

Responsible AI governance in human resource management: A systematic literature review of ethics, trust, and algorithmic decision-making

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Abstract

Artificial intelligence (AI) has increasingly transformed human resource management (HRM) through automated recruitment, workforce analytics, predictive decision-making, and digital talent management. However, the rapid integration of AI within organizational environments has also generated governance challenges related to ethics, employee trust, transparency, accountability, and algorithmic decision-making. This study aims to examine AI governance in HRM by focusing on the relationship between ethical challenges, trust formation, and governance mechanisms in AI-driven organizational systems. This study employed a systematic literature review (SLR) approach following the PRISMA 2020 framework. Data were collected from the Scopus database, resulting in 20 peer-reviewed studies published between 2020 and 2026. The findings indicate that AI governance in HRM has evolved into a multidimensional organizational issue extending beyond technological implementation. Ethical concerns such as algorithmic bias, surveillance, discrimination, and limited transparency significantly influence employee trust and organizational legitimacy. Furthermore, responsible AI implementation requires governance mechanisms emphasizing transparency, explainability, ethical auditing, and human oversight. This study contributes to the AI governance literature by providing an integrated understanding of ethics, trust, and algorithmic decision-making within HRM contexts while offering practical implications for responsible AI implementation in workforce management.

INTRODUCTION

Artificial intelligence (AI) has become one of the most transformative technological developments influencing organizational systems and managerial practices across industries. Organizations increasingly adopt AI-driven technologies to improve operational efficiency, automate organizational processes, and strengthen data-driven decision-making systems. The rapid expansion of digital transformation has significantly altered organizational structures, communication systems, and workforce management practices, particularly within human resource management (HRM). Recent studies indicate that AI technologies are increasingly integrated into organizational operations to support predictive analytics, intelligent automation, and strategic workforce planning (Alainati et al., 2025; Mihai et al., 2023; Yabanci, 2023). Furthermore, the emergence of Industry 4.0 and digital organizational ecosystems has intensified organizational dependence on AI-assisted systems

to improve competitiveness and operational effectiveness (Malik et al., 2022). Consequently, AI is no longer viewed merely as a technological tool but as a strategic organizational resource shaping managerial decision-making and governance structures.

The increasing integration of AI technologies within HRM has transformed traditional human resource functions into automated and data-driven organizational systems. AI technologies are currently utilized in recruitment processes, employee selection, workforce analytics, talent management, performance evaluation, and predictive decision-making systems. The adoption of AI in HRM allows organizations to process large volumes of workforce data efficiently while supporting faster and more accurate organizational decisions. Wiblen and Marler (2021) argued that digitalized talent management systems increasingly influence HR professionals' roles and organizational decision-making structures. Similarly, Böhmer and Schinnenburg (2023)

emphasized that AI-driven HRM systems contribute to the development of organizational capabilities and strategic workforce management. Existing studies also demonstrate that AI adoption in HRM has shifted organizational practices from administrative-based systems toward predictive and algorithmic management systems (Androniceanu, 2025; Votto et al., 2021). As organizations continue integrating AI into HRM practices, governance-related concerns regarding accountability, transparency, and organizational control have become increasingly important.

Despite the organizational advantages offered by AI technologies, the implementation of AI-driven HRM systems has generated significant ethical and governance challenges. Algorithmic decision-making systems frequently raise concerns regarding fairness, discrimination, privacy, transparency, and accountability. AI-assisted recruitment systems, for example, may unintentionally reproduce historical biases embedded within training data, potentially creating discriminatory organizational outcomes. Furthermore, AI surveillance technologies and automated workforce monitoring systems may threaten employee autonomy and organizational trust. Aloisi (2024) highlighted that algorithmic management systems create substantial concerns regarding labor rights, data protection, and organizational accountability. Similarly, Špadina (2023) emphasized that AI implementation within employment processes creates legal and ethical challenges associated with transparency and non-discriminatory practices. Ethical AI scholars have also argued that governance mechanisms are necessary to ensure responsible AI implementation within organizations (Floridi et al., 2018). Moreover, Mittelstadt (2019) argued that ethical principles alone are insufficient without effective governance mechanisms capable of enforcing accountability and transparency. These issues indicate that AI governance within HRM extends beyond technological efficiency and increasingly involves ethical responsibility and organizational legitimacy.

In addition to ethical concerns, employee trust has emerged as a critical issue influencing the successful implementation of AI systems within organizational environments. Employees may perceive AI technologies as threats to job security, professional autonomy, and workplace fairness, particularly when organizational decisions are heavily dependent on opaque algorithmic systems. Trust toward AI systems significantly influences employee acceptance, organizational adaptation, and willingness to collaborate with AI-assisted technologies. Glikson and Woolley (2020) explained that transparency and explainability play essential roles in developing trust toward AI systems. Furthermore, Fu (2026) demonstrated that employee awareness of AI technologies affects career resilience and organizational adapta-

tion processes. Campino and Asvestopoulou (2025) also found that AI expansion contributes to employee anxiety and concerns regarding job displacement. Similarly, Poisat et al. (2024) emphasized that HR professionals perceive AI implementation as both an organizational opportunity and a workforce challenge. These findings suggest that organizational trust and employee acceptance are fundamental dimensions shaping the legitimacy of AI governance in HRM systems.

Although previous studies have examined AI adoption, digital transformation, and algorithmic systems within organizational environments, the existing literature remains fragmented and conceptually disconnected. Many studies primarily focus on technological efficiency, automation, or digital transformation without comprehensively integrating ethical governance, employee trust, and algorithmic accountability within HRM contexts. Existing governance discussions are frequently separated from trust-related studies, while ethical analyses are often disconnected from organizational decision-making frameworks. Jobin et al. (2019) argued that global AI governance frameworks remain fragmented across institutions and regulatory environments. Furthermore, Usman et al. (2025) highlighted that AI-HRM research continues to develop rapidly but lacks integrative conceptual synthesis regarding governance dimensions. Similarly, Votto et al. (2021) emphasized that research concerning AI-driven HRM remains dominated by technological and operational perspectives rather than governance-oriented analyses. As a result, there remains limited understanding regarding how ethics, trust, and algorithmic decision-making interact within AI governance systems in HRM.

Based on these issues, this study aims to conduct a systematic literature review examining AI governance within HRM by focusing on ethics, trust, and algorithmic decision-making dimensions. This review synthesizes previous studies to identify major governance challenges, thematic patterns, and conceptual relationships emerging from AI implementation within organizational HRM systems. By employing a systematic and transparent review approach, this study contributes to the growing literature concerning AI governance and HRM while offering a conceptual foundation for future organizational and managerial research. The study also provides practical implications for organizations seeking to implement AI systems responsibly and sustainably within HRM practices.

LITERATURE REVIEW

AI in Human Resource Management

Artificial intelligence (AI) has increasingly transformed organizational management systems, particularly within the field of human resource management

(HRM). The integration of AI technologies into HRM practices has enabled organizations to automate administrative processes, improve workforce analytics, and strengthen strategic decision-making capabilities. AI-driven HRM systems are commonly utilized in recruitment, employee selection, talent management, performance evaluation, and predictive workforce planning. As organizations continue to adopt digital technologies, HRM functions have gradually shifted from conventional administrative systems toward data-driven and algorithmic management structures.

Wiblen and Marler (2021) explained that digitalized talent management systems significantly influence organizational decision-making and redefine the strategic role of HR professionals. Similarly, Bilon and Litwin (2023) argued that HRM digitalization contributes to organizational flexibility and operational transformation within modern organizational environments. These developments demonstrate that AI technologies increasingly shape organizational workforce management and strategic HR practices.

The rapid development of AI technologies has also expanded organizational dependence on intelligent systems to support workforce efficiency and organizational competitiveness. AI-driven HRM systems are capable of processing large-scale workforce data and generating predictive organizational insights that support managerial decision-making. Böhmer and Schinnenburg (2023) emphasized that AI implementation in HRM contributes to the development of organizational capabilities and enhances strategic workforce management. In addition, Androniceanu (2025) highlighted that AI technologies increasingly influence HR processes, particularly in organizational decision-making and administrative automation. Existing studies further indicate that AI integration within HRM contributes to organizational innovation, digital transformation, and strategic workforce optimization. However, despite these organizational advantages, the increasing reliance on AI technologies also raises concerns regarding organizational governance, transparency, and accountability within HRM systems.

AI Governance and Ethical Concerns

The growing adoption of AI technologies within organizational systems has intensified discussions regarding AI governance and ethical accountability. AI governance generally refers to organizational mechanisms, regulatory structures, and ethical frameworks designed to ensure that AI systems operate responsibly, transparently, and fairly. In HRM contexts, governance issues become increasingly important because algorithmic systems directly influence employment decisions, workforce monitoring, and organizational control mechanisms. Floridi et al. (2018) proposed that responsible AI systems should prioritize ethical principles

such as fairness, accountability, transparency, and explainability. These principles are essential for ensuring that organizational AI systems do not generate discriminatory outcomes or undermine organizational legitimacy. Consequently, governance structures are increasingly viewed as critical components supporting responsible AI implementation in organizational environments.

Ethical concerns surrounding AI implementation in HRM are primarily associated with algorithmic bias, surveillance, privacy violations, and discriminatory decision-making processes. AI recruitment systems may unintentionally reproduce historical biases embedded within organizational data, resulting in unfair employment outcomes. Similarly, algorithmic monitoring systems may create excessive organizational surveillance and threaten employee autonomy.

Aloisi (2024) argued that algorithmic management systems create important challenges related to labor rights, data protection, and workplace fairness. Likewise, Špadina (2023) emphasized that AI implementation in employment systems requires stronger legal and ethical safeguards to prevent discriminatory practices and governance failures. Furthermore, Mittelstadt (2019) argued that ethical principles alone are insufficient without effective governance mechanisms capable of enforcing organizational accountability. These findings suggest that organizations require comprehensive governance structures capable of balancing technological efficiency with ethical responsibility and workforce protection.

The governance of AI systems within HRM also involves explainability and organizational transparency. AI systems frequently operate through complex algorithmic models that are difficult for employees and organizational stakeholders to understand. This lack of transparency may reduce organizational trust and increase concerns regarding fairness and accountability. Ethical governance therefore requires organizations to develop explainable AI systems that allow employees and managers to understand how organizational decisions are generated.

Transparent AI governance mechanisms are particularly important within HRM because employment decisions directly influence workforce opportunities, career development, and organizational relationships. Consequently, explainability and transparency increasingly function as central dimensions supporting responsible AI governance and organizational legitimacy.

Trust and Algorithmic Decision-Making

Trust represents one of the most significant dimensions influencing the acceptance and effectiveness of AI systems within organizational environments. Organizational trust refers to employee confidence regarding

the reliability, fairness, and legitimacy of organizational systems and managerial practices. Mayer et al. (1995) proposed that organizational trust is shaped by factors such as integrity, competence, and benevolence. Within AI-driven HRM systems, employee trust becomes particularly important because organizational decisions are increasingly influenced by algorithmic processes and automated technologies. Employees are more likely to accept AI systems when organizational technologies are perceived as transparent, explainable, and fair. Conversely, opaque algorithmic systems may generate distrust, resistance, and concerns regarding organizational fairness.

Recent studies demonstrate that trust toward AI systems significantly influences employee adaptation, organizational acceptance, and human-AI collaboration within dynamic HRM contexts. Establishing this foundation is critical, as Glikson and Woolley (2020) explained that trust in AI systems is strongly influenced by operational transparency, algorithmic explainability, and clear perceptions of fairness among users.

Nevertheless, Campino and Asvestopoulou (2025) found that rapid AI expansion contributes to heightened employee concerns regarding long-term job security and potential workforce displacement. Similarly, Omoush (2026) emphasized that effective human-AI collaboration inherently depends on organizational trust and proactive, employee-centered governance approaches. These findings indicate that trust functions not only as a psychological factor but also as an essential governance dimension influencing the legitimacy and sustainability of AI implementation in modern HRM systems. Therefore, organizations increasingly require holistic, human-centered governance approaches capable of balancing algorithmic efficiency with employee trust, organizational accountability, and strict ethical responsibility.

METHOD

Review Design

This study employed a systematic literature review (SLR) approach to examine the development of research concerning artificial intelligence (AI) governance in human resource management (HRM), particularly focusing on ethics, trust, transparency, accountability, and algorithmic decision-making. The SLR approach was selected because it enables researchers to systematically identify, evaluate, and synthesize existing academic literature in a transparent, structured, and reproducible manner. Compared with conventional narrative reviews, systematic literature reviews provide stronger methodological rigor through explicit eligibility criteria, structured screening procedures, and systematic thematic synthesis.

This review followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 framework proposed by Page et al. (2021) to ensure transparency throughout the identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion stages of the review process. Furthermore, the methodological procedures adopted in this study were aligned with systematic review principles in management and organizational research as suggested by Sauer and Seuring (2023).

The review specifically focused on academic studies discussing AI implementation and governance within organizational HRM contexts. The study aimed to identify dominant thematic patterns, governance challenges, ethical implications, and conceptual relationships emerging from previous studies concerning responsible AI implementation in HRM environments. In addition, the review sought to synthesize fragmented discussions regarding AI governance and provide an integrated understanding of organizational challenges associated with AI-driven HRM systems.

Search Strategy and Data Sources

The literature search process was conducted using the Scopus database because it is widely recognized as one of the most comprehensive academic databases covering high-quality peer-reviewed journals in management, business, organizational studies, and technology-related disciplines. Scopus was selected due to its broad international coverage, strong indexing standards, and extensive inclusion of interdisciplinary studies related to AI, governance, and HRM.

The review focused on studies published between 2020 and 2026. The publication range was selected because discussions regarding responsible AI governance in organizational HRM contexts have significantly expanded following the accelerated adoption of AI technologies in workplaces after 2020. In particular, growing concerns related to algorithmic bias, ethical governance, employee trust, digital surveillance, and AI-based decision-making became increasingly prominent within HRM scholarship during this period. Therefore, limiting the review to studies published between 2020 and 2026 enabled the analysis to capture recent developments and contemporary governance challenges associated with AI-driven HRM systems. The literature search was conducted in Scopus on May 20, 2026. Consequently, only studies indexed in the database up to the search date were included in the review.

The search strategy employed Boolean search queries combining keywords related to artificial intelligence, governance, HRM, ethics, trust, and algorithmic decision-making. The primary search terms included “artificial intelligence,” “AI governance,” “human resource management,” “ethics,” “trust,” “algorithmic decision-making,” and “digital HRM.” The search

query was refined iteratively to improve the relevance and specificity of the retrieved studies.

Only peer-reviewed journal articles written in English were included in the review process. Meanwhile,

conference papers, editorials, book chapters, and non-peer-reviewed publications were excluded to maintain the academic quality, consistency, and comparability of the dataset.

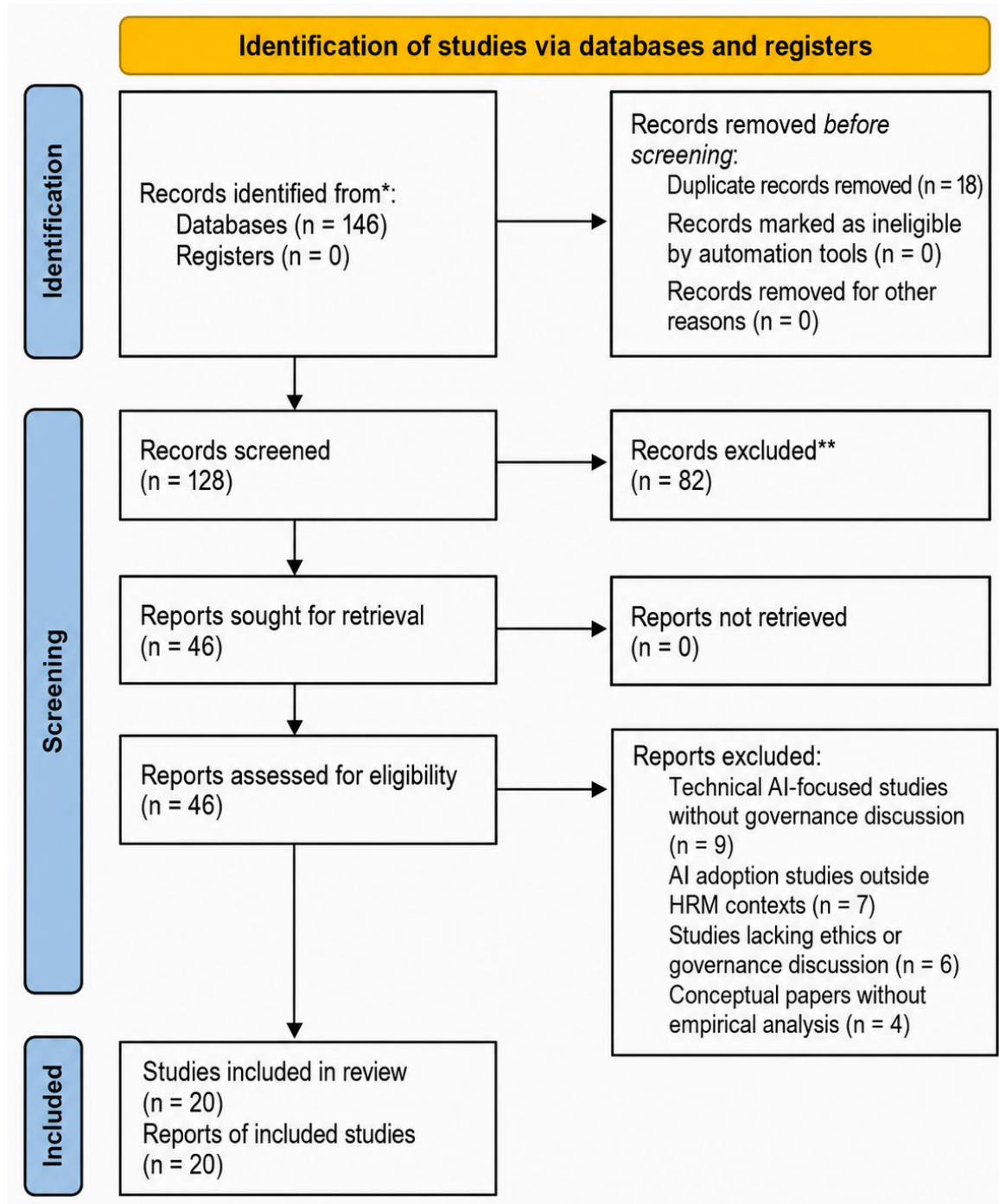


Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Diagram of Study Selection Process

Source. Author(s)' own work.

Eligibility Criteria and Study Selection

The study selection process followed multiple screening stages based on predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria consisted of: (1)

studies focusing on AI implementation within HRM or workforce management systems; (2) studies discussing governance, ethics, trust, accountability, or algorithmic decision-making related to AI adoption; (3) peer-reviewed journal articles; and (4) studies published be-

tween 2020 and 2026. Meanwhile, studies were excluded if they: (1) focused exclusively on technical AI development without organizational relevance; (2) discussed AI outside HRM or workforce management contexts; (3) lacked substantial discussion regarding governance, ethics, trust, or organizational implications; or (4) were duplicate or incomplete records.

The study selection process was conducted systematically using the PRISMA 2020 framework to ensure transparency and reproducibility throughout the review process. The identification stage began with a comprehensive search in the Scopus database using predefined Boolean search queries related to artificial intelligence, governance, human resource management, ethics, trust, and algorithmic decision-making. The initial search identified 146 records. After removing 18 duplicate records, 128 studies remained for the title and abstract screening process.

During the screening stage, 82 studies were excluded because they did not meet the inclusion criteria. The excluded studies primarily consisted of articles discussing AI applications outside HRM contexts, studies focusing mainly on technical AI development without organizational governance implications, studies unrelated to ethics or AI governance, and publications lacking relevance to workforce management environments.

Subsequently, 46 reports proceeded to the full-text eligibility assessment stage. During this stage, 26 studies were excluded for several reasons: (1) studies focused primarily on technical AI systems without discussing organizational governance implications ($n = 9$); (2) studies discussing AI adoption outside HRM or workforce management contexts ($n = 7$); (3) studies lacking substantial discussion regarding ethics, trust, accountability, or algorithmic governance ($n = 6$); and (4) conceptual or theoretical papers without sufficient empirical or organizational analysis related to AI governance in HRM ($n = 4$).

The final review included 20 peer-reviewed studies that were considered highly relevant to the research objectives. These studies formed the basis for the thematic synthesis and conceptual analysis conducted in this review. The detailed identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion process is presented in Figure 1. The final dataset consists of studies specifically addressing organizational governance challenges associated with AI-driven HRM systems. The selected studies provide substantial discussion regarding ethics, trust, accountability, transparency, and algorithmic decision-making within organizational contexts.

Data Extraction and Analysis Strategy

The data extraction process was conducted systematically to identify relevant information from the selected studies. The extracted data included author names, publication years, research contexts, study ob-

jectives, methodologies, governance dimensions, and major findings related to AI governance in HRM. Each study was reviewed carefully to identify recurring concepts, governance challenges, and organizational implications associated with AI-driven HRM systems.

The data analysis process employed a thematic synthesis approach to classify and interpret the major themes emerging from the reviewed studies. The thematic coding process focused on four primary dimensions: (1) ethical challenges, (2) trust toward AI systems, (3) algorithmic decision-making, and (4) AI governance mechanisms. Thematic synthesis was selected because it enables researchers to integrate findings from diverse organizational contexts and methodological approaches while identifying conceptual relationships across studies. Through this process, the review generated an integrated conceptual understanding of AI governance in HRM and identified major research gaps and future research directions within the existing literature.

RESULTS

Characteristics of Included Studies

The systematic review identified 20 studies that met the predefined inclusion criteria and were subsequently analyzed through thematic synthesis. Table 1 presents the characteristics of the selected studies, including the authors, publication years, research objectives, methodological approaches, organizational contexts, and principal findings.

The reviewed studies demonstrate increasing scholarly attention toward artificial intelligence (AI) governance within human resource management (HRM), particularly concerning ethics, trust, algorithmic decision-making, and workforce governance. Most of the included studies were published between 2023 and 2026, indicating that responsible AI governance in HRM has emerged as a rapidly expanding research area in recent years.

The literature also reflects substantial contextual diversity. The reviewed studies examined AI implementation across multiple organizational environments, including manufacturing industries, public administration, healthcare organizations, SMEs, tourism industries, digital HRM systems, recruitment platforms, and algorithmic management environments. Geographically, the studies covered both developed and developing contexts, including China, Germany, Australia, Croatia, Morocco, Kuwait, Poland, Romania, Türkiye, India, South Africa, Pakistan, Jordan, Spain, and European Union governance systems. This contextual variation suggests that AI governance challenges in HRM are not restricted to particular industries or national contexts but increasingly represent a global organizational concern.

Table 1. Characteristics of the Selected Studies

No	Author(s) & Year	Research Objective	Method	Context / Research Object and Country	Key Findings
1	Zhang et al. (2024)	To develop an AI-based decision support framework for ergonomic optimization in manufacturing processes.	Predictive analytics and MCDM framework	Fashion manufacturing industry, China	AI-driven decision systems improved ergonomic assessment accuracy and supported more efficient workforce management decisions.
2	Böhmer and Schinnenburg (2023)	To examine how AI-driven HRM contributes to organizational capability development.	Conceptual and organizational analysis	Organizational HRM governance, Germany	Effective AI governance requires balancing technological capability with ethical and organizational accountability.
3	Wiblen and Marler (2021)	To analyze the implications of automated talent decisions for HR professionals.	Qualitative HRM analysis	Digital talent management, Australia	Automation transformed HR roles and increased concerns regarding transparency and professional judgment in recruitment.
4	Špadina (2023)	To explore legal and ethical issues surrounding AI use in employment processes.	Legal analysis	Employment and labor regulation, Croatia	AI adoption in employment raises challenges related to discrimination, privacy, and legal accountability.
5	Fu (2026)	To investigate the relationship between AI awareness and employee career resilience.	Quantitative mediation analysis	Financial enterprises, China	Employee willingness to protect professional boundaries mediated the relationship between AI awareness and career resilience.
6	Ibourk and El Alami (2026)	To assess the role of AI and digitalization in tourism employability and recruitment practices.	Empirical employability study	Tourism industry, Morocco	AI-based recruitment increased efficiency but also highlighted skill gaps and employability inequalities among graduates.
7	Alainati et al. (2025)	To examine organizational readiness for AI adoption in HRM-supported marketing activities.	Organizational readiness analysis	AI-driven marketing and HRM, Kuwait	Organizational readiness, leadership support, and employee adaptation significantly influenced AI adoption success.
8	Bilon and Litwin (2023)	To analyze HRM digitalization processes in multidisciplinary companies.	Organizational case analysis	Ship design companies, Poland	HR digitalization improved operational coordination but required stronger governance mechanisms and workforce adaptation.
9	Androniceanu (2025)	To evaluate AI implementation in public administration HR processes.	Public administration analysis	Government HR processes, Romania	AI enhanced administrative efficiency, although governance and ethical oversight remained critical concerns.
10	Yabanci (2023)	To explore intelligent HRM practices in SMEs undergoing digital transformation.	Conceptual and SME-focused analysis	SMEs and intelligent HRM, Türkiye	Intelligent HRM systems supported organizational agility and competitiveness during digital transformation.
11	Satish et al. (2025)	To investigate the role of AI-enabled transformational leadership in healthcare management.	Leadership and workforce analysis	Healthcare sector, India	AI-supported leadership improved workforce performance, adaptability, and operational effectiveness.
12	Mihai et al. (2023)	To examine AI-based digital transformation in EU organizations.	Organizational and policy analysis	European Union organizations	Successful digital transformation depended on governance quality, institutional readiness, and technological integration.
13	Poisat et al. (2024)	To explore HR managers' perceptions of AI impacts on the workforce.	Qualitative perception study	Workforce management, South Africa	HR managers perceived AI as both an opportunity for efficiency and a threat to employment stability and trust.
14	Votto et al. (2021)	To systematically review AI applications in tactical HRM.	Systematic literature review	HRM systems and AI integration	AI integration enhanced recruitment, selection, and workforce analytics but raised concerns about ethics and bias.
15	Onyshchenko et al. (2026)	To propose a method for evaluating human resource value using intelligent systems.	Intelligent evaluation model	HR evaluation systems, Ukraine	AI-based evaluation systems integrated hard and soft skills more comprehensively for workforce assessment.
16	Aloisi (2024)	To analyze the regulation of algorithmic management in the European Union.	Regulatory and legal analysis	Labor governance in the EU	Algorithmic management requires stronger protections regarding data privacy, non-discrimination, and worker rights.
17	Malik et al. (2022)	To investigate employee responses toward AI implementation in Industry 4.0 organizations.	Quantitative employee analysis	Industry 4.0 organizations, Pakistan	AI adoption influenced employee perceptions of job security, performance expectations, and workplace adaptation.

Continued on the next page

No	Author(s) & Year	Research Objective	Method	Context / Research Object and Country	Key Findings
18	Usman et al. (2025)	To map the intellectual development of AI-HRM integration research from 2000–2024.	Bibliometric review	Global AI-HRM literature	AI-HRM research increasingly focuses on governance, ethics, trust, and employee-centered approaches.
19	Omoush (2026)	To examine human-AI collaboration and employee outcomes in HRM.	Empirical collaboration study	E-supply chain management, Jordan	Human-AI collaboration positively affected employee outcomes when supported by organizational trust and adaptive management.
20	Campino and Asvestopoulou (2025)	To examine the relationship between trust in AI services and fear of job displacement.	Quantitative survey and regression analysis	AI service users across industries	Fear of job displacement reduced trust in AI, while adaptability and institutional trust strengthened trust in AI services.

Source. Author(s)' own work.

Methodologically, the reviewed literature demonstrates a combination of conceptual, qualitative, quantitative, legal, organizational, and empirical approaches. Several studies employed conceptual or governance-oriented analyses to examine organizational transformation and ethical accountability associated with AI adoption in HRM (Aloisi, 2024; Schinnenburg & Böhrner, 2025). In contrast, empirical and quantitative studies focused more strongly on employee trust, job insecurity, workforce adaptation, and organizational acceptance of AI systems (Campino & Asvestopoulou, 2025; Fu, 2026; Malik et al., 2022). Other studies emphasized algorithmic recruitment systems, digital HRM transformation, and AI-assisted managerial decision-making (Wiblen & Marler, 2021).

Despite methodological diversity, the reviewed studies collectively indicate that AI governance in HRM is increasingly understood as an interdisciplinary issue involving technological capability, organizational accountability, workforce protection, and ethical governance.

Ethical Challenges in AI-HRM

One of the strongest convergent patterns across the reviewed studies concerns the emergence of ethical challenges associated with AI implementation in HRM systems. Although the studies examined different organizational contexts and methodological approaches, most consistently identified fairness, discrimination, transparency, surveillance, and accountability as major governance concerns.

Several studies specifically emphasized that AI-driven recruitment and workforce analytics systems may reproduce organizational bias because algorithmic models are frequently trained using historical employment data. Studies focusing on legal and governance dimensions argued that algorithmic systems may unintentionally reinforce discrimination within recruitment, promotion, and workforce evaluation processes (Aloisi, 2024; Špadina, 2023). Similar concerns were identified in organizational and employee-centered studies,

which showed that employees frequently perceive AI-based management systems as potentially unfair or insufficiently transparent (Malik et al., 2022; Poisat et al., 2024).

The reviewed studies also demonstrate convergence regarding the relationship between algorithmic management and organizational surveillance. Aloisi (2024) argued that algorithmic governance systems may weaken labor protections and increase managerial surveillance over workers. Comparable findings emerged in workforce-oriented studies, where employees expressed concerns regarding reduced professional autonomy and declining human judgment within recruitment and performance evaluation systems (Wiblen & Marler, 2021). These findings collectively indicate that ethical challenges are not limited to technical algorithmic bias but extend to broader organizational power relations and workforce governance structures.

However, some divergence also appears across the literature. Studies emphasizing organizational efficiency and digital transformation tended to portray AI implementation as beneficial for operational coordination, productivity, and workforce optimization (Bilon & Litwin, 2023). In contrast, legal and employee-centered studies more strongly emphasized ethical risks, labor vulnerability, and governance failures associated with excessive reliance on algorithmic systems. This divergence suggests that the perception of AI governance challenges frequently depends on analytical orientation. Organizational performance studies tend to prioritize efficiency outcomes, whereas governance-oriented studies prioritize ethical safeguards and workforce protection.

Despite these differences, the literature supports the conclusion that effective AI governance in HRM requires balancing technological efficiency with ethical accountability, transparency, and organizational responsibility. Across the reviewed studies, governance failures frequently emerged when organizations prioritized automation and predictive efficiency without implementing sufficient ethical oversight mechanisms.

Trust Toward AI Systems

Trust emerged as another dominant and highly interconnected theme across the reviewed studies. The literature consistently demonstrates that employee trust significantly influences organizational acceptance, legitimacy, and sustainability of AI-driven HRM systems.

A strong convergent pattern across empirical studies indicates that transparency and explainability function as critical determinants of trust toward AI systems. Employees are more likely to accept AI-assisted decision-making when organizational systems are perceived as understandable, fair, and accountable (Campino & Asvestopoulou, 2025; Fu, 2026). Similarly, HR professionals and managers emphasized that employee trust depends on organizational communication, governance transparency, and managerial accountability during AI implementation processes (Poisat et al., 2024).

Several studies also converged in identifying AI-related anxiety and job insecurity as major barriers affecting workforce acceptance. Campino and Asvestopoulou (2025) demonstrated that concerns regarding job displacement negatively influence employee trust toward organizational AI systems. Comparable findings emerged in Malik et al. (2022), where AI adoption affected employee perceptions of job security, workplace stability, and performance expectations. Fu (2026) similarly showed that employee awareness of AI technologies influences adaptation processes and career resilience. Collectively, these studies indicate that trust toward AI systems is closely linked to employee perceptions regarding workforce protection and organizational fairness.

At the same time, divergence emerges regarding the extent to which AI systems are perceived positively by organizational actors. Some studies portrayed AI implementation as an opportunity to improve workforce performance, adaptability, and organizational effectiveness (Omoush, 2026; Satish et al., 2025). In contrast, other studies highlighted employee fears regarding dehumanization, declining autonomy, and reduced employment security.

This divergence suggests that trust toward AI systems is not determined solely by technological capability but also by organizational governance quality and implementation strategy. Studies emphasizing human-centered governance approaches generally reported more positive workforce outcomes, whereas studies involving opaque or poorly communicated AI systems identified stronger resistance and distrust among employees.

Overall, the reviewed literature collectively demonstrates that trust should not be interpreted merely as an individual psychological response. Instead, trust functions as an organizational governance mechanism

shaped by transparency, explainability, communication practices, ethical safeguards, and employee participation in AI implementation processes.

Algorithmic Decision-Making and Governance Mechanisms

The reviewed studies consistently demonstrate that algorithmic decision-making increasingly shapes organizational HRM practices, particularly in recruitment, workforce analytics, performance evaluation, talent management, and predictive organizational systems.

Several studies converged in arguing that AI-assisted systems significantly improve organizational efficiency and managerial decision-making capacity. Various studies examining the digital transformation of human resource management (HRM) and intelligent workforce management systems emphasize the strategic value of artificial intelligence (AI) for organizational coordination and performance management (Mihai et al., 2023; Yabanci, 2023).

However, the literature also demonstrates substantial convergence regarding the risks associated with excessive dependence on algorithmic systems. Wiblen and Marler (2021) argued that automated decision systems may reduce professional judgment and alter the strategic role of HR professionals. Comparable concerns emerged in governance-oriented studies emphasizing that algorithmic systems often operate as opaque “black-box” technologies that are difficult for employees and organizational stakeholders to interpret (Androniceanu, 2025).

An important pattern emerging across the literature is the growing recognition that technological efficiency alone is insufficient for sustainable AI implementation in HRM. Studies consistently emphasized the importance of governance mechanisms capable of maintaining organizational accountability and workforce legitimacy. Several studies specifically highlighted the importance of (a) explainable AI systems; (b) ethical auditing mechanisms; (c) transparency protocols; (d) human oversight structures; and (e) employee-centered governance approaches.

Omoush (2026) emphasized that effective human-AI collaboration depends on adaptive governance systems capable of balancing automation with human managerial oversight. Similarly, Androniceanu (2025) argued that AI implementation requires institutional governance structures capable of maintaining accountability, transparency, and ethical responsibility.

Nevertheless, divergence exists regarding the extent to which organizations are institutionally prepared to implement responsible AI governance. Studies examining organizational readiness and leadership adaptation generally portrayed AI implementation as man-

ageable when supported by governance structures and workforce adaptation mechanisms (Alainati et al., 2025; Satish et al., 2025). Conversely, legal and workforce-centered studies argued that many organizations still lack adequate governance safeguards to prevent algorithmic discrimination, privacy violations, and workforce exploitation.

Taken together, the reviewed studies collectively indicate that algorithmic decision-making and governance mechanisms are deeply interconnected dimensions within AI-driven HRM systems. Organizational legitimacy increasingly depends not only on technological performance but also on the capacity of governance systems to maintain fairness, transparency, accountability, and employee trust.

Integrative Thematic Synthesis

The thematic synthesis reveals that ethics, trust, algorithmic decision-making, and governance in AI-driven HRM are deeply interconnected. While weak governance and opacity drive employee distrust and organizational resistance, transparent systems with human oversight and adaptive governance foster positive workforce outcomes and organizational legitimacy. Furthermore, AI-HRM scholarship has shifted conceptually. Rather than prioritizing mere technological capabilities and organizational efficiency, recent literature increasingly emphasizes employee-centered governance, ethical accountability, workforce protection, and responsible AI implementation. Consequently, responsible AI governance in HRM transcends technological boundaries. It presents a multidimensional organizational challenge that demands integrated frameworks to effectively balance automation with ethical responsibility, workforce trust, organizational legitimacy, and managerial accountability.

DISCUSSION

Theoretical Contributions

The findings of this systematic literature review demonstrate that artificial intelligence (AI) governance within human resource management (HRM) has evolved into a multidimensional organizational issue involving ethics, trust, accountability, and algorithmic decision-making. The reviewed studies consistently indicate that AI implementation in HRM extends beyond technological automation and increasingly influences organizational legitimacy, workforce governance, and managerial responsibility. Previous studies concerning AI in HRM have often focused primarily on technological efficiency and digital transformation, while governance-related dimensions remain fragmented and conceptually disconnected. This review therefore contributes to

the existing literature by integrating ethical governance, employee trust, and algorithmic decision-making into a unified conceptual discussion.

The findings also reinforce previous arguments suggesting that responsible AI implementation requires organizational governance mechanisms capable of balancing technological innovation with ethical accountability. Floridi et al. (2018) argued that AI systems should operate according to principles of transparency, fairness, accountability, and explainability. Similarly, Mittelstadt (2019) emphasized that ethical principles alone are insufficient without effective governance structures capable of enforcing organizational responsibility. The reviewed studies demonstrate that organizations implementing AI-driven HRM systems frequently encounter governance challenges associated with algorithmic bias, workforce surveillance, discriminatory outcomes, and limited transparency. Consequently, governance mechanisms increasingly function as strategic organizational safeguards designed to maintain workforce trust and organizational legitimacy.

In addition, this review highlights the importance of integrating trust dimensions into AI governance discussions within HRM contexts. Existing studies frequently discuss trust, ethics, and governance separately, resulting in fragmented conceptual understandings regarding responsible AI implementation. However, the findings of this review indicate that employee trust significantly influences organizational acceptance of AI systems and determines the legitimacy of algorithmic decision-making processes. Glikson and Woolley (2020) explained that explainability and transparency are fundamental factors shaping trust toward AI systems. Trust is strongly associated with integrity, competence, and organizational reliability. Therefore, this review contributes theoretically by positioning trust as a central governance dimension influencing responsible AI implementation within HRM systems.

Before presenting the future research agenda, the review identifies several important research gaps emerging from the existing literature. The reviewed studies demonstrate that AI governance research within HRM remains dominated by discussions concerning technological implementation and operational efficiency, while governance integration and employee-centered approaches remain underdeveloped.

Table 2 demonstrates that future research should increasingly focus on integrated governance approaches capable of balancing organizational efficiency with ethical accountability and workforce protection. Future studies should also examine cross-cultural governance practices, explainable AI systems, and employee-centered governance mechanisms to strengthen responsible AI implementation within organizational HRM environments.

Table 2. Research Gaps and Future Research Directions

Research Gap	Evidence from Literature	Future Direction
Fragmented governance discussions	Ethics, trust, and governance often discussed separately	Development of integrated AI governance frameworks
Limited Global South perspectives	Most studies focus on Western organizational contexts	Cross-cultural and Global South HRM governance studies
Weak explainability mechanisms	AI systems frequently operate as black-box technologies	Development of explainable AI systems in HRM
Limited employee-centered governance	Technical and organizational efficiency perspectives dominate	Human-centered and participatory AI governance models

Source. Author(s)' own work.

Managerial Implications and Conceptual Synthesis Framework

The findings of this review indicate that organizations can no longer rely exclusively on technological efficiency when implementing AI-driven HRM systems. Instead, organizations increasingly require governance mechanisms capable of ensuring transparency, accountability, fairness, explainability, and workforce protection. Across the reviewed studies, AI technologies were consistently associated with organizational recruitment systems, workforce analytics, employee evaluation, predictive decision-making, and algorithmic management practices. Consequently, governance failures within AI-driven HRM systems may directly affect employee trust, organizational legitimacy, and workforce sustainability.

Several studies included in this review emphasized the importance of human-centered governance approaches in strengthening organizational acceptance of AI systems and reducing workforce resistance. Aloisi (2024) highlighted that algorithmic management sys-

tems require stronger governance structures to protect labor rights, workplace fairness, and data privacy. Likewise, Omoush (2026) emphasized that effective human-AI collaboration depends on organizational transparency, adaptive governance systems, and employee-centered implementation strategies. Similar governance concerns were also identified in studies discussing algorithmic accountability, organizational trust, and transparency within AI-assisted HRM systems (Campino & Asvestopoulou, 2025; Poisat et al., 2024; Špadina, 2023).

Based on the thematic synthesis of the reviewed studies, this review proposes an integrative conceptual synthesis framework explaining the interrelationship among ethics, trust, algorithmic decision-making, and governance mechanisms within AI-driven HRM systems. The framework presented in Table 3 does not represent a direct adaptation of a single pre-existing theoretical model. Instead, it constitutes an original conceptual synthesis developed inductively from the dominant thematic patterns identified throughout the systematic review process.

Table 3. Conceptual Synthesis Framework of AI Governance in HRM

Dimension	Dominant Issues Identified in the Literature	Governance Response Derived from the Review
Ethics	Bias, discrimination, surveillance, privacy concerns, and unfair organizational outcomes	Ethical auditing, fairness monitoring, and explainable AI systems
Trust	Employee resistance, low AI acceptance, job insecurity, and distrust toward opaque systems	Transparency mechanisms, organizational communication, and participatory governance
Algorithmic Decision-Making	Overdependence on automated systems and declining human judgment in HR processes	Human oversight, hybrid decision-making, and accountability safeguards
Governance	Weak organizational accountability, limited transparency, and insufficient regulatory control	Integrated governance frameworks, compliance systems, and adaptive oversight mechanisms

Source. Author(s)' own work.

More specifically, the ethical dimension emerged from studies emphasizing algorithmic bias, discrimination, privacy concerns, and surveillance risks associated with AI implementation in employment systems (Aloisi, 2024; Špadina, 2023). The trust dimension was derived from studies demonstrating that employee acceptance of AI systems is strongly influenced by transparency, explainability, perceived fairness, and organizational

communication practices (Campino & Asvestopoulou, 2025; Fu, 2026; Poisat et al., 2024). Meanwhile, the algorithmic decision-making dimension was informed by studies examining AI-assisted recruitment systems, predictive workforce analytics, and automated managerial decision structures (Wiblen & Marler, 2021). Finally, the governance dimension emerged from studies emphasizing accountability mechanisms, human oversight, ethi-

cal auditing, and institutional governance structures required for responsible AI implementation.

Therefore, the framework was constructed as an integrative interpretation of recurring cross-study patterns rather than as an isolated conceptual proposition. The framework synthesizes how the reviewed studies collectively position governance mechanisms as mediating structures balancing technological efficiency with workforce protection, organizational legitimacy, and ethical accountability.

The framework presented in Table 3 demonstrates that ethics, trust, algorithmic decision-making, and governance mechanisms are highly interconnected dimensions shaping responsible AI implementation within HRM systems. The reviewed studies collectively indicate that ethical failures frequently reduce employee trust, while insufficient governance structures weaken organizational accountability and transparency. Consequently, governance mechanisms function not only as operational controls but also as organizational safeguards supporting workforce legitimacy and sustainable AI adoption.

To further strengthen the conceptual interpretation of the thematic synthesis findings, this review also proposes a conceptual model illustrating the sequential and interactive relationships among AI governance dimensions within HRM systems.

The conceptual model presented in Figure 2 was developed inductively from the thematic synthesis findings generated through the systematic review. The model illustrates how AI adoption within HRM systems initiates algorithmic decision-making processes that subsequently generate ethical challenges related to bias, surveillance, transparency, and accountability. These ethical conditions then influence employee trust and workforce acceptance, which ultimately shape organizational legitimacy and the effectiveness of AI implementation.

The model further demonstrates that governance mechanisms such as transparency protocols, ethical auditing, explainability systems, and managerial oversight function as mediating structures regulating the relationship between AI adoption and organizational outcomes. In this framework, responsible AI governance is achieved when organizations successfully balance technological capability with ethical safeguards, workforce trust, and institutional accountability.

Importantly, the conceptual model should not be interpreted as a universal causal theory applicable to all organizational contexts. Instead, the model represents an integrative conceptual interpretation derived from recurring patterns identified across the reviewed studies. The model therefore functions as a theoretical synthesis framework intended to clarify the interconnected governance dimensions emerging within contemporary

AI-HRM scholarship.

The proposed framework also reflects a broader conceptual shift within the literature. Earlier studies frequently emphasized technological efficiency and digital transformation as primary indicators of successful AI implementation. However, the reviewed studies increasingly demonstrate that sustainable AI adoption within HRM depends not only on technological capability but also on employee trust, ethical legitimacy, governance transparency, and organizational accountability. Consequently, responsible AI governance increasingly requires integrated and human-centered organizational approaches capable of balancing automation with workforce protection and managerial responsibility.

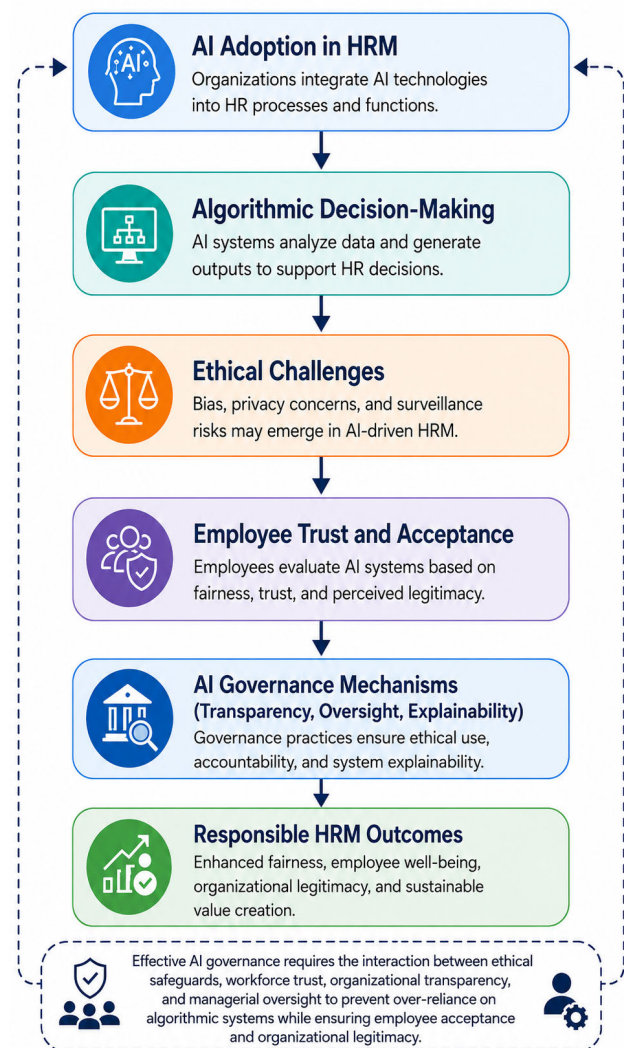


Figure 2. Conceptual Model of AI Governance in HRM
Source. Author(s)' own work.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

Despite providing important conceptual insights regarding AI governance in HRM, this review has several limitations. First, the review relied exclusively

on the Scopus database, potentially limiting the inclusion of relevant studies indexed in other academic databases. Second, the review focused only on peer-reviewed English-language journal articles published between 2020 and 2026. Consequently, relevant studies published in other languages or publication formats may not have been captured within the dataset. Third, the reviewed studies remain heavily concentrated in technologically advanced organizational environments, limiting broader cross-cultural understanding regarding AI governance practices.

Future studies should therefore examine AI governance within more diverse organizational and cultural contexts, particularly in Global South environments where organizational structures, workforce dynamics, and governance practices may differ significantly from Western organizational systems. Future research should also focus on explainable AI systems, governance maturity models, ethical auditing mechanisms, and participatory governance approaches capable of improving workforce trust and organizational accountability. Furthermore, empirical studies examining long-term organizational outcomes associated with AI governance implementation would significantly strengthen the development of responsible and sustainable HRM systems.

CONCLUSION

This systematic literature review demonstrates that artificial intelligence (AI) governance within human resource management (HRM) has evolved into a multi-dimensional organizational issue involving ethics, trust, accountability, and algorithmic decision-making. The findings indicate that AI-driven HRM systems provide important organizational benefits through automation, predictive analytics, and digital workforce management;

however, these technologies also generate substantial governance challenges related to bias, surveillance, transparency, explainability, and employee trust. The review further reveals that ethical concerns, workforce acceptance, and governance mechanisms are highly interconnected dimensions shaping the legitimacy and sustainability of AI implementation within HRM environments. Consequently, AI governance should no longer be viewed solely as a technological issue but rather as an organizational and managerial responsibility requiring balanced integration between technological innovation and ethical accountability. Responsible AI implementation therefore depends on governance mechanisms capable of ensuring transparency, fairness, explainability, and human oversight within organizational decision-making systems.

This review contributes to the growing literature on AI governance and HRM by providing an integrated conceptual understanding connecting ethical governance, employee trust, and algorithmic decision-making within organizational contexts. The findings emphasize the importance of human-centered governance approaches that balance organizational efficiency with workforce protection and managerial accountability. In practical terms, organizations implementing AI-driven HRM systems should strengthen governance frameworks through ethical auditing mechanisms, explainable AI systems, transparency protocols, and participatory oversight structures. Furthermore, future HRM systems will increasingly require hybrid governance approaches capable of integrating technological advancement with organizational legitimacy and employee trust. Future studies are encouraged to examine cross-cultural governance practices, governance maturity models, and long-term organizational outcomes associated with responsible AI implementation in HRM systems.

AUTHOR DECLARATIONS

Ethical Approval or Exemption/Waiver: This study employed a systematic literature review (SLR) approach using secondary data obtained from previously published academic articles indexed in the Scopus database. The study did not involve direct interaction with human participants, personal data collection, clinical procedures, or experimental interventions. Therefore, formal ethical approval was not required according to institutional research regulations.

Informed Consent: This study did not involve human participants or primary data collection. Consequently, informed consent was not required.

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