



## Multidisciplinary Integration in Modern Management: A Systematic Review of Seven Strategic Perspectives

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### Abstract

**Background:** The development of modern management and business science cannot be separated from interdisciplinary interactions and the complexity of global challenges. From classical management theories of the 1960s to the modern era of artificial intelligence (AI) and global crises, both academia and practitioners are increasingly required to adopt an integrative approach. Challenges in digital marketing, financial literacy, economic disruption, and human resource (HR) management demand the unification of diverse perspectives to build a more adaptive and relevant management framework.

**Objective:** This article aims to summarize and synthesize findings from seven key scientific articles to present cross-issue perspectives and approaches that enrich contemporary management theory and practice. This synthesis is expected to identify new integrative patterns that can serve as a conceptual reference for the development of context-based and technology-driven management.

**Method:** A descriptive qualitative approach was used in the form of a literature review of seven scientific articles from reputable international journals, covering topics such as management theory, digital marketing, financial behavior, responses to global crises, and HR systems.

**Results:** The synthesis of the seven articles presented highlights the significant contributions of various management disciplines to modern management. This synthesis connects theory and practice, ranging from classical approaches like Koontz to cutting-edge technologies like AI in marketing. Furthermore, managerial approaches need to be tailored to actual situations and needs, such as in financial education, global policy, and HR management. Overall, this synthesis reflects the importance of cross-scale and cross-disciplinary perspectives—integrating aspects of psychology, technology, economics, and human resources—to form a more comprehensive management framework that is relevant to today's challenges.

**Conclusion:** The synthesis of these seven articles demonstrates that modern management requires cross-disciplinary integration to address the challenges of the digital era, global crises, and organizational transformation. The resulting framework supports the need for management that is adaptive, contextual, and technology-based, while also affirming the importance of harmonizing theory, practice, and the dynamic realities of contemporary organizations.

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*Received: 19 April 2025*

*Revised: 09 May 2025*

*Accepted: 25 May 2025*

*Published online:*

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**Key Words :**

*COVID-19; Multidisciplinary Integration; Artificial Intelligence; Financial Literacy; Human Resource Management Systems.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Management science has undergone significant evolution since the mid-20th century. Harold Koontz (1961) described this condition as a "jungle of management theory," referring to the plethora of managerial approaches that developed in parallel yet remained unintegrated. In his later revision (1980), he identified eleven main approaches encompassing behavioral, social system, contingency, and managerial role aspects, and offered an operational approach as a synthesizing solution to unify theory and practice (Agustina et al., 2023).

However, to this day, a research gap remains in bridging this legacy of classical theory with the realities of contemporary management. Modern management challenges are no longer linear but are complex and dynamic, as explained by complexity theory. Organizations must now navigate uncertainty in the global landscape, disruptive technologies, and environmental sustainability pressures (ESG). Unfortunately, few studies have connected Koontz's frameworks to issues such as AI adoption, digital customer experience, global market crises, and post-pandemic HR dynamics.

In an effort to build such an integrative framework, this study reviews seven scientific articles from reputable journals, selected purposively. These articles reflect three important pillars in contemporary management: (1) conceptual foundations and the synthesis of management theory (Koontz), (2) technology and consumer behavior (AI and CEM), and (3) organizational responses to crises and structural changes (financial markets, financial education, and HR). The article selection was limited to English-language publications in internationally indexed databases (Scopus/WoS), which, of course, introduces limitations regarding the diversity of local contexts and non-Western approaches. To enhance transparency, the PRISMA framework is recommended as a guide for the article selection process.

### Critical Analysis and Synthesis Contribution

Koontz underscored the fragmentation of management theory and the need for operational integration. Mariani et al. (2022) emphasize AI as a key element in marketing, but their work tends to be biased toward studies in developed countries and does not thoroughly address the ethics of data usage. Homburg et al. (2017) developed a Customer Experience Management (CEM) framework but have not tested CEM resistance in B2B or public sector contexts. Fernandes et al. (2014) revealed the limited impact of financial education when not provided at the right time, yet their approach heavily relies on cross-sectional survey data without strong experimental controls. Zhang et al. (2020) highlighted the pandemic's impact on global financial market volatility but did not delve deeply into its effects on digital marketing and HR management, which were significantly disrupted by COVID-19. Boon et al. (2019) pointed out weaknesses in HR system measurements but have not yet incorporated ESG contexts and the inclusivity of remote work as new post-pandemic dynamics.

### Multidisciplinary Synthesis Contribution

The synthesis of these seven articles forms an integrative conceptual model that balances three levels of approach:

1. **Theoretical-Practical:** Connecting the conceptual foundations of classical management (Koontz) with cutting-edge technological applications (AI, CEM).
2. **Macro-Micro:** Bridging global policies (Zhang) with individual behavioral responses (Fernandes, Homburg).
3. **Cross-Functional:** Unifying marketing, HR, finance, and technology into a single adaptive organizational response framework.

### Practical and Ethical Research Implications

This study proposes a manager training model based on Koontz's operational approach combined with digital literacy, ESG understanding, and cross-disciplinary adaptive skills. Real-world applications can be observed in companies like Amazon and Unilever, which integrate AI, customer experience, and sustainability principles into their organizational strategies. As this study uses secondary data, there are no research ethics violations; however, the analysis of sensitive data (e.g., market impacts or HR systems) was conducted with a critical and non-inductive approach.

### ANALYSIS METHOD

This research employs a literature review approach, structured and presented narratively, guided by the integrative literature review method as outlined by Torraco (2005). Its primary focus is to synthesize theoretical and practical insights from seven selected scientific articles to develop a cross-disciplinary understanding of contemporary management theory and practice.

#### Article Selection Criteria

The articles analyzed were selected purposively based on the following criteria:

1. **Thematic Relevance:** Articles must discuss fundamental aspects of management theory or practice, including topics such as organizational theory, digital marketing, financial behavior, human resources, or responses to global crises.
2. **Conceptual or Empirical Contribution:** Articles present new theoretical frameworks, significant empirical findings, or substantive critiques of existing management approaches.
3. **Source Credibility:** Articles are sourced from reputable, indexed international scientific journals (Scopus/Web of Science).
4. **Timeliness or Historical Relevance:** Recent articles (post-2010) to reflect contemporary issues, as well as classic articles that remain relevant as theoretical foundations (e.g., Koontz, 1961/1980).
5. **Language:** Articles are written in English to ensure comparability and accessibility of data within the global academic sphere.

The seven selected articles reflect a diversity of approaches and thematic scope, ranging from classical management (Koontz), digitalization and AI (Mariani et al.), CEM (Homburg et al.), financial education (Fernandes et al.), the pandemic's impact on markets (Zhang et al.), to contemporary HR systems (Boon et al.)

### Thematic Analysis Procedure

The analysis was conducted using a thematic synthesis approach, which consists of three main stages:

1. **Core Data Extraction:**

- Identifying the research objectives, theoretical approaches, methodologies, and main contributions of each article.
  - Data was extracted manually and classified into a synthesis matrix to facilitate systematic comparison.
2. Initial Coding and Theme Mapping:
- An inductive open coding process was carried out to identify key terms, dominant concepts, and logical structures within each article.
  - The initial codes were then grouped into major themes reflecting key areas in modern management, such as "technology integration in management," "organizational resilience to crises," and "recontextualization of classical theory."
3. Thematic Synthesis and Narrative Development:
- Each theme was compared across articles to identify interconnections, differences, and potential integrations.
  - The synthesis results were articulated in a critical narrative linking the literature to multidisciplinary challenges in current management theory and practice.
  - A conceptual model, a theme relationship heatmap, and a historical timeline were developed to support the visual representation of the synthesis findings.

This method enables the study to not only compile findings but also generate new insights into the evolutionary direction of management through a dialogue between different approaches.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Harold Koontz's article, "The Management Theory Jungle" (1961), critiques the state of management science during his time, which he viewed as chaotic and unstructured. He described this condition as a "management theory jungle," where various approaches developed without clear direction and often contradicted one another. Many parties attempted to define management from their respective viewpoints—psychologists emphasized interpersonal relationships, sociologists viewed it as a social system, economists stressed decision-making aspects, while exact scientists formulated it through mathematical models. Consequently, management became a fragmented and confusing discipline.

In response to this disarray, Koontz developed a taxonomy of six major schools of management theory. The first is The Management Process School, which regards management as a universal process. This approach is grounded in functional principles such as planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, and controlling—as popularized by Henri Fayol (1949). Koontz explained that although Fayol's work was only widely translated in the late 1940s, many thinkers like Gulick, Mooney, and Urwick had already developed similar ideas. In practice, this approach analyzes managerial activities based on four key questions: what is the nature, purpose, structure, and process of each managerial function? While not entirely dismissing social and cultural contexts, it remains focused on the core activities of management so that they can be studied and taught systematically.

The second school, The Empirical School, emphasizes the importance of case studies and real-world experience in understanding management. Koontz cites figures like Ernest Dale, who employed a comparative approach to analyze the managerial practices of various successful leaders. The focus of this approach is not on establishing universal theory, but on drawing lessons from real contexts that can be applied in practice.

The third school is The Human Behavior School, which highlights the psychological aspects and dynamics of human relationships within organizations. The fourth, The Social System School, views the organization as an interconnected cultural social system. The fifth, The Decision Theory School, focuses on the process of rational decision-making as the core managerial function. Finally, The Mathematical School utilizes mathematical models and quantitative approaches to analyze organizational problems.

Koontz (1961) concluded that the main problem was not the diversity of approaches itself, but rather the lack of effort to unify and integrate them harmoniously. He urged academics and practitioners to clarify terminology, remain open to other approaches, and build management theory that is more structured, grounded in real practice, yet still open to scientific testing. For Koontz, management was not just a science, but also a vital contribution to society that must be developed seriously and collaboratively.

In his article titled "The Management Theory Jungle Revisited," Koontz (1980) re-examined the conceptual chaos in management theory that he had previously termed the "management theory jungle." Whereas in his 1961 work he had identified six main approaches, in this revision he found that management theory had expanded into eleven distinct approaches, signifying increasing complexity. Koontz outlines each approach concisely yet incisively.

First, the Empirical/Case Approach focuses on learning from real cases. While useful, he cautions that without efforts to formulate general principles, this approach can be misleading. Second, the Interpersonal Behavior Approach emphasizes interpersonal relationships and individual motivation, with roots in psychology. Third, the Group Behavior Approach examines how group dynamics, social norms, and organizational culture influence management effectiveness.

Fourth, the Cooperative Social Systems Approach views the organization as a coordinated social network, drawing on the thinking of Chester Barnard. Fifth, the Sociotechnical Systems Approach highlights the importance of balancing technical and social systems, especially in an increasingly digitalized work environment. Sixth, the Decision Theory Approach elevates rational decision-making as the core managerial activity.

Seventh, the Systems Approach regards the organization as an open system interconnected with its environment, arguing that management theory should be built considering the interrelationships between system elements. Eighth, the Mathematical/Management Science Approach relies on mathematical models to aid planning and control processes, though it is too narrow to represent the entirety of management.

Ninth, the Contingency/Situational Approach asserts that there is no single best way to manage; approaches must be adapted to the organizational context and conditions. Tenth, the Managerial Roles Approach, developed by Mintzberg, describes the actual roles of managers—such as leader, liaison, and negotiator—focusing on what truly happens in practice.

Finally, the eleventh approach, the Operational Theory Approach, is the one explicitly endorsed by Koontz himself. He advocates for the integration of management theories based on five core managerial functions: planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling

*Table 1. Management Theory Approaches and Applications*

<b>Approach</b>	<b>Main Focus</b>	<b>Academic Basis</b>	<b>Application Example</b>
<b>Empirical/Case Approach</b>	Real-world case studies and managerial experience	Management practice	Case discussions in business schools
<b>Interpersonal Behavior Approach</b>	Interpersonal relationships and individual motivation	Individual psychology	Soft-skills & communication training
<b>Group Behavior Approach</b>	Group behavior within organizations	Sociology, anthropology	Team building and organizational culture change
<b>Cooperative Social Systems Approach</b>	Organization as cooperative social system	Organization theory	Application of Barnard's theory in work structures
<b>Sociotechnical Systems Approach</b>	Interaction between social and technical systems	Engineering & behavioral science	Job redesign in manufacturing industries
<b>Decision Theory Approach</b>	Rational decision-making processes	Economics & decision theory	Strategic choice analysis in management
<b>Systems Approach</b>	Organization as complex open system	General systems theory	Work system analysis in complex organizations
<b>Mathematical/Management Science Approach</b>	Mathematical models for optimization	Mathematics & operations research	Inventory models and operations simulation
<b>Contingency/Situational Approach</b>	Situational management actions	Behavioral & contextual science	Leadership style adjustment according to context
<b>Managerial Roles Approach</b>	Actual roles performed by managers	Managerial observation	Studies of CEO and middle manager roles
<b>Operational Theory Approach</b>	Core management functions	Management theory integration	Strategic planning & performance control

Harold Koontz explains that although there are eleven approaches in management theory, we need not debate them. Instead, all these approaches can complement each other when unified within a comprehensive framework. He proposes the operational approach as the solution—a perspective focused on the five main functions of management: planning, organizing, selecting and managing people, leading, and controlling. This approach also remains open to ideas from other fields such as psychology, sociology, or mathematics, as long as they can contribute to management practice.

Subsequently, in the article *AI in marketing, consumer research and psychology: A systematic literature review and research agenda*, Mariani et al. (2022) discuss how artificial intelligence (AI) is beginning to play a significant role in three interrelated fields: marketing, psychology, and consumer research. Although each field has extensively researched AI, there has yet to be a comprehensive and interdisciplinary mapping that fully integrates all three. Yet, understanding psychology is crucial in explaining consumer behavior, while marketing serves as a primary domain for AI application. To address this, the authors conducted a systematic literature review (SLR) of 4,488 articles from the Scopus database up to mid-2021. As a result, they identified eight major topics frequently discussed in AI research across these three fields. These topics include computational logic and artificial memory, decision-making processes, artificial neural networks, machine learning and language analysis, as well as the use of AI in social media—both for text mining and content analysis. Additionally, research often explores consumer technology acceptance and the use of AI in big data processing and service robotics. Equally important, the study identified 412 theories and models used by researchers in studying AI, such as TAM (Technology Acceptance Model), UTAUT, and the Theory of Planned Behavior. Other theories like Game Theory and Computational Decision Theories are used to simulate human thinking or interactions that can be replicated by AI. In practice, AI is most commonly used for machine learning, social media analysis, marketing personalization, and interactions with chatbots or service robots. The most active countries researching this field are the United States, the United Kingdom, and China.

In conclusion, the article proposes a future research agenda that encourages cross-disciplinary collaboration. The authors suggest that theories from psychology and social sciences should be utilized to enrich technological approaches. They also advocate for the exploration of less commonly used theories, such as anthropomorphism (attributing human characteristics to machines), construal level theory (psychological distance in consumer perception), and actor-network theory (which views technology as part of human social networks).

In the article *Customer experience management: toward implementing an evolving marketing concept*, Homburg et al. (2017) discuss how the marketing landscape is rapidly changing, primarily due to the impact of digitalization and the increasingly active, transparent, and connected role of consumers. In this context, many practitioners have begun to regard Customer Experience Management (CEM) as a promising approach to address contemporary market challenges. Unfortunately, in academia, the concept of CEM is still not clearly understood. The term is often used, but its meaning remains fragmented, unsystematic, and not well differentiated from other marketing management concepts such as CRM or market orientation.

Through in-depth interviews with 52 senior managers across various industries, Homburg et al. (2017) developed a new conceptual framework for CEM. They found that CEM is not just a marketing technique but a comprehensive management approach within a company. Three main components constitute CEM: (1) Cultural mindsets – organizational cultural patterns that place customer experience at the center of orientation; (2) Strategic directions – the strategies companies use to design customer experiences that are holistic, consistent, and relevant to consumer needs; and (3) Firm capabilities – the company's ability to continuously update and adapt customer experiences over time. The authors also identified four distinct patterns of CEM implementation, depending on company size and type of business relationship (sustainable or transactional). With these findings, CEM is positioned as a highly valuable organizational resource that can help companies build long-term customer loyalty and sustainable competitive advantage.

In the conclusion of this research, Homburg et al. (2017) emphasize that Customer Experience Management (CEM) is not merely a trend but a crucial strategic approach for companies in the current era. CEM is not solely the responsibility of marketing or customer service teams but involves the entire organization—from organizational mindset and business strategy to internal capabilities to continually adapt to changing customer needs. The study demonstrates that to successfully implement CEM, companies must cultivate a customer-focused mindset, develop clear strategies for creating enjoyable experiences, and possess the capability to execute them

consistently. Each company may implement CEM differently, depending on its business size and the type of relationship it builds with customers—whether long-term relationships or occasional transactions. Overall, the conclusion of this research is that CEM is not just about making customers happy but about creating meaningful experiences to foster customer loyalty and enable sustainable company growth amid increasingly fierce competition.

Financial Literacy, Financial Education and Downstream Financial Behaviors by Fernandes et al. (2014) addresses the complex financial decisions faced by modern consumers—from choosing loan products and managing investments to retirement planning. While many believe financial literacy and education are the primary solutions, and governments, non-profits, and international organizations have invested billions in financial education programs, there remains limited evidence of their significant impact on financial behavior. This study seeks to answer a critical question: Do financial literacy and education truly affect consumer financial behavior?

Fernandes et al. (2014) conducted a meta-analysis of 201 studies from 168 scientific articles, supplemented by three additional field studies. The results were surprising: financial education interventions accounted for only about 0.1% of the variance in financial behaviors—an exceedingly small effect. Even when programs were lengthy and intensive, their impact tended to fade after 18–20 months. In contrast, studies measuring financial literacy levels (without educational interventions) showed a stronger correlation with financial behaviors. However, the authors caution that these results may be biased, as many studies failed to control for psychological variables such as planning habits, self-confidence, and risk tolerance. When these psychological factors were accounted for in the authors' empirical studies, the influence of financial literacy on behavior diminished significantly or became statistically insignificant. This suggests that attitudes and habits play a more substantial role in everyday financial decision-making than knowledge alone.

The study reveals that traditional financial education is not as effective as widely believed. After analyzing hundreds of studies and conducting additional research, the authors found that financial education has minimal impact on behavioral change—especially if not applied immediately. For instance, knowledge about debt management or retirement planning tends to fade quickly if not put into practice, typically within two years. Furthermore, the study challenges the assumption that higher financial literacy directly translates to better financial behavior. When important variables like planning habits, self-control, and confidence are considered, the standalone effect of literacy becomes considerably weaker. This indicates that knowledge alone is insufficient; mindset, attitudes, and daily behaviors are more influential. In conclusion, Fernandes et al. (2014) recommend a shift in financial education strategy. Instead of providing information prematurely when it may not yet be relevant, education should be delivered in a timely and contextual manner—such as when an individual is taking out a loan, buying a house, or starting an investment. This approach, termed "just-in-time financial education," ensures knowledge is provided when it is most needed, rather than long beforehand.

Financial markets under the global pandemic of COVID-19 by Zhang et al. (2020) examines how the COVID-19 pandemic, which emerged in early 2020, delivered a massive shock not only to global health but also to economies and financial markets worldwide. When the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a pandemic in March 2020, global stock markets immediately exhibited extreme volatility unprecedented in history. Within a very short period, major indices such as the S&P 500 in the United States, the FTSE in the United Kingdom, and key Asian indices plummeted sharply. This tremendous uncertainty triggered investor panic, prompting governments to implement emergency policies such as zero interest rates and unlimited quantitative easing (QE). This research aims to understand how global financial markets reacted to the pandemic and whether these policies helped stabilize the situation or instead introduced new uncertainties.

Using daily data from stock markets across multiple countries and global COVID-19 case numbers up to the end of March 2020, the researchers found that the pandemic caused a significant

surge in financial market risk worldwide. Market volatility increased sharply, and countries with higher COVID-19 case counts experienced greater instability in their stock markets. For example, volatility in the United States in March was nearly four times higher than in February. Additionally, the study revealed that systemic risk between countries—the degree to which markets in different countries are interconnected and influence each other—also increased during the crisis. The correlation between European and U.S. markets strengthened, while Asian markets, initially more isolated, gradually became more integrated. However, economic policies such as quantitative easing implemented by the U.S. introduced new uncertainties, particularly for developing countries, as the effects could spread unevenly and add pressure to global stability.

This study demonstrates that the COVID-19 pandemic triggered an unprecedented shock to global financial markets. As the virus spread rapidly worldwide, uncertainty soared and directly impacted stock markets across nations. Volatility—or price fluctuations—increased drastically, and cross-country systemic risk surged sharply. Countries with the highest case numbers experienced the most severe risk spikes, reflecting the pandemic's profound impact on global economic stability. Zhang et al. (2020) also found that policy responses from major countries, particularly the United States, such as zero interest rates and unlimited quantitative easing, helped alleviate short-term panic but created new long-term uncertainties. The lack of synchronization between national policies and global dynamics caused markets to react differently. For instance, Asian markets showed changing connectivity patterns post-pandemic, becoming more integrated yet still out of sync with Western markets. Most concerning, the study highlights signs of disintegration in global cooperation, with countries tending to take individual rather than coordinated actions in managing the crisis. When countries act separately, financial risks become harder to control and may exacerbate the crisis itself. The authors warn that in a global crisis like this, lack of international coordination could pose a greater threat than the virus itself.

A Systematic Review of Human Resource Management Systems and Their Measurement by (Boon et al., 2019) discusses how researchers in human resource management (HRM) have begun to agree that the approach to HR should not focus solely on individual practices but should view them as interconnected systems. This means the effectiveness of one HR practice (such as training or compensation) is highly influenced by other practices within the same system. However, although the idea of "HR as a system" is widely accepted, there remains considerable ambiguity in how these systems are conceptualized and measured. Various terms such as high-performance systems, commitment systems, and involvement systems are used interchangeably, often without clear explanations of their differences. Therefore, this study systematically reviews 495 empirical studies on HR systems to examine how approaches, measurements, and research designs related to HR systems have evolved over time.

(Boon et al., 2019) explain that although the number of studies on HR systems continues to grow, many still face conceptual and methodological challenges. One key finding is the lack of consensus regarding what constitutes an HR system, both in terms of terminology, included practices, and measurement methods. Even systems with the same label may encompass vastly different practices. Additionally, most studies still rely on simplistic measurement approaches, such as additive indices (summing scores of various practices), which fail to capture the interactions and synergies between practices that are central to the concept of HR systems. Furthermore, (Boon et al., 2019) note that while data sources have become more diverse over time—shifting from being dominated by HR managers to increasingly involving employees as respondents—this also introduces new challenges, as data from different organizational levels may reflect different realities. Moreover, many studies continue to use cross-sectional research designs, making it difficult to understand the long-term effects of HR systems on organizational performance. Ultimately, the article highlights that although HR systems have become an important topic in strategic management, there is still considerable "homework" to be done to improve conceptual clarity and measurement accuracy, ensuring that research findings truly reflect the real relationship between HR systems and organizational performance.

In conclusion, this study finds that although the concept of Human Resource Management (HRM) as a system is widely acknowledged in academic literature, its practical application in research remains inconsistent and fraught with challenges. There is significant confusion regarding how HR systems are defined, which practices are included, and how best to measure them. Labels such as high-performance work systems, commitment-based systems, and involvement-oriented systems are frequently used but not always clearly or uniformly explained. Overall, (Boon et al., 2019) call for HRM researchers to exercise greater care and precision in defining the concept of HR systems and advocate for the use of more complex and realistic measurement approaches, such as considering the combined effects of practices, organizational context, and multi-level perspectives. Only through such efforts can we truly understand how HR systems strategically create value and competitive advantage for organizations.

## CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that contemporary management theory and practice are at a strategic crossroads demanding cross-disciplinary and multidisciplinary integration. Arising from the need to unify diverse classical management theories, particularly within the context of contemporary challenges such as digital technology adoption, evolving consumer behavior, personal financial transformation, global economic uncertainty, and HR system consistency, this study emphasizes the importance of adaptive and contextual approaches. Although it has reviewed seven key relevant articles, the literature coverage could be expanded to include perspectives from other fields such as information technology, education, and environmental studies. The analysis employed remains qualitative and narrative, thus not yet deeply exploring quantitative relationships between approaches. Therefore, future research should consider broader meta-analyses and empirical testing of this integrative model in real organizational contexts.

This study recommends developing manager training models based on an operational approach strengthened with digital literacy, understanding of sustainability principles, and cross-disciplinary adaptive skills to shape leaders who are not only functionally competent but also responsive to modern business dynamics. The practical application of this multidisciplinary integration can be observed in global companies that combine technology, market orientation, and ESG principles in their management strategies. From an ethical perspective, this research did not involve primary data or interventions with individuals, thus raising no significant ethical issues; however, it maintained critical analysis of sensitive secondary data to ensure objectivity and interpretive accuracy.

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