
Editorial: Historical Present. Seeking integrative papers to advance research on management history

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Introduction

Before beginning and conducting research, scholars are forced to make choices. They must define the research topic and clarify its boundaries, select a theoretical background and adopt a methodology. All these choices must be made according to the type of paper each scholar wishes to share with their audience. Not surprisingly, there is growing interest in the types of documents scholars can consider and select to be most effective with their research. In the field of management history, integrative papers (based on the analysis and synthesis of primary research findings to provide new insights and summarized knowledge on a specific topic) seem to be undervalued. This editorial examines the actions that underlie the writing of integrative papers, highlights the contribution they can make and encourages management history scholars to consider them for their further research.

The types of papers in the portfolio of management history scholars

This section recalls and reviews the types of papers that management history scholars can choose from. First, it should be noted that the list is not intended to be exhaustive. Instead, it aims only to include the most common types of papers to highlight their strengths and weaknesses. In fact, each type requires a specific approach and serves a specific purpose. Therefore, understanding the differences among the types of papers is crucial to advancing management history research appropriately.

Let us begin with definition papers ([Tebeaux, 1980](#); [Lidow, 2022](#)). These provide pure and genuine descriptions of a topic without the authors' personal opinions. Concepts related to the topic are defined, but not analyzed, so that scholars can create a solid foundation for further discussion and analysis and help readers understand the topic. In the field of management history, these documents, also labeled as positioning papers ([Barney, 2018, 2020](#)), are used and relevant to narrate a specific historical event, define its key concepts and terms, provide definitions or present implications for further analysis. Management history scholars may also opt for scoping articles ([Brown et al., 2019](#); [Manesh et al., 2020](#); [Rasoolimanesh et al., 2023](#)). These are reviews that attempt to provide an initial indication of the potential size and nature of the existing literature on an emerging topic.

Definition papers overlap somewhat with descriptive or narrative papers. In descriptive papers ([Speckbacher et al., 2003](#); [Fuertes et al., 2020](#)), scholars offer reviews to help determine the extent to which a body of knowledge about a particular research topic reveals patterns or trends that can be interpreted in relation to preexisting propositions, theories, methodologies or findings. In narrative papers ([Valle Santos and García, 2006](#); [Morrell, 2008](#); [Zhang et al., 2023](#)), scholars share reviews to summarize what other scholars write about a particular topic, without seeking generalizations or cumulative knowledge from what is being reviewed. Scholars who submit descriptive or narrative papers do more than definition papers, but they do not go as far. They do not limit their role to recalling events, concepts, terms, definitions or implications, but they do not analyze data, theories and concepts to discover insights and draw new conclusions.



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