human relationships. They mention three elements of their idea about time in organizations, and they are (1) Management is an attempt to create a desirable future, keeping the past and the present in mind; (2) Management is practiced in and is a reflection of a particular historical era; and (3) Management is a practice that produces consequences and effects that emerge over time. Their idea about human relationships also has three elements, and they are: (1) Managers act in relationships that are two-way streets; each party is influenced by the other; (2) Managers act in relationships that have spillover effects for other people, for better or for worse; and (3) Managers juggle multiple simultaneous relationships. The definition and insights provided by Stoner, Freeman, and Gilbert comprehensively capture the essence of Management by emphasizing its dynamic nature and relational complexity. First, their definition frames Management as a process involving four core functions: planning, organizing, leading, and controlling. These functions are aimed at coordinating the efforts of organizational members and effectively utilizing all resources to achieve predetermined goals. This highlights Management not just as a set of tasks, but as an ongoing, purposeful activity that steers an organization towards success. The authors then deepen the understanding of Management by focusing on two critical dimensions: time and human relationships. They assert that Management inherently deals with the dimension of time in three ways: (1) Creating a desirable future while considering past and present: Management is forward-looking but grounded. It requires managers to learn from history and current realities to shape a sustainable and effective future for the organization; (2) Historical context of Management practice: Management is not practiced in a vacuum but is influenced by the characteristics and conditions of the specific historical era. This means the principles and methods of Management evolve as society, technology, and business environments change; and (3) Consequences emerging over time: Actions taken by Management have results that unfold gradually or later, emphasizing the importance of understanding cause and effect over extended periods. This highlights the long-term impact and responsibility in Management decision-making. Regarding the dimension of human relationships, the authors emphasize that effective Management is deeply relational and complex due to three main factors: (1) Two-way influence: Managers do not act unilaterally; instead, relationships are reciprocal,

with both managers and those they manage affecting each other. This mutual influence shapes attitudes, behaviours, and outcomes; (2) Spillover effects: Managerial actions have broader implications beyond the immediate parties involved. These effects can be positive or negative and might affect other stakeholders, organizations, or communities, underscoring the ethical and social challenges of Management; and (3) Multiple simultaneous relationships: Managers must balance and navigate many complex relationships at once, requiring skill in managing conflicting demands, diverse interests, and competing priorities concurrently. Together, these insights enrich the classical view of management as a functional process by underscoring the temporal and interpersonal intricacies managers must handle. This holistic perspective highlights why Management is considered as a phenomenon deeply embedded in time and social dynamics.

Griffin (1997) defines that Management is a set of activities (including planning and decision making, organizing, leading, and controlling) directed at an organization's resources (human, financial, physical, and information) with the aim of achieving organizational goals in an efficient and effective manner. According to Griffin, managers are responsible for combining and coordinating the resources to achieve the organization's objectives. Further, he writes that the last phrase in the definition is especially important because it highlights the basic purpose of Management, i.e., to ensure that an organization's goals are achieved in an efficient and effective manner. Being efficient means using resources wisely and in a cost-effective way. Being effective means making right decisions and implementing them successfully. This definition presents four major functions or activities of Management, and they include planning and decision making (setting the organization's goals and deciding how best to achieve them), organizing (determining how best to group activities and resources), leading (motivating members of the organization to work in the best interests of the organization), and controlling (monitoring and correcting ongoing activities to facilitate goal achievement).

DuBrin (2000) defined the term Management in his 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the textbook titled "Essentials of Management". He (2000, p. 3) defines: *"The term management in this book refers to the process of using organizational resources to achieve organizational objectives through the functions of planning, organizing and staffing, leading, and controlling. These functions represent the broad framework for this book and will be described later. In addition to being a process, the term management is also used as a label for a specific discipline, for the people who manage, and for a career choice."* According to DuBrin (2000) a multifaceted definition of Management has been provided. This defining goes beyond just describing what Management is. His definition emphasizes management as a process, a field of study, a role, and a career. Key aspects of DuBrin's definition include: (1) Management as a Process: He views Management primarily as a systematic process involving the use of organizational resources to achieve organizational goals. This process is structured around several core functions such as planning, organizing and staffing, leading, and controlling. He has added staffing which involves making sure there are the necessary human resources to achieve organizational goals. According to Dubrin (2000), hiring people for jobs is a typical staffing activity, and staffing is such a major activity that it is sometimes classified as a function

separate from organizing. These functions serve as a broad framework for understanding management activities and organizing the content of his book; (2) Management as a Discipline: Besides describing managerial activities, DuBrin notes that Management is recognized as a formal academic and professional discipline. This means it is a specialized field of knowledge studied and taught, with theories, principles, and best practices; (3) Management as People: The term also refers to the group of individuals who perform Management functions, i.e., managers themselves. This highlights the human element in Management, focusing on those responsible for leading and directing organizations; and (4) Management as a Career: Finally, Management is seen as a career choice. Many individuals pursue management roles professionally as their chosen line of work, which indicates the importance of Management skills and knowledge for professional growth. In summary, DuBrin's definition underscores management as a dynamic, multifaceted concept. It acts as a process guiding organizational efforts, a field of study with its own body of knowledge, an identity for the people fulfilling the roles, and a recognized professional path. This comprehensive view helps in understanding the wide scope and significance of Management in both theory and practice.

Dessler (2001) defined Management in a different way. According to him, Management refers to two things: (1) collectively to the managers of an organisation; and (2) to the study of what managers do. Dessler (2001) offers a dual perspective on the concept of Management that helps clarify both the people involved and the activities they perform. As far as the first meaning is concerned, "Management" refers to the group of individuals who hold managerial positions within an organization. These managers are responsible for overseeing operations, making decisions, and leading teams. This perspective highlights the human element, i.e., identifying Management as the people who plan, organize, lead, and control resources to achieve organizational goals. It encompasses all levels of Management, from top managers (called as executives in USA) to middle managers and first line managers (alternatively, called as supervisors). As far as the second meaning is concerned, it defines Management as an academic and practical field focused on understanding the roles, responsibilities, functions, and behaviours of managers. It involves analysing processes such as planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling. This perspective treats management as a discipline or body of knowledge that explains how managers operate, make decisions, solve problems, and interact with others in the workplace. By combining these two definitions, Dessler emphasizes that Management is both a collective identity (the actual managers) and a systematic area of study that explores the practices and functions those managers engage in to guide an organization's success. This dual approach is useful for distinguishing between the people who manage and the study or theory behind Management practices.

Newstrom (2013) defines Management as a process. He (2013, p. 1) writes: *“Management is the process of obtaining, deploying, and utilizing a variety of essential resources to contribute to an organization’s success—both effectively and efficiently. Managers are deemed effective if they achieve their goals and efficient if they do so with a minimal amount of resources for the amount of outputs produced. One of the most important resources of an organization is its employees. Managers devote a large proportion of their efforts to planning, organizing, staffing,*

*leading, and controlling the work of human and other resources. One clear distinction between managers and other employees, however, is that managers direct and guide the work of others rather than perform the work themselves.”* Thus, Newstrom (2013) defines management as an ongoing process of acquiring, allocating, and effectively using essential resources to drive organizational success, balancing effectiveness (achieving goals) with efficiency (minimizing resource use per output). One special point is manager-employee distinction. Managers differ from other employees by focusing on directing and guiding others' work rather than executing tasks themselves, enabling overseeing and optimization of collective efforts. This leadership role ensures resources, especially human ones, contribute maximally to efficiency and goal attainment without wasteful overlap.

In his textbook titled *New Era of Management* (11<sup>th</sup> edition) published in 2014, Daft defines that Management is the attainment of organizational goals in an effective and efficient manner through planning, organizing, leading, and controlling organizational resources. The definition includes two important ideas (Daft, 2014): (1) the four functions of planning, organizing, leading, and controlling, and (2) the attainment of organizational goals in an effective and efficient manner. Daft's definition of Management highlights Management as the process of attaining organizational goals by using resources effectively and efficiently. This definition captures the core purpose of Management while emphasizing both the methods used and the results expected.

Certo and Certo (2019) in their 15<sup>th</sup> edition write (p. 35): *“As used most commonly in this text, management is the process of reaching organizational goals by working with and through people and other organizational resources. A comparison of this definition with the definitions offered by several contemporary management thinkers indicates broad agreement that management encompasses the following three main characteristics:*

- 1. It is a process or series of continuing and related activities.*
- 2. It involves and concentrates on reaching organizational goals.*
- 3. It reaches these goals by working with and through people and other organizational resources.”*

Their defining focuses on achieving organizational goals by collaborating with people and effectively using other organizational assets. The essence of their definition breaks down into three key characteristics: (1) Management as a process: Management is not a one-time event but a continuous sequence of related activities; (2) Goal-oriented focus: The core purpose of Management is to ensure that the organization meets its objectives. This goal-centric view unifies all management activities around a common purpose; and (3) Working with and through people and other resources: Human resources are the people working for the organization and other resources include monetary (money), raw material (ingredients), and capital (machines). Taken together, this definition encapsulates Management as a systematic, purposeful process driven by working with and through employees and other resource use.

Jones and George (2019) define that Management is the planning, organizing, leading, and controlling of human and other resources to achieve organizational goals efficiently and

effectively. According to them, an organization's resources include assets such as people and their skills, know-how, and experience; machinery; raw materials; computers and information technology; and patents, financial capital, and loyal customers and employees. Further they mention that the job of Management is to help an organization make the best use of its resources to achieve its goals. They describe Management as a comprehensive process involving four key functions: planning, organizing, leading, and controlling. Each function plays a critical role in ensuring that an organization uses its resources efficiently and effectively to achieve its goals. It may be that Jones and George (2019) listed "people and their skills, know-how, and experience" and "loyal customers and employees" separately to distinguish between the broader human talent pool and the specific subset of formal employees, emphasizing the multifaceted nature of human resources in organizations. It may be that term *People* refers to the general workforce or individuals contributing skills, knowledge, and experience, which may include contractors, partners, or even potential talent beyond formal employment.

In their 9<sup>th</sup> edition of the textbook titled *Management: A Practical Introduction*, Kinicki and Williams (2020, p. 5) define: “More formally, management is defined as (1) the pursuit of organizational goals efficiently and effectively by (2) integrating the work of people through (3) planning, organizing, leading, and controlling the organization's resources.” According to them, to be efficient means to use resources—people, money, raw materials, and the like—wisely and cost-effectively, and to be effective means to achieve results, to make the right decisions, and to successfully carry them out so that they achieve the organization's goals. Kinicki and Williams (2020) provide a clear and structured definition of management that highlights three key aspects: goal pursuit, integration of people's work, and the core managerial functions of planning, organizing, leading, and controlling. When integrating the work of people is examined, it is evident that Management is fundamentally about coordinating human efforts. It involves bringing various individuals and teams together, aligning their activities, and ensuring they work harmoniously towards shared targets. This integration is vital because people are the primary agents through which organizational plans become reality. Using the functions of planning, organizing, leading, and controlling, the definition highlights classical managerial functions as the means to achieve integration and goal pursuit. Adapting from their writing (p. 9) manager must do getting things done—that is, to achieve the stated goals of the organization he or she works for; must perform what is known as the management process, also called the four management functions: planning (to set goals and decide how to achieve them), organizing (to arrange tasks, people, and other resources to accomplish the work), leading (to motivate, direct, and otherwise influence people to work hard to achieve the organization's goals), and controlling (to monitor performance, compare it with goals, and take corrective action as needed); and all these functions (the abbreviation “POLC”) affect one another, are ongoing, and are performed simultaneously. This comprehensive view aligns well with contemporary management thinking by recognizing management as a dynamic and multifaceted process. It underscores why managers need both analytical skills to optimize resources and interpersonal skills to coordinate people's work effectively.

Robbins and Coulter (2021) have given a distinct answer for the question “What Is Management?” They (2021, p. 37) write: *“Management involves coordinating and overseeing the work activities of others so their activities are completed efficiently and effectively. We already know that coordinating and overseeing the work of others is what distinguishes a managerial position from a nonmanagerial one. However, this doesn’t mean that managers or their employees can do what they want anytime, anywhere, or in any way. Instead, management involves ensuring that work activities are completed efficiently and effectively by the people responsible for doing them, or at least that’s what managers should be doing.”* This definition has an exclusive mention of coordination and overseeing of what other employees do. It indicates that the coordination and overseeing are done by managers. Overseeing means supervision. Robbins and Coulter (2021) offer a clear and distinctive perspective on what management entails. Several important points emerge from their writing or defining: (1) Coordination and Supervision as Core Managerial Tasks: Managing involves organizing how work is done by others and supervising these activities to achieve desired outcomes. This responsibility is what differentiates managers from nonmanagerial employees. Managers have the role of guiding and aligning the efforts of their teams to meet organizational objectives; (2) Not Absolute Freedom: Management is not about allowing people—or even managers themselves—to work in any way they want without structure or accountability. There are boundaries and systems in place to ensure that work follows established standards and objectives. This means managers must balance flexibility with control to maintain order and productivity; (3) Emphasis on Efficiency and Effectiveness: The goal of management, according to Robbins and Coulter, is to make sure that the right tasks are done right (effectiveness), and that resources such as time, effort, and materials are used wisely without waste (efficiency); and (4) Manager's Responsibility: It is the manager’s duty to make sure these standards of efficiency and effectiveness are upheld by those responsible for the work. Managers serve as the facilitators and guardians of both productivity and quality in the workplace. Thus, Robbins and Coulter’s definition encapsulates Management as a structured process of actively coordinating and supervising work, fostering accountability, and ensuring organizational goals are met with optimal use of resources. This way of defining highlights the managerial role in not only directing work but also maintaining the discipline and system that underpin organizational success.

A thorough analysis of the aforementioned definitions indicates a considerable overlap among them. Indeed, the meanings articulated by various scholars exhibit no substantial divergence. Some authors (Stoner, Freeman, and Gilbert; DuBrin) have given several distinct aspects of Management indicating multiple meanings. Fundamentally, Management constitutes the execution of designated activities or functions aimed at administering organizational resources, including employees, to accomplish established objectives.

Refer to Exhibit 2. Characteristics derived from the definitions studied are given in the Exhibit. In this context a characteristic refers to a feature that belongs typically to the definition as done in Opatha (2021) and Opatha (2024).

**Exhibit 2. Characteristics derived from the Definitions**

No.	Author/s	Characteristic/s
1	Hitt, Middlemist, and Mathis	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The use of resources to move effectively towards objectives</li> <li>2. To integrate and coordinate various management activities</li> <li>3. Integration and coordination to be done by managers</li> </ol>
2	Szilagyi	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Management is concerned with three things (1) resources, (2) tasks, and (3) goals.</li> <li>2. Management as a process meaning a systematic and organized way of doing things</li> </ol>
3	Longenecker and Pringle	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Management as a systematic process centred on resource acquisition and integration to fulfil organizational goals.</li> <li>2. Focuses on two key activities: acquiring (obtaining the necessary resources) and combining (integrating these resources effectively, so that they work together seamlessly rather than in silos, optimizing productivity and effectiveness)</li> </ol>
4	Hodgetts	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Management as the process of setting objectives and coordinating the efforts of personnel in order to attain them</li> <li>2. Getting things done through other people</li> </ol>
5	Chandan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The problem-solving nature</li> <li>2. The focus on the efficient use of limited resources</li> <li>3. The acknowledgement of a dynamic, ever-changing environment, meaning managers must adapt strategies and decisions as internal and external conditions evolve</li> <li>4. The collaborative dimension of Management, stressing coordination, communication, and teamwork as essential functions</li> <li>5. Management as a social process, where directing and harmonizing the efforts of others is crucial to overcoming obstacles and attaining goals effectively</li> </ol>
6	Donnelly, Gibson, and Ivancevich	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Management fundamentally as a process consisting of a series of ongoing, interrelated activities</li> <li>2. These activities are carried out by one or more individuals who assume responsibility</li> <li>3. The core of Management as coordinating other people's efforts, i.e., aligning, directing, and combining their work to accomplish common goals. Coordination is necessary because certain outcomes cannot be reached by an individual working alone</li> </ol>



7	Oldcorn	1. Management as a practical and dynamic activity focused on opportunity creation, goal attainment, and effective utilization of resources, primarily through skilled leadership and managerial functions
8	Prasad	1. Getting things done by others 2. Process of achieving goals efficiently 3. Coordinating individual and group efforts
9	Rue and Byars	1. Management as a specific type of work focused on coordination of organizational resources towards achieving organizational objectives. 2. Bringing together diverse resources 3. Ensuring diverse resources are aligned and used effectively
10	Bovee, Thill, Wood, and Dovel	1. Management as a distinct process 2. Management as a set of ongoing, coordinated activities that managers engage in as they pursue the organization's goals
11	Stoner, Freeman, and Gilbert	1. Management as a process involving four core functions: planning, organizing, leading, and controlling 2. Management not just as a set of tasks, but as an ongoing, purposeful activity that steers an organization towards success 3. Management inherently dealing with the dimension of time in three ways: (1) Creating a desirable future while considering past and present (2) Historical context of Management practice (3) Consequences emerging over time 4. Effective Management as deeply relational and complex due to three main factors: (1) Two-way influence (2) Spillover effects (3) Multiple simultaneous relationships
12	Griffin	1. Management as a set of activities (including planning and decision making, organizing, leading, and controlling) 2. The activities directed at an organization's resources (human, financial, physical, and information) 3. The aim of achieving organizational goals in an efficient and effective manner
13	DuBrin	1. Management as a Process 2. Management as a Discipline 3. Management as People 4. Management as a Career

14	Dessler	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A collective identity (the actual managers)</li> <li>2. A systematic area of study exploring the practices and functions those managers engage in to guide an organization's success</li> </ol>
15	Newstrom	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Management as an ongoing process of acquiring, allocating, and effectively using essential resources to drive organizational success</li> <li>2. To balance effectiveness (achieving goals) with efficiency (minimizing resource use per output)</li> <li>3. Manager-employee distinction</li> </ol>
16	Daft	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The four Management functions of planning, organizing, leading, and controlling</li> <li>2. The attainment of organizational goals in an effective and efficient manner</li> </ol>
17	Certo and Certo	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Management as a process</li> <li>2. Goal-oriented focus</li> <li>3. Working with and through people and other resources</li> </ol>
18	Jones and George	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A comprehensive process involving four key functions</li> <li>2. To help an organization make the best use of its resources to achieve its goals is the job of Management.</li> <li>3. Emphasis on the multifaceted nature of human resources in organizations</li> </ol>
19	Kinicki and Williams	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Goal pursuit</li> <li>2. Integration of people's work</li> <li>3. The core managerial functions of planning, organizing, leading, and controlling.</li> </ol>
20	Robbins and Coulter	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Coordination and supervision as core managerial tasks</li> <li>2. Not absolute freedom</li> <li>3. Emphasis on efficiency and effectiveness</li> <li>4. Manager's responsibility as the facilitators and guardians of both productivity and quality in the workplace.</li> </ol>

An attempt was made to develop a list of characteristics of Management based on what has been given in Exhibit 1. The list is given below.

1. Management is the use of resources to move effectively towards objectives.
2. Management involves integrating and coordinating various management activities done by managers.
3. Management is concerned with three things (1) resources, (2) tasks, and (3) goals.
4. Management is a process meaning a systematic and organized way of doing things.
5. Management is a systematic process centred on resource acquisition and integration to fulfil organizational goals.

6. Management has focuses on two key activities: acquiring (obtaining the necessary resources) and combining (integrating these resources effectively, so that they work together seamlessly rather than in silos, optimizing productivity and effectiveness).
7. Management is the process of setting objectives and coordinating the efforts of personnel in order to attain them.
8. It involves getting things done through other people
9. It has a problem-solving nature.
10. It has the focus on the efficient use of limited resources.
11. It has to deal with a dynamic, ever-changing environment, meaning managers must adapt strategies and decisions as internal and external conditions evolve.
12. It has a collaborative dimension of Management, stressing coordination, communication, and teamwork as essential functions.
13. Management is a social process, where directing and harmonizing the efforts of others is crucial to overcoming obstacles and attaining goals effectively
14. Management is fundamentally a process consisting of a series of ongoing, interrelated activities carried out by one or more individuals who assume responsibility.
15. The core of Management is coordinating other people's efforts, i.e., aligning, directing, and combining their work to accomplish common goals or certain outcomes which cannot be reached by an individual working alone.
16. Management is a practical and dynamic activity focused on opportunity creation, goal attainment, and effective utilization of resources, primarily through skilled leadership and managerial functions.
17. Management is getting things done by others.
18. Management is a process of achieving goals efficiently.
19. It is about coordinating individual and group efforts.
20. Management is a specific type of work focused on coordination of organizational resources towards achieving organizational objectives.
21. Management involves bringing together diverse resources, and ensuring diverse resources are aligned and used effectively.
22. Management is a distinct process.
23. Management is a set of ongoing, coordinated activities that managers engage in as they pursue the organization's goals.
24. Management is a process involving four core functions: planning, organizing, leading, and controlling.
25. Management is not just as a set of tasks, but as an ongoing, purposeful activity that steers an organization towards success.
26. Management inherently deals with the dimension of time in three ways: (1) Creating a desirable future while considering past and present (2) Historical context of Management practice (3) Consequences emerging over time.
27. Effective Management is deeply relational and complex due to three main factors: (1) Two-way influence (2) Spillover effects (3) Multiple simultaneous relationships.
28. Management is a set of activities (including planning and decision making, organizing, leading, and controlling).

29. Management has activities directed at an organization's resources (human, financial, physical, and information).
30. Management has the aim of achieving organizational goals in an efficient and effective manner.
31. Management is a process.
32. Management is a discipline.
33. Management is people who do management.
34. Management is a career having a set of jobs arranged in a hierarchy.
35. Management is a collective identity (the actual managers).
36. Management is a systematic area of study exploring the practices and functions those managers engage in to guide an organization's success.
37. Management is an ongoing process of acquiring, allocating, and effectively using essential resources to drive organizational success.
38. Management is about balancing effectiveness (achieving goals) with efficiency (minimizing resource use per output).
39. Management has manager-employee distinction: those who do management are managers and those who work under managers are employees.
40. Management has four Management functions of planning, organizing, leading, and controlling.
41. Management involves the attainment of organizational goals in an effective and efficient manner.
42. Management is a process.
43. Management has goal-oriented focus.
44. Management involves working with and through people and other resources.
45. Management is a comprehensive process involving four key functions
46. To help an organization make the best use of its resources to achieve its goals is the job of Management.
47. Management has an emphasis on the multifaceted nature of human resources in organizations.
48. Management has a goal pursuit.
49. Management has an integration of people's work.
50. The core managerial functions are planning, organizing, leading, and controlling.
51. Coordination and supervision are core managerial tasks.
52. Management does not allow absolute freedom, as it involves operating within boundaries and systems that ensure work adheres to established standards and objectives, rather than permitting individuals or managers to work without structure or accountability.
53. Management has an emphasis on efficiency and effectiveness.
54. Manager's responsibility is to serve as the facilitators and guardians of both productivity and quality in the workplace.

A total of fifty-four characteristics were initially derived from the twenty definitions. It was observed, however, that several of these characteristics shared similar meanings, resulted in conceptual overlap, or conveyed closely related ideas using different terminology. Therefore,

a systematic effort was made to consolidate, refine, and rewrite the characteristics to eliminate duplication, redundancy, and semantic overlap. To enhance clarity, the final set of characteristics was organized into six thematic groups: (1) Process-related characteristics; (2) People-related characteristics; (3) Resource-related characteristics; (4) Environmental and contextual characteristics; (5) Responsibility, accountability and role characteristics; and (6) Disciplinary and occupational characteristics. Exhibit 2 presents the consolidated and thematically organized set of characteristics, which together represent a comprehensive conceptualization of the nature and essence of Management.

**Exhibit 2. The Final List of Consolidated Characteristics of Management**

Group	Characteristics
Process-related characteristics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Management is a continuous, systematic, and organized process.</li> <li>2. It consists of a series of ongoing, interrelated, and purposeful activities.</li> <li>3. It involves planning, organizing, leading, and controlling (the four core functions).</li> <li>4. It includes decision-making and problem-solving.</li> <li>5. The process is inherently goal-oriented and directed toward achieving objectives.</li> <li>6. The process involves creating a desirable future while considering past, present, and long-term consequences (time orientation).</li> </ol>
People-related characteristics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Management involves working with and through people.</li> <li>8. It requires coordinating, harmonizing, aligning, and directing people's efforts.</li> <li>9. Collaboration, communication, teamwork, and interpersonal relationships are essential components.</li> <li>10. It is a social process involving influence, relationships, and two-way interactions.</li> <li>11. Management includes supervision and leadership as core responsibilities.</li> <li>12. It recognizes a distinction between managers and employees based on role and responsibility.</li> </ol>
Resource-related characteristics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>13. Management involves acquiring, allocating, integrating, and utilizing resources.</li> <li>14. Ensuring efficient use of limited resources is a key managerial concern.</li> <li>15. It focuses on using resources effectively and efficiently to optimize productivity and performance.</li> <li>16. It includes bringing together diverse resources and ensuring their proper alignment.</li> <li>17. It is responsible for balancing effectiveness (achieving goals) with efficiency (optimal resource use).</li> </ol>

Environmental & contextual characteristics	18. Management operates within a dynamic, ever-changing environment requiring adaptation. 19. It involves opportunity creation, improvement, and innovation. 20. It requires operating within boundaries, rules, systems, and accountability structures (not absolute freedom). 21. Managers must consider external and internal factors influencing organizational success.
Responsibility, accountability & role characteristics	22. Management involves responsibility and accountability for results. 23. Managers act as facilitators and guardians of productivity and quality. 24. Management includes coordinating work that individuals alone cannot accomplish. 25. It ensures that work adheres to standards, systems, and organizational expectations.
Disciplinary & occupational characteristics	26. Management is a distinct discipline and systematic area of study. 27. It represents a specific type of work carried out by individuals called managers. 28. Management is a collective identity (the group of people performing managerial roles). 29. It is a career comprising a hierarchy of managerial jobs. 30. Management is a comprehensive and multifaceted concept involving human, physical, financial, and informational resources.

The consolidated characteristics shown in Exhibit 2 present a structured and coherent understanding of the essence of Management. Although the original twenty definitions vary in wording, emphasis, and theoretical orientation, they converge around a shared conceptual core. The findings suggest that Management is fundamentally a process—continuous, systematic, organized, and goal-oriented. This process requires purposeful planning, organizing, leading, and controlling, all of which are directed toward achieving defined objectives. Equally important is the people-centred nature of Management. The characteristics emphasize that Management is a social process involving communication, influence, collaboration, leadership, and interpersonal relationships. Managers work with and through others, making human coordination an indispensable foundation for organizational success.

The resource-oriented perspective also emerges strongly. Management requires the acquisition, integration, and efficient utilization of various resources—human, physical, financial, and informational. Balancing efficiency and effectiveness becomes a central managerial responsibility. Another core dimension is the environmental and contextual orientation of Management. Managers must respond to changing conditions, consider long-term implications, and remain adaptive in dynamic environments. Innovation, opportunity

identification, boundary management, and contextual alignment all form part of this dynamic role.

The characteristics further reinforce that Management entails responsibility and accountability for results, as well as adherence to organizational systems, standards, and expectations. Managing activities that individuals alone cannot accomplish positions managers as facilitators and guardians of productivity and quality. Finally, Management is revealed as both a discipline and a profession. It represents a structured body of knowledge while simultaneously defining a hierarchy of roles performed by individuals known as managers. This dual identity underscores its academic legitimacy and practical significance.

Together, these themes outline Management as a holistic, multifaceted, and integrative phenomenon encompassing processes, people, resources, and environmental dynamics, i.e., all oriented toward the achievement of organizational goals.

### **Discussion and A Synthesized Definition**

The analysis of twenty authoritative definitions positions Management as a complex, integrative, and goal-directed process rather than a single, narrowly defined activity. The dominant perspective emphasizes Management as a systematic sequence of interrelated functions—planning, organizing, leading, and controlling—forming the backbone of a process-oriented understanding. The people-oriented perspective, derived from the people-related characteristics, underscores that managerial work is inherently social. Managers mobilize human effort through communication, coordination, motivation, and leadership. Managerial effectiveness thus depends not merely on technical competence but also on relational and interpersonal capabilities, emphasizing the social complexity inherent in managerial roles.

Equally significant is the resource-oriented perspective, which aligns with the resource-based view of management practice. Managers are responsible for acquiring, allocating, and integrating diverse resources to achieve optimal productivity and performance. The dual imperatives of efficiency and effectiveness emerge as central themes, highlighting Management's responsibility in ensuring that goals are accomplished with judicious use of limited resources. The contextual and environmental perspective acknowledges the dynamic conditions under which Management operates. Organizations function within changing environments, requiring managers to identify opportunities, adapt strategies, and foster continual improvement. The time orientation dimension—which includes retrospective evaluation, present responsiveness, and future preparation—illustrates the complexity and judgement inherent in managerial decision-making.

The fifth thematic category, responsibility, accountability, and role, brings out the managerial obligation to ensure results, maintain standards, and coordinate work that exceeds the capacity of individuals acting alone. Managers thus serve as custodians of organizational performance and integrity. The final category positions Management both as a discipline, i.e., with a structured body of knowledge and as an occupation comprising a distinct set of roles

and responsibilities. This dual identity reflects the academic foundations of Management as well as its practical expression in hierarchical organizations.

Collectively, these perspectives show that Management integrates processes, people, resources, and environmental considerations toward one core purpose: the achievement of organizational objectives. The unified conceptual framework derived in this study offers theoretical clarity and supports improved understanding for both academic inquiry and professional practice.

Thus, a synthesized overview follows. Management, as reflected across twenty authoritative definitions, emerges as a multidimensional and integrative process aimed at the effective and efficient attainment of organizational goals. It is fundamentally a continuous and systematic set of activities involving planning, staffing, organizing, leading, and controlling. The concept is inherently social, requiring managers to work with and through people by coordinating, communicating, motivating, and directing their efforts. Management also entails the acquisition, allocation, integration, and optimal use of diverse resources to enhance productivity, quality, and performance which are organizational outcomes or results. Operating within a dynamic and ever-changing environment, Management must adapt to contextual shifts, consider time-based implications, and pursue opportunities for improvement and growth. Ultimately, Management embodies both a discipline and a career, embedding responsibility, accountability, and relational complexity within its central purpose of achieving organizational objectives.

Using the 20 characteristics and six conceptual categories or dimensions, the following integrated and academically robust definition is proposed:

*“Management is a systematic and continuous process of planning, organizing, leading, and controlling organizational activities by working with and through human resources to efficiently and effectively acquire, allocate, and utilize resources, adapt to dynamic environmental conditions, coordinate individual and collective efforts, foster innovation, and ensure accountability for accomplishing desired goals and enhancing sustainable performance.”*

This synthesized definition offers a comprehensive conceptualization, well-suited for scholarly research and advanced pedagogical applications.

### **Concluding Remarks**

This study demonstrates that definitions of Management, although varied in expression, converge around a shared conceptual nucleus. By systematically analyzing twenty authoritative definitions and synthesizing their underlying components, the paper distills a coherent framework comprising six thematic categories and a consolidated list of thirty characteristics. These characteristics provide a holistic understanding of the nature of Management and its theoretical foundations. The study contributes to academic literature by enhancing definitional clarity, resolving terminological ambiguities, and offering a structured framework that can support teaching, research, and managerial practice. The thematic



synthesis not only enriches conceptual understanding but also reinforces the multidimensional nature of Management as a process, a social activity, a resource-oriented endeavour, an environmental response mechanism, a responsibility-laden role, a recognized discipline, and a recognized profession. By presenting an integrated view of Management, this paper strengthens pedagogical effectiveness and serves as a guiding reference for educators, students, scholars, and practitioners seeking a clear and comprehensive conceptualization of what Management fundamentally is.

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