

Artificial intelligence in people management: mapping the literature through a humanistic lens¹

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Abstract

Frame of the research: The study first examines what the existing body of scholarship at the intersection of AI and people management covers, and secondly identifying what it neglects. This lens provides the normative foundation for critically evaluating how AI technologies are being deployed in the people management domain, and whether such deployment aligns with sustainability goals and SDG commitments.

Purpose of the paper: This paper explores the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into people management practices and examines its implications for individuals and sustainability through a humanistic lens. The research aims to map current research trends and identify emerging issues from this perspective.

Methodology: A systematic literature review and bibliometric analysis were conducted on 223 peer-reviewed articles sourced from the Scopus database. Techniques such as keyword co-occurrence, bibliographic coupling, and co-citation analysis were performed using VOSviewer to identify the primary research clusters and identify existing gaps.

Findings: The study reveals that the application of AI in people management is a growing yet fragmented field, characterized by a strong emphasis on efficiency and decision-making, while often neglecting broader humanistic and ethical dimensions. Five thematic areas have been identified: data-driven decision-making, ethical concerns, employee experience, organizational adaptation, and sustainable development.

Research limits: The review focuses solely on articles written in English and indexed in Scopus, potentially excluding relevant contributions from other databases and languages.

Practical implications: The study offers actionable insights for managers, human resource (HR) professionals, and policymakers seeking to implement AI in ways that are ethically responsible and aligned with the principles of ethics and sustainability in people management.

Originality of the paper: This is one of the first studies to apply a humanistic management approach to the intersection of AI and people management, combining bibliometric and systematic review methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of the field.

Keywords: artificial intelligence; people management; human resource management; bibliometric analysis; systematic literature review

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1. Introduction

“People Management” is the preferred term for embracing the complexity and diversity of individuals within businesses and organizations. The inclusion of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the management of human resources within organizations has emerged as a complex theme, particularly in relation to ethical consideration, as sophisticated technologies have significantly transformed how companies operate. Humanistic Management advocates for a people-first strategy, prioritizing the well-being, dignity, and respect of individuals over profitability (Pirson, 2017). This challenge has become increasingly complex due to the Fourth Industrial Revolution, which has facilitated the integration of AI into numerous business processes and functions, including Human Resource Management (HRM) (Ogedengbe *et al.*, 2023). Nevertheless, this integration raises significant concerns about the depersonalization of people management functions, potential bias in AI-driven decision-making processes, and the risk of job displacement. A critical area of discussion in this field of research is whether people management must ensure that technology reinforces rather than diminishes the human-centric aspects of work, especially as AI takes on responsibilities such as recruitment, performance reviews, and workforce planning (Brynjolfsson and McAfee, 2017). The role of people management is pivotal in ensuring that the inclusion of technology does not replace the human touch with smart machines but instead fosters AI-human collaboration in a manner that safeguards human-centric values in the workplace. This study explores how existing literature and studies have examined this issue.

This paper focuses on the research regarding the inclusion of AI in people management, extending beyond the traditional scope of HRM. People management embodies a human-centric approach that contributes to fostering a conducive environment for the workforce to thrive. In contrast, HRM is a strategic and administrative approach. While researchers have concentrated on exploring the impact of technological development on innovation and organizational efficiency, its impact on the human dimension of people management remains underexplored in the context of sustainable development. In this regard, the literature often appears fragmented and fails to offer a comprehensive scholarly evaluation of research that concentrates on the integration of AI into people management, particularly concerning ethical considerations and humanistic values (Tuffaha, 2023; Tuffaha and Perello-Martin, 2023; Pereira *et al.*, 2023). This fragmentation reflects a broader challenge in contemporary management research, which is increasingly called to move beyond purely efficiency-driven perspectives and embrace more human-centered, ethically grounded, and societally relevant approaches (Ciampi *et al.*, 2025). In this scenario, this situation underscores the need for this systematic literature review (SLR), which aims to synthesize and critically evaluate studies that have examined the integration of AI into people management, considering ethical implications and corporate interests. Previous SLRs have primarily explored AI in HRM in terms of performance improvement, workplace transformation, and business development.

However, only a limited number of studies have scrutinized ethical issues or specific aspects (Mori *et al.*, 2024; Di Vaio *et al.*, 2020). This study aims to address this gap by concentrating on people management rather than solely on human resources, which could perpetuate the outdated notion of employees as mere assets. Additionally, it adheres to the Humanistic Management philosophy, which examines the ethical implications of employee-centric values within the workplace.

In other words, while AI has improved operational efficiency, this SLR also seeks to understand what prior studies state about humanistic outcomes in the context of process optimization. Consequently, this study explores AI's role in people management for its technological and functional advantages, as well as its capacity to foster human-centric outcomes. To achieve this goal, this study employs a combination of an extensive SLR and bibliometric analysis to answer the following research questions.

RQ1. What are the literature streams in the context of the inclusion of artificial intelligence technologies in people management?

RQ2. What topics and themes have been studied in relation to artificial intelligence technology in people management?

RQ3. What are the drivers and outcomes of artificial intelligence in people management?

This study distinguishes itself from previous literature reviews in multiple aspects. First, it utilizes the term “people management” rather than human resources and/or personnel management, thereby shifting the philosophy at the foundation of the study from a resource perspective to a human perspective. Second, this study also investigates ethical and humanistic aspects. Additionally, while previous reviews were based on qualitative or quantitative analysis, this study integrates both approaches, utilizing bibliometric visualization tools such as keyword co-occurrence analysis, co-citation analysis, and bibliographic coupling to map the evolution and impact of studies over time, providing a robust methodological framework (Cobo *et al.*, 2011; Van Eck and Waltman, 2014). Our review systematically categorizes literature streams, identifies under-researched areas, and highlights the empirical impact of AI technologies on people management practices. This approach offers a comprehensive and updated view of the field (Bondarouk and Brewster, 2016; Basu *et al.*, 2023). Finally, this study updates theoretical understanding and examines the practical implications of integrating AI into people management functions, an aspect sporadically addressed in previous research. This dual focus guarantees that our findings are relevant for both academic researchers and practitioners (Prikshtat *et al.*, 2023).

2. Literature review

2.1 The impact of artificial intelligence on people management

The evolution of people management from mere personnel management to a strategic component within organizations illustrates a fundamental

transformation driven by technology and regulatory changes. Initially focusing on basic employee management and compliance with labor laws, people management has undergone significant changes over the centuries. A pivotal moment in this evolution was the introduction of human resource information systems in the 20th century, which marked the beginning of people management's digital transformation (Rotich, 2015; Thite *et al.*, 2012). This transformation was further accelerated by the advent of the internet and the rise of Industry 4.0 technologies, including AI, which have fundamentally reshaped the landscape of people management practices (Roblek *et al.*, 2018). While organizations are embracing AI in people management practices to streamline hiring, learning, compensation, and performance management, it is also accompanied by challenges such as ethical considerations. Despite the growing demand for AI-driven people management practices, this field remains in its infancy. The current advancements in AI applications within people management are primarily driven by experts in technical fields rather than by people management professionals (Bauwens and Batistič, 2025). Benabou and Touhami (2025) argue the need for AI-human collaboration to leverage AI and overcome challenges.

AI represents an advanced technology replicating characteristics of human intellect (Yang and Siau, 2018). It may be defined as a branch of knowledge that applies computer science and mathematics with statistical modeling to develop intelligent techniques and systems with human-like capabilities to discharge responsibilities and functions while engaging in analytical thinking (Konar, 2018). In simpler terms, AI technology in business involves devising intelligent machines and methods that proficiently grasp, respond to, and execute varied roles like human beings (Malik *et al.*, 2020, p. 3).

The impact of AI on people management has been revolutionary, allowing for the automation of complex tasks that traditionally required considerable human effort. For example, the incorporation of AI in e-recruitment and e-training systems has significantly alleviated the burdens of people management departments, enabling more efficient handling of tasks and allowing professionals to focus on strategic planning and decision-making (Stone *et al.*, 2015). An AI-driven recruitment process reduces the overall hiring duration and associated costs. Additionally, it enhances other people management functions, including learning and development, induction and onboarding, and career planning (Bulut and Dinler, 2023).

As AI technology continues to evolve, its application in mimicking human intelligence and executing tasks with an unprecedented level of autonomy is becoming more prevalent (Yang and Siau, 2018; Konar, 2018). Addressing the varied complexities brought about by rapid advancements and the conjunction of human, data, and technology-entailing uncertain exigencies, cross-disciplinary connections, and environmental changes-demands the collaboration of AI-driven agents alongside human intelligence (Song *et al.*, 2022; Moravec, 1988; Lake *et al.*, 2017). More specifically, AI technology, when applied in people management, aids in decision-making through expert systems in numerous tasks such as job

evaluation (Lawler and Elliot, 1993), recommendations for staffing teams (Malinowski *et al.*, 2008), management of talent pools with the support of HRM systems (Dickson and Nusair, 2010), predicting turnover by exploiting artificial neural networks (Strohmeier and Piazza, 2015), and developing and executing learning and training modules powered by augmented reality (AR) (Prasolova-Førland *et al.*, 2017). Robotics and AI enhance the efficiency of manpower planning and recruitment (Gupta *et al.*, 2018). They forecast absenteeism using a hybrid approach that combines fuzzy logic and artificial neural networks (Araujo *et al.*, 2019). AI also aids in people management practices in managing employee performance outcomes (Bhardwaj *et al.*, 2020). People management bots facilitate impressive communication without the need for human intervention (Majumder and Mondal, 2021). The latest development in smart technology is generative AI, such as ChatGPT, Gemini, and Deepseek, which are capable of creating text content, emails, reports, images, or even videos using a human prompt in a matter of seconds. This innovative technology has proven beneficial for businesses (Chen *et al.*, 2023). The intelligent Q&A system of generative AI enables employees to expedite routine tasks and minimize errors (Feuerriegel *et al.*, 2024). Nevertheless, Venugopal *et al.* (2024) highlight that despite AI's potential to enhance people management tasks, by backing them through data-driven decisions and making it farsighted, privacy and bias are emerging concerns that need to be addressed by implementing an ethical framework that ensures transparency.

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2.2 Role of AI technologies in transforming people management practices

The role of AI in people management is evolving. An unprecedented shift is being witnessed with the incorporation of AI in workforce management. On one hand, it significantly contributes to enhancing the efficiency and accuracy of decisions, augmenting employee experience and engagement, and even hyper-personalizing communication and information sharing within the organization. On the other hand, it also poses numerous challenges. Pressing issues such as bias and privacy concerns are surfacing.

AI in Recruitment and Talent Acquisition: The conventional recruitment and talent acquisition process is complex. It demands extensive manual labor from people management professionals. The steps involved, from collecting resumes to scrutinizing them, assessing candidates' job knowledge and personalities, and carefully shortlisting them for final interviews, pose challenges to efficiency and are both time-consuming and expensive (Zhang, E. Y. A., 2024). AI tools have the potential to help managers streamline the entire recruitment and talent acquisition process, enhancing hiring accuracy (Rahman *et al.*, 2022).

In the early 2000s, AI-enabled recruitment systems began to gain popularity. Various companies started applying analytics techniques to analyze data and find the best candidates for positions (Cappelli *et al.*, 2018). Major multinational giants pioneered this approach; for instance, Google strategically implemented it to enhance the overall hiring process and decrease employee turnover within the organization (Singh *et al.*,

2022), successfully building a stable workforce. Predictive analytics, as the term suggests, supports personnel managers in making more informed decisions by analyzing past and present data patterns. It logically predicts the future by using statistics, machine learning, data mining, and AI (Elkan, 2013). In the context of hiring, predictive analytics assists in identifying the most suitable candidates by analyzing their past performances and behaviors. It can also predict whether a candidate will accept a job offer and their tenure in a company (Mehta *et al.*, 2013).

AI was first introduced through chatbots designed to screen candidates by assessing their responses to a predetermined set of questions. Based on these answers, candidates deemed suitable are either recommended for further consideration or rejected. This automated process enhances efficiency by saving both time and effort (Gupta and Mishra, 2022). The role and effectiveness of chatbots in the recruitment process have been examined by several researchers. Studies have found that chatbots improve the candidate experience by providing prompt and accurate responses to queries. Additionally, studies have revealed that chatbots assist recruiters and reduce their workload, enabling them to focus on more complex tasks, such as evaluating the personality of potential candidates and interviewing them (Koivunen *et al.*, 2022; Albassam, 2023). Nevertheless, human behavior is inconsistent and communication styles vary from person to person, making it challenging for chatbots to guarantee accuracy in the process (Akram *et al.*, 2024).

Over the years, the utilization of AI techniques in the hiring and talent acquisition process has evolved. More sophisticated technologies, namely machine learning (ML) and natural language processing (NLP), are being introduced to ensure greater precision in screening and matching candidates. For instance, some organizations use AI-supported video interviews to assess candidates' facial expressions, body movements, and speech modulations. This advanced technology enables recruiters to evaluate a range of candidate characteristics, such as their emotional intelligence, confidence, and communication capabilities (Zimmermann *et al.*, 2016).

AI in Training and Development: In the current era of digital transformation, where the skill gap is widening, it is crucial for companies to adopt a forward-looking approach and investment significantly in the training and development of their workforce for the company's success and the employees' growth (Racherla, 2019). As technology advances, the work culture is evolving as well. The workforce is becoming increasingly geographically dispersed, with remote teams and individuals working in hybrid modes, while many are also traveling. Work schedules have also become more flexible. As a result, organizations must implement training strategies that facilitate a more personalized approach to training and upskilling, addressing employees' needs to ensure that training remains relevant and effective (Maity, 2019). Personalized training helps prevent information overload for employees, allowing them to concentrate on relevant content that is beneficial to them. This approach also enables them to acquire knowledge and skills that boost their productivity (Dorobăt

and Năstase, 2010). Sh (2024) discusses the reasons contributing to the wide adoption of advanced technology in employee training. Emerging technologies, such as social media and smartphones, are becoming increasingly economical for companies to adopt. These technologies significantly lower the costs involved in training employees by eliminating travel and accommodation expenses for remote teams, while also providing flexibility that makes training accessible at one's convenience. Presently, numerous organizations are using AI technology to train, upskill, and reskill their employees. Certain companies are utilizing intelligent learning management systems to formulate personalized training material and learning pathways tailored to the specific requirements of employees and their training history. Organizations are also turning to virtual reality (VR) to offer more impactful experiences (Na, 2023). Smart technologies like AI tailor learning experiences to fit employees' needs, enhancing employee engagement and boosting productivity (Goswami, 2024). Generative AI tools are capable of developing real-time products, further expediting the training process through enhanced creativity (Jetter *et al.*, 2024). AI-driven learning and development platforms employ smart technologies like ML, NLP, and predictive analytics to assess employees' skills, predict training needs, and design personalized training modules. These intelligent platforms analyze large amounts of employee data to create customized career development paths. Consequently, these AI-based platforms prove effective and efficient in the domains of employee learning and development, employee retention, and bridging skill gaps (Madhumithaa *et al.*, 2025).

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AI in Workforce Planning: A vital function of people management is workforce planning. This process plays a major role in managing talent requirements within an organization. It aligns the organization's manpower demands with its strategic objectives, intending to ensure improved efficiency, output, and long-term success (Nazreen, 2023). The emergence of cutting-edge technologies like AI and predictive analytics provides promising solutions to address the various challenges faced by managers during workforce planning. It assists managers in analyzing large volumes of data, conducting data-driven forecasts, and making analytical decisions to strategically acquire, develop, and retain the best employees (Yanamala, 2024). Research conducted by Oluwatamilore *et al.* (2023) in U.S. organizations revealed that an AI-supported talent analytics system ensures logical decision-making by precisely predicting workforce needs and effectively managing talent. Roy (2021) examines long-term workforce planning with the application of AI-enabled workforce management systems within the Indian context. The study delves into the future scope of AI in people management and the displacement of human resources due to AI intervention. In the realm of succession planning, AI aids management organizations in planning and developing the best-suited employees for future leadership roles. This proactive approach enables firms to manage change, fill leadership roles, and foster stability (Yanamala, 2024).

AI in Performance Management: The scope of AI in performance management is not limited to increasing efficiency. Advanced technologies such as data analytics, ML, and NLP assist in gaining an in-depth understanding of employees' strengths and areas for improvement. These technologies have the potential to transform how organizations develop their employees and support career development, contributing to firms' sustainability (Madhumita *et al.*, 2024). The application of AI-supported performance management systems reduces biases and ensures fairness in the workplace. A standardized evaluation process analyzes the actual inputs and productivity of employees, fostering a culture of trust (Nyathani, 2023). Although AI in performance management claims to eliminate human biases, algorithmic biases persist, raising questions about the credibility and transparency of AI-driven performance management tools. To leverage this technology, it is crucial to align it with the organizational culture and train employees accordingly (Haider *et al.*, 2025). Despite the rapid adoption of AI in people management, existing literature often fails to fully capture the scope and depth of the implications associated with these technologies. A substantial portion of the current research predominantly focuses on larger corporations (Bolton *et al.*, 2018), with limited insights into how small to medium enterprises (SMEs) are navigating the AI landscape in people management. Furthermore, there is a noticeable lack of comprehensive theoretical frameworks that integrate the various dimensions of AI's effects across different people management functions (Bolton *et al.*, 2018; Prikshat *et al.*, 2023), especially concerning new challenges and ethical concerns, such as data privacy, the potential for algorithmic bias, and the fear of job displacement among workers. These issues necessitate ongoing research to ensure that AI technologies are implemented in people management ethically and sustainably (Basu *et al.*, 2023; Del Giudice *et al.*, 2023), especially under the current suggestions of the Humanistic Management perspective, which offers a complementary framework grounded in humanism, emphasizing flourishing and prioritizing fairness and workplace practices (Pirson and Kostera, 2016; Lawrence and Pirson, 2015; Melé, 2003; Pirson *et al.*, 2019). This approach respects individuals, embraces individualization, and acknowledges their rights, focusing on care and concern for people's legitimate interests while promoting virtuous behavior and providing support in addressing issues (Pless *et al.*, 2017; Matheson *et al.*, 2021). Specifically, respect—a fundamental yet elusive human trait—encompasses self-respect and respect for others. Sayer (2007) argues that respect is shaped through social interactions and relationships, where individuals are recognized and trusted, allowing them to achieve autonomy and self-mastery. Kostera and Pirson (2017) assert that admiration and fairness are the pinnacle of all human norms and values. Their significance extends beyond personal well-being, playing a critical role in the success of organizations. Considering the significant amount of time that individuals dedicate to work, the workplace emerges as a primary source of recognition and trust for employees (Valcour, 2014). Humanistic Management scholars have recently expanded the understanding of dignity in the workplace, focusing on the factors that promote or undermine it. This perspective advocates for practices that

promote fairness in the workplace and enhance employee well-being. Recently, Thomas and Lucas (2019) have explored the conditions that preserve dignity and those that threaten it. Common threats include excessive workloads, poor leadership, abuse, loss of autonomy, and being forced into undesirable tasks (Hodson, 2001). Factors such as job security, fair compensation, and equal opportunities also play a significant role in upholding workplace dignity (Bolton, 2007). The principles of non-discrimination and the interests of employees have emerged as critical priorities for both researchers and organizations, now seen as key drivers of business success. In today's competitive market, even top companies can no longer rely solely on their reputation to attract and retain talent. Employees are now demanding more—they seek workplaces that actively prioritize supportive environments and sustainable practices (Kashyap *et al.*, 2016). In response, many companies are investing in comprehensive programs that promote the development of supportive environments that promote work-life balance and life satisfaction, boosting productivity and performance. A supportive workplace environment encompasses a holistic psychological, physiological, and overall health state. It reflects the level of satisfaction employees experience both at work and in their personal lives (Danna and Griffin, 1999). Ultimately, an employee's well-being is shaped by their job satisfaction and relationships with colleagues, team members, and leadership (Nielsen *et al.*, 2017). When organizations actively nurture these areas, they improve employee satisfaction and drive long-term business success. In this scenario, the inclusion of AI in people management practices needs to be considered in terms of fairness and responsible organizational practices. Thus, given the dynamic and evolving nature of AI applications in people management, there is a critical need for a new SLR that can offer a comprehensive analysis of current trends, challenges, and future directions, synthesizing existing studies and discovering under-researched areas.

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3. Method

3.1 Research design

To achieve the predefined goals of the study and deepen our understanding of the latest advancements in the field, we use Scopus, the largest database of peer-reviewed articles, to select journals for conducting a SLR and bibliometric analysis. A SLR is a scientific method designed to gather all relevant research addressing specific questions impartially (Nightingale, 2009). This method systematically summarizes scientific documents, providing clear and reproducible responses to specified questions (Lame, 2019). The rigorous nature of SLR lends credibility and originality to our research (Rother, 2007), and its structured approach is highly effective in drawing reliable conclusions (Tranfield *et al.*, 2003). Policymakers recognize the value of SLR for making informed, evidence-based decisions (Petticrew and Roberts, 2008).

Additionally, to address the quantitative elements of our study, we incorporate bibliometric analysis alongside SLR. Bibliometric

analysis, a well-regarded technique in literature review, falls into two categories: performance analysis and science mapping (Donthu *et al.*, 2021). Performance analysis evaluates various scientific aspects, such as contributions from different countries, academic institutions, researchers, and divisions, assessing their impact in the field (Cobo *et al.*, 2011; Donthu *et al.*, 2021). Science mapping, also known as bibliometric mapping, visually represents relationships among diverse disciplines, fields, and individual contributors (Small, 1999). This study investigates the most significant developments in the application of AI technology in people management practices and the driving forces behind these advancements through a combined approach of SLR and bibliometric analysis using VOSviewer visualization software. Bibliometric analysis is favored for its ability to offer a comprehensive overview of major trends in research domains, journals, or countries (Hood and Wilson, 2001). The science mapping visualization helps analyze the bibliometric networks, where closer proximity between mapped items indicates stronger relational ties, enhancing our understanding of the connections within the field (Van Eck and Waltman, 2014; Fachada *et al.*, 2022). This approach employs various techniques such as co-citation, keyword co-occurrences, and bibliometric coupling to evaluate existing studies based on data extracted from databases (Zupic and Čater, 2015). Bibliometric coupling is applied to assess the similarity between the documents by analyzing the number of shared references (Kessler, 1963). The more the overlap in the bibliographies of the two studies, the stronger the association between them. Citation analysis is carried out to scale the impact of a study. An article is regarded as relevant if it has a significant number of citations (Zupic and Čater, 2015). Keyword co-occurrence analysis aims to reveal the underlying concepts from the articles (Chiang, 2020). It determines the frequency with which terms are repeated in the sample (Weismayer and Pezenka, 2017). The higher the frequency of keyword occurrence, the larger the circle representing the keyword, while the links indicate the strength between the keywords (Fachada *et al.*, 2022).

3.2 Data collection

To compile a collection of authentic and reliable data, the Scopus database is referenced. Scopus is the product of a collaboration that lasted more than two years involving Elsevier, librarians, and researchers across the globe (Boyle and Sherman, 2006). Elsevier's Scopus is an all-inclusive citation and abstract database that incorporates an extensive array of information sources, ranging from trade journals to peer-reviewed articles. In addition to this, websites, patents, and conference papers are also included. The details of authors, article citations, and references are cited for materials published since 1996 (Ballew, 2009). It serves as the largest database containing multidisciplinary scientific literature and publications (Chadegani *et al.*, 2013). Scopus, as the biggest source of abstract and citation database of scientific literature and exceptional digital sources, extends superlative support for the publication exploration procedure (Guz and Rushchitsky, 2009). Since 1966, it has amassed 27 million abstracts

along with citations (Burnham, 2006). This study undertakes 375 articles published between 1996 and 2025 for an in-depth exploration.

Considering the context of AI and people management, a set of keywords was identified. A search string was developed to gather relevant publications associated with the application and incorporation of AI tools and technologies in various people management functions and practices. A standard Boolean search was performed with the search string formed; our search query: ((TITLE-ABS-KEY("People Management" OR "HRM" OR "Human resource management" OR "personnel management" OR "Manpower management" OR "workforce management") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY("artificial intelligence" OR "AI")) AND (LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA,"BUSI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA,"SOCI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA,"MATE")) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE, "English"))). The decision to refer to terms such as HRM (Human Resource Management) aligns with Armstrong and Taylor's (2014) observation that these terms are often used interchangeably. Limiting the scope to "People Management" alone would be overly restrictive and fail to encompass the broader body of literature, which is essential for this study. The search query generated a total of 500 documents from the year 1988 to 2025. The output was further refined based on inclusion and exclusion criteria, including open-access articles from subject areas specifically related to Business, Management and Accounting, Computer Science, Psychology, and Social Sciences, while excluding retracted articles. In the final output, 375 articles were extracted that were published between 1996 and 2025 (see Figure 1).

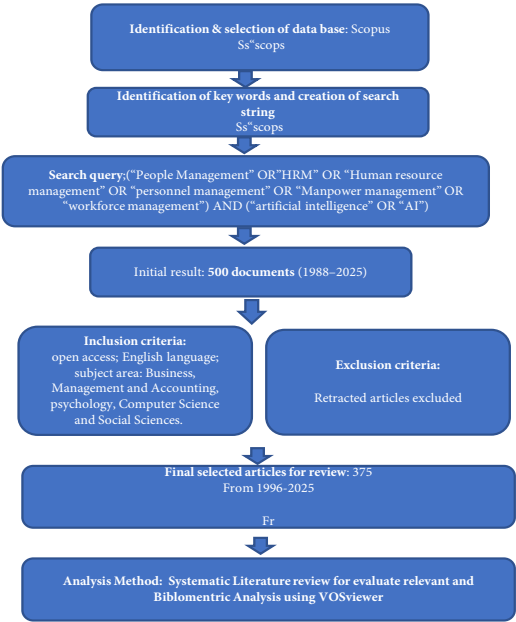
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3.3 Data analysis

After selecting 375 articles based on inclusion and exclusion criteria, the literature was analyzed systematically, and a bibliometric analysis was conducted using VOSviewer software. The initial stage involved a descriptive performance analysis to clarify the publication and growth patterns from 1996 to 2025. It included highly cited papers to identify the most influential works and leading countries to gain an understanding of the inclinations of different nations and journals within the field. This provided a clear picture of the growth and evolution of this study.

In the second stage, a keyword co-occurrence analysis was performed, identifying keywords with a minimum threshold occurrence set at three times. These keywords were grouped into clusters using VOSviewer. The third stage encompassed a keyword cluster analysis, identifying the most frequently occurring keywords. These keywords were grouped into thematic clusters, enabling the identification of research streams or subtopics related to the overarching theme of AI in people management. In the fourth stage, a co-citation analysis was performed to evaluate the themes studied. Out of 11,743 references, documents with a minimum of five citations were considered. This analysis aids in understanding the thematic clusters or documents that have been cited together (school of thought). Finally, a coupling analysis was executed on the 375 documents, applying a criterion of a minimum of 10 citations per document. This analysis reflects the conceptual similarities and thematic clusters present.

Fig. 1: Step by step layout of method and analysis



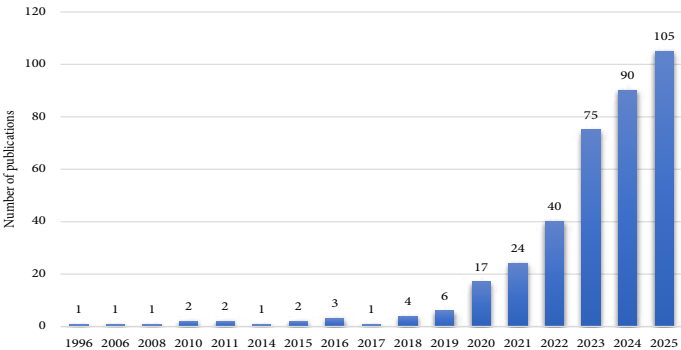
Source: Developed by the author from systematic literature review and bibliometric analysis using Scopus and VOSviewer.

4. Findings

The literature streams

The findings of the study elucidate the progression and spectrum of research in the field of AI in the context of people management practices. Figure 2 summarizes the growth within the selected time span between the years 1996 and 2025.

Fig. 2: Evolution and growth in the number of annual publications



Source: Author’s own elaboration based on data retrieved from Scopus and analyzed using VOSviewer (1996–2025).

Evolution and Growth in the Number of Annual Publications

Figure 2 illustrates the annual publication growth from 1996 to 2025, with a peak occurring in 2025, where 105 articles were published, constituting approximately 47.08% of the total publications. The graph indicates a period of low inclination from 1996 to 2018, with a decline noted in 2016. However, there exists a collection of articles that constitutes approximately 26.91% of the total publications. The graph clearly presents a low inclination from 1996 to 2018. Even a decline was perhaps noted in 2016. However, a significant leap in interest and research within the field of study has been evident from 2019, and this trend continues to expand to the present day.

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Most Cited Publications

According to the Scopus database, the top 20 highly cited publications are given in Table 1. The table is arranged in chronological order of their year of publication, beginning from 1996 to 2025.

Tab. 1: Most cited publications

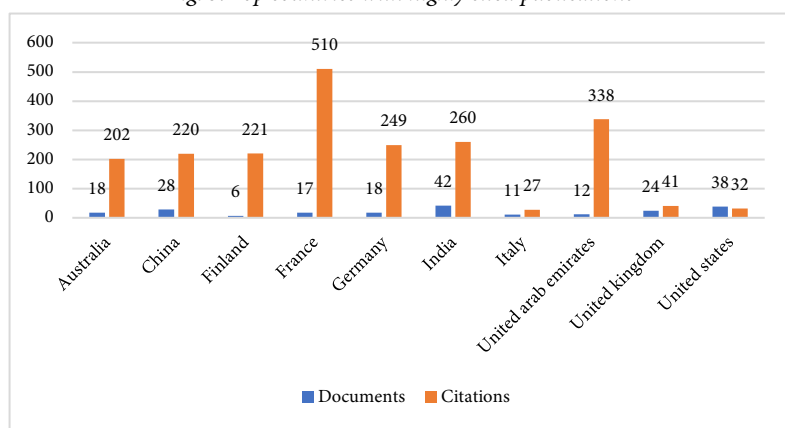
Title	Authors	Year	Journal	Number of citations
1. Artificial intelligence in human resources management: Challenges and A path forward	Tambe <i>et al.</i>	2019	California Management Review	275
2. Human resources for Big Data professions: A systematic classification of job roles and required skill sets	De Mauro A. <i>et al.</i>	2018	Information Processing and Management	178
3. Artificial intelligence, robotics, advanced technologies and human resource management: a systematic review	Vrontis <i>et al.</i>	2022	International Journal of Human Resource Management	140
4.The critical role of HRM in AI-driven digital transformation: a paradigm shift to enable firms to move from AI implementation to human-centric adoption	Fenwick <i>et al.</i>	2024	Discover Artificial Intelligence	96
5. Innovating through digital revolution: The role of soft skills and Big Data in increasing firm performance	Caputo F. <i>et al.</i>	2019	Management Decision	86
6. Artificial intelligence techniques in human resource management - A conceptual exploration	Strohmeier <i>et al.</i>	2015	Intelligent Systems Reference Library	70
7.Adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) for talent acquisition in IT/ ITeS organizations	Pillai R. <i>et al.</i>	2020	Benchmarking	68
8.A conceptual artificial intelligence application framework in human resource management	Jia <i>et al.</i>	2018	Proceedings of the International Conference on Electronic Business (ICEB)	64
9.Decision support for team staffing: An automated relational recommendation approach	Malinowski <i>et al.</i>	2008	Decision Support Systems	57
10.Trends and opportunities of artificial intelligence in human resource management: Aspirations for public sector in Bahrain	Abdeldayem <i>et al.</i>	2020	International Journal of Scientific and Technology Research	53
11.Big Data in Industrial-Organizational Psychology and Human Resource Management: Forward Progress for Organizational Research and Practice	Oswald <i>et al.</i>	2020	Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior	51
12.The adoption of artificial intelligence in employee recruitment: The influence of contextual factors	Pan <i>et al.</i>	2022	International Journal of Human Resource Management	42
13.The dark sides of people analytics: reviewing the perils for organisations and employees	Giermindl O. <i>et al.</i>	2022	European Journal of Information Systems	42
14. Barriers and Enablers of AI adoption in human resource management: a critical analysis of organizational and technological factors	Madanchian, <i>et al.</i>	2025	Advances in Human- centered Artificial Intelligence	41
15.Artificial Intelligence in Tactical Human Resource Management: A Systematic Literature Review	Votto <i>et al.</i>	2021	International Journal of Information Management Data Insights	41
16. The Janus face of artificial intelligence feedback: Deployment versus disclosure effects on employee performance.	Tong S <i>et al.</i>	2021	Strategic Management Journal	41
17. May the bots be with you! Delivering HR cost-effectiveness and individualised employee experiences in an MNE	Malik <i>et al.</i>	2022	International Journal of Human Resource Management	40
18. The benefits of eHRM and AI for talent acquisition	Johnson <i>et al.</i>	2020	Journal of Tourism Futures	39
19.Artificial intelligence- challenges and opportunities for international HRM: a review and research agenda	Budhwar <i>et al.</i>	2022	International Journal of Human Resource Management	38
20. Artificial intelligence in HRM: An experimental study of an expert system	Lawler <i>et al.</i>	1996	Journal of Management	38
21. A systematic literature review on the impact of artificial intelligence on workplace outcomes: A multi-process perspective	Pereira <i>et al.</i>	2023	Human Resource Management Review	37
21. Smart education in the context of industry 4.0	Assante <i>et al.</i>	2019	IEEE Global Engineering Education Conference, EDUCON	36

Source: Author's own compilation based on citation data retrieved from Scopus and analyzed using VOSviewer

As illustrated in Table 1, the article with the maximum influence is by Tambe *et al.* (2019), with 275 citations; the study highlights the causes of the challenges faced when it comes to the application of AI and proposes solutions to overcome them. The second highly cited study identifies the big data skills organizations demand and argues that people management strategies should align with business policies and talent acquisition and competency development strategies (De Mauro *et al.*, 2018). The oldest study, as per the data sample, is on expert systems, in which Lawler *et al.* (1996) analyzed that expert systems do not alone affect the accuracy of decision-making but depend upon the degree of complexity of work.

Top Highly Cited Countries

Fig. 3: Top countries with highly cited publications



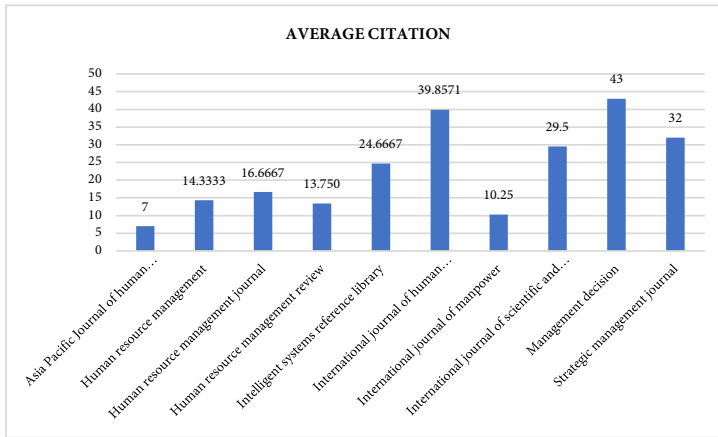
Source: Author's own elaboration based on data retrieved from Scopus and analyzed using VOSviewer (1996–2025).

Figure 3 summarizes the countries with highly cited scientific articles. Finland has the most influence in the domain, with six articles and a total of 221 citations. The average citation score of Finland is approximately 38, followed by the UAE and France with average citation scores of 28 and 30, respectively. The table clearly explains that the countries with significant impact in the research field are the ones that are cited more frequently. The United States has the lowest citation average in comparison to the other countries.

Top Highly Cited Journals

Figure 4 features the top 10 most frequently cited journals, thus making them the most influential journals within this research domain. Management Decision tops the chart with an average citation of 43.

Fig. 4: Top 10 highly cited journals



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Source: Author's own elaboration based on bibliometric data retrieved from Scopus and analyzed using VOSviewer.

Keyword Co-occurrences

In the analysis of keyword co-occurrences, a total of 1,306 keywords were identified from the data sample, with 44 of these appearing a minimum of three times. These 44 keywords have been grouped into 14 clusters using VOSviewer. Figure 5(a) illustrates the network visualization of keyword occurrences in these 14 distinct clusters. Figure 5(b), on the other hand, reflects the year of their occurrences. The two major keywords are (i) “artificial intelligence,” which has a total link strength of 252 and occurrences of 155, and (ii) “human resource management,” with a total link strength of 246 and 146 occurrences. Both keywords are closely linked to each other, as the distance between them is minimal. The keyword “artificial intelligence” is linked to 43 other keywords, and “human resource management” is linked to 41 other keywords. The most recent keywords linked to artificial intelligence and people management are “organisational change,” “recruitment process,” “selection,” “employee,” “productivity,” “ethics,” “HR analytics,” “human resource management system,” “ai adoption,” “COVID 19,” “higher education,” “organisational performance,” and “employee experience.” The average publication year is between 2021 and 2025.

Topics and themes

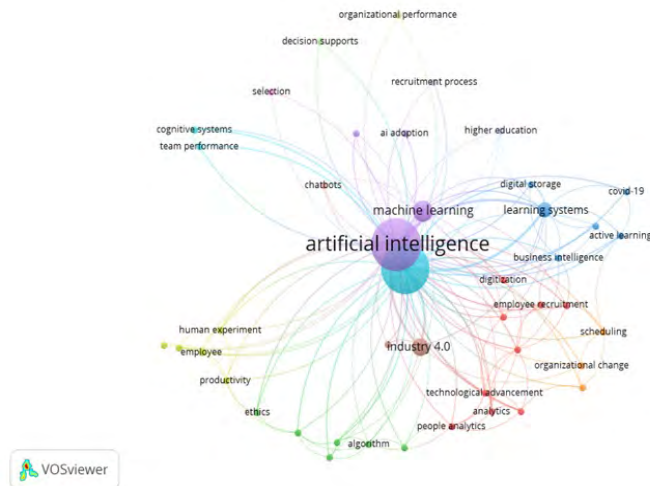
Keywords Cluster Analysis

The 44 keywords have been grouped into 14 clusters. The node represents the frequency of occurrences, and the line represents the link between the keywords. These clusters represent the main literature streams in the research area concerning the inclusion of AI in HRM.

Cluster 1. This is the largest cluster of all, containing nine keywords: “analytics,” “data-driven decision,” “digitalisation,” “employee recruitment,” human resource,” human resource management,” people analytics,”

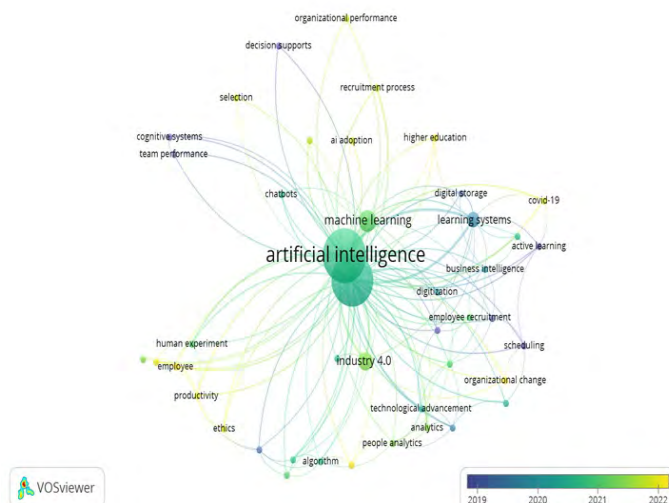
performance appraisal” and “technological advancement”. Similarly, *Cluster 6* contains three keywords: “cognitive systems”, human resource management”, and “team performance”. *Cluster 9* has the keyword “selection”, while “decision support” is the keyword in *cluster 11*. Likewise, *cluster 14* contains one item: “recruitment process”.

Fig. 5 (a): Key words co-occurrences using VOS viewer network visualisation



Source: Developed by the author from keyword co occurrence data extracted from Scopus and processed through VOSviewer for network visualization

Fig. 5 (b): Key words co-occurrences using VOS viewer overlay visualisation



Source: Developed by the author from keyword co occurrence data extracted from Scopus and processed through VOSviewer for overlay visualisation.

AI is transforming people management practices in organizations by analyzing the gathered data more precisely and effectively (Tong *et al.*, 2021). The collaboration of AI and people is likely to yield improved performance in the future (McNeese *et al.*, 2021). AI technology is strengthening the recruitment process, predicting turnover, and reducing replacement time (Johnson *et al.*, 2020). However, there is a likelihood that technological advances could displace people and transform organizational structures (Mishra *et al.*, 2021; Felten *et al.*, 2021). *Cluster 5* contains four keywords: “ai adoption”, “artificial intelligence”, “human resource information systems”, and “machine learning”. The adoption of AI technology in people management functions improves the reputation of employers. For efficient management, both domestic and international human resources are being adopted (Budhwar *et al.*, 2022). The implementation of AI technologies is influenced by the perceived complexity by organizations, while technological know-how and regulatory support encourage its adoption (Pan *et al.*, 2022). People management and human resource information systems include AI (Votto *et al.*, 2021). *Clusters 1, 5, 6, 9, and 11* appear to be closely linked to each other.

Cluster 2 consists of six keywords: “algorithm”, “enterprise management”, “ethics”, “hr analytics”, human resource strategy”, and “neural networks”. Comparable to *cluster 2* is *cluster 7*, which incorporates three keywords: “organisational change”, “scheduling”, and “technology acceptance”. *Cluster 8* is similar, containing the keywords “algorithmic management” and “industry 4.0”. ML algorithms are utilized to detect individuals’ personalities by analyzing their social media posts and updates (Sewwandi *et al.*, 2017). Leveraging the use of neural networks aids in predicting employee turnover (Strohmeier and Piazza, 2015). Incorporating AI technologies in people management can bring about numerous ethical issues, such as favoritism and unfairness that are resolvable through the development of skills that ensure ethical behavior by managers (Charlwood and Guenole, 2022). Thus, *clusters 2, 7, and 8* seem closely linked together.

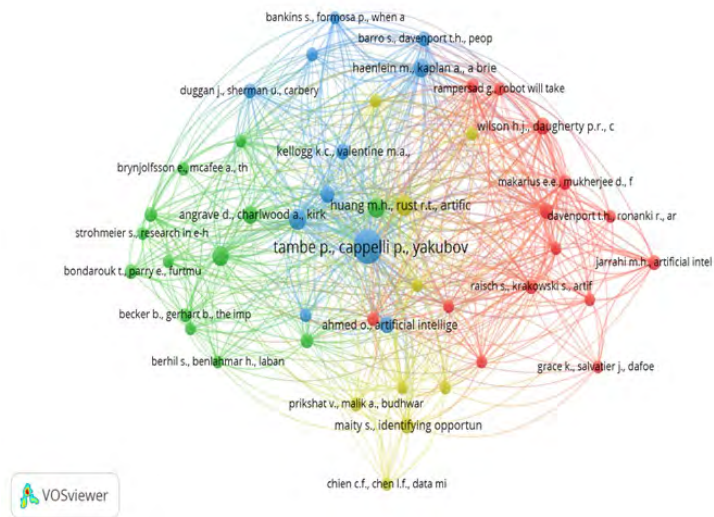
Cluster 3 comprises six keywords: “active learning”, “business intelligence”, “COVID-19”, “digital storage”, “learning systems”, and “risk-management”. The common vocabulary of job families and skill sets helps align the strategies of leaders and educators to meet the demand and supply of future manpower needs (De Mauro *et al.*, 2018). The application and inclusion of VR-based learning have identified various opportunities and challenges (Prasolova-Førland *et al.*, 2017). *Cluster 12* has the keyword “higher education” that is linked with *cluster 3*.

Cluster 4 includes five keywords: “employee”, “employee experience”, “hrm practices”, “human experiment”, and “productivity”. *Cluster 13* contains one item: “organisational performance”. The adoption of AI in people management functions significantly influences innovation and ease of use (Bhardwaj *et al.*, 2020). Employee experience and engagement increase with AI support, leading to improved overall efficiency (Malik *et al.*, 2023). *Cluster 10* has one keyword: “chatbots.” People management bots are widely used by organizations to provide a personalized employee experience (Malik *et al.*, 2022). Thus, *clusters 4, 10, and 13* share a similar literature stream.

Co-Citation Analysis

A co-citation analysis was performed to evaluate the themes studied. Out of 11,743 references, documents with a minimum of five citations have been considered. Forty-seven scientific works have met the threshold and were grouped into four clusters. Figure 6 illustrates the network visualization of the co-citation analysis of these documents. The largest cluster is red, containing 14 items; the green cluster has 13 items; the blue cluster has 11 items; and the yellow cluster contains nine items. This analysis supports the evaluation of the various themes.

Fig. 6: Network visualisation of co-citation of documents



Source: Author's own elaboration based on co citation data retrieved from Scopus and visualized using VOSviewer

Co-Citation Cluster Analysis

Red cluster: The document most frequently referred within this cluster has been cited nine times and highlights that AI is likely to augment human efficiency when there is collaboration rather than replacement (Wilson and Daugherty, 2018). This research comprises 30 links and a total link strength of 58. Another document, cited eight times, argues that the successful implementation of AI in people management practices is contingent upon the level of employee trust in the organization (Glikson and Woolley, 2020). This document includes 43 links and a total link strength of 65. The socialization of AI is essential for its integration with people (Makarius *et al.*, 2020). This cluster primarily focuses on the adoption and integration of AI within people management functions.

Green cluster: The document cited in 12 articles contends that businesses should market the use of AI technology in their hiring processes and focus on applicants who have a favorable perception of both AI and the organization (Van Esch *et al.*, 2019). It contains 35 links and a total link

strength of 59. Furthermore, another study discusses the potential skill gaps that may arise as a consequence of computerization (Frey and Osborne, 2017). This study has 12 citations, 39 links, and a total link strength of 69. Additionally, another study asserts that leaders must understand the potential advantages and limitations of human resource (HR) analytics and big data to achieve positive outcomes for the organization (Angrave *et al.*, 2016). This scholarly article has 29 links, a total link strength of 41, and is cited 10 times. The green cluster discusses themes related to the promotion of AI in people management functions, the transformative impact on organizations, and the necessary preparations leaders must undertake for this transition.

Blue cluster: The document containing 46 links, with a total strength of 193 and cited 38 times, highlights the characteristics of people management functions that pose challenges to implementing data science techniques (Tambe *et al.*, 2019). Within the same cluster, another influential study points out that the adoption of AI in the recruiting industry has proven qualitatively beneficial for both clients and candidates (Upadhyay and Khandelwal, 2018). This research comprises 37 links, a total link strength of 69, and has been cited 13 times. As organizations increasingly embrace data-driven decision-making, there is a risk of neglecting individuals' personal integrity and exacerbating compliance-related stress (Leicht-Deobald *et al.*, 2022). This study has 34 links, a total link strength of 52, and has been cited nine times. Overall, this cluster predominantly highlights the challenges and possibilities of AI adoption in HRM.

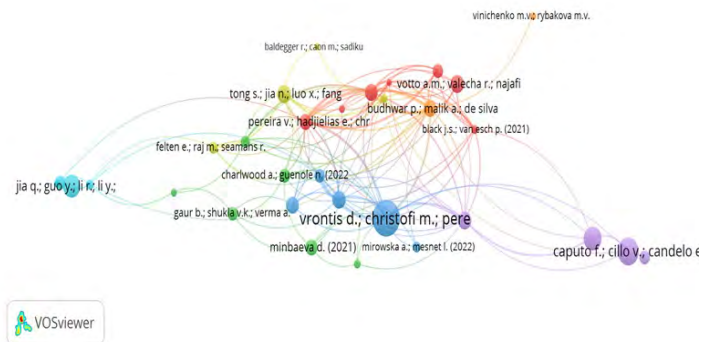
Yellow cluster: The largest node in this cluster has 38 links, a total link strength of 73, and has been cited 13 times. The study focuses on the gradual replacement of employees by AI, suggesting that it has the potential to displace people completely in the near future (Huang and Rust, 2018). Additionally, another study with 24 links, a total link strength of 34, and eight citations identifies the opportunities of incorporating AI tools to meet personalized needs in training and development (Maity, 2019). A study comprising 20 links, a total link strength of 28, and six citations explores and summarizes scenarios in which AI can be employed for workforce management, including predicting turnover, identifying candidates, acquiring resume data, scheduling staff, conducting sentiment analysis, and facilitating employee self-service (Strohmeier and Piazza, 2015). This cluster explains the ways and areas in which AI can be integrated into the people management domain.

Bibliographic Coupling

Of the 375 documents, bibliographic coupling analysis was performed based on a minimum of 10 citations per document. Documents published between 2018 and 2025 were considered. A total of 32 items have been grouped into seven clusters that are strongly linked. These seven clusters represent the themes within the research field. This analysis aims to elucidate the landscape of intellect linkage within this area of study. Figures 7(a) and 7(b) depict the bibliographic coupling of documents in network visualization and overlay visualization forms, respectively.

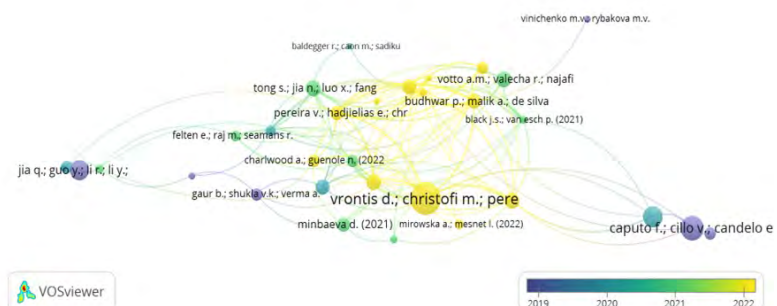
The most cited paper, Tambe *et al.* (2019), has garnered 275 citations and addresses the challenges associated with the adoption of AI in people management; it has a total link strength of 0. In a similar vein, Gupta *et al.* (2018) argue that the automation of the recruitment process, with 32 citations, has a total link strength of 0. Abdeldayem *et al.* (2020) focus on the importance of AI in organizations to manage dynamic environments, accumulating 70 citations, yet maintaining a total link strength of 0. Additionally, the study conducted by Souse *et al.* (2019), which has 39 citations, examine the topic of identifying key skills gaps required to balance organizational technological requirements, also reflecting a total link strength of 0. Sahota and Ashley (2019), with 68 citations, raised the question of managing robots or robots supervising human teams, which also exhibited a total link strength of 0.

Fig. 7 (a): Network visualisation of bibliographic coupling



Source: Author's own elaboration

Fig. 7 (b): Overlay visualisation of bibliographic coupling



Source: Author's own elaboration

Conversely, Budhwar *et al.* (2022), which reviews gaps in the literature and provides future research directions, has a total link strength of 48 and has been cited 40 times. Pereira *et al.* (2023) shares a similar theme, with

44 total link strengths and 37 citations, explaining the outcomes of AI in workplace settings in the context of people management. Vrontis *et al.* (2022) argue for an in-depth understanding of the impact of sophisticated technologies and their influence on workforce management. This paper studies AI and robotics in the context of people management, with a total link strength of 38 and 53 citations.

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Literature Streams and Topics (RQ1 and RQ2)

The various operations undertaken by personnel managers to handle the workforce are undergoing transformation with the incorporation of AI technology. Functions such as recruitment and talent acquisition, training and development, workforce planning, and performance management are being streamlined through automation, thus enhancing the overall efficiency of the department. Researchers have extensively examined the impact of AI by exploring its benefits, the challenges it presents, and the critical issues regarding privacy and ethical considerations that are increasingly coming to the forefront.

Tab. 2: Literature stream and themes

Literature Stream	Theme
AI in Recruitment & Talent Acquisition	Resume handling, social media, blockchain, machine learning, analytics, IOT, big data, algorithms, bots
AI in Training & Development	Virtual reality, augmented reality, skill gap, machine learning, analytics, IOT, algorithms, bots, MOOC,
AI in Workforce Planning	Expert system, Turnover prediction, block chain, machine learning, IOT, algorithms, bots
AI in Performance Management	Absenteeism, fuzzy neural network, IOT, digital analytics, algorithms, bots
AI in Employee Well-being	IOT, people analytics, algorithms, bots
AI and Human Collaboration	AI & human teaming, robots, job replacement
AI and Challenges	Application of AI, technological joblessness, ethical and legal perspective, privacy and security concerns, stress, high cost,
AI and Benefits	Streamline people management functions, reducing operational cost, effectiveness
Adoption of AI	Employee perception, organizations' readiness, technological infrastructure, organizational culture and leadership
Ethical & Human-centrism	Best practices including policies, programs, strong digital leadership

Source: Author's own compilation based on citation data retrieved from Scopus and analyzed using VOSviewer

To conduct an in-depth analysis of existing research and gain insights into the literature stream, themes, and topics in the field of AI in people management, a search string was created to identify relevant articles. The analytical techniques employed included keyword co-occurrence (to identify themes and topics), co-citation (to explore schools of thought), and bibliographic coupling (to discover research gaps) using VOSviewer for article examination.

Tab. 3: Topics covered

Phase	Author	Discussion/Topic
1990 to 2000	Lawler & Elliot R (1993)	Expert system in job evaluation as a decision aid.
2001 to 2010	Malinowski <i>et al.</i> (2008)	Decision support for team staffing.
	Dickson & Nusair (2010)	AI in handling resumes.
2011 to 2020	Strohmeier & Piazza (2015)	Turnover prediction supported by artificial neural networks, knowledge-based search engines for candidate search, application of a genetic algorithm that aids staff rostering. HR sentiment analysis with text mining, resume data accession with particulars extraction and employee self-service coupled with interactive voice response.
	Sewwandi <i>et al.</i> (2017)	Linguist feature vector Matrix analysis, an ontology-based detector for one's personality and semantic analysis to examine the content.
	Prasolova-Forland E. <i>et al.</i> (2017)	Virtual reality learning modules.
	Gupta <i>et al.</i> (2018)	Challenges in the recruitment process.
	Michailidis M.P. (2018)	Challenges of AI and blockchain on HR recruiting practices.
	Sousa & Wilks (2018)	Disrupted technology skill gap and critical skill gap in small and medium-sized enterprises in future.
	Jia <i>et al.</i> (2018)	AI in six dimensions of HRM, namely, HR planning, hiring, training and development, performance evaluation, compensation administration and employee relationship management.
	De Mauro <i>et al.</i> (2018)	Human resources for Big Data professions.
	Moyo S. <i>et al.</i> (2018)	Machine learning to determine the length of stay of the health workers.
	Ahmed F. <i>et al.</i> (2018)	Employee's preparedness for technological acceptance (decision support systems).
	Araujo <i>et al.</i> (2019)	Fuzzy logic and artificial neural networks: a hybrid approach to predict absenteeism.
	Gaur B. <i>et al.</i> (2019)	IOT wearable devices to improve decision-making.
	Burnett & Lisk (2019)	Advanced tools and techniques for timely training, feedback and controlling, revamping the productivity, satisfaction, and retention of employees.
	Tambe P. <i>et al.</i> (2019)	Challenges of AI in HRM.
	Rab-Kettler & Lehnervp (2019)	Technological joblessness, creative class, net generation (generation Y), humanistic management, sustainable development, corporate social responsibility, and new executive in the current scenario of rapid socio-economic transformation and technological advancement.
	Vinichenko M.V. <i>et al.</i> (2019)	Natural and artificial intelligence in the talent management system.
	Assante D. <i>et al.</i> (2019)	New competencies and skills are required because of the digital shift.
	Caputo F. <i>et al.</i> (2019)	The role of soft skills and Big Data in increasing firm performance.
	Sahota & Ashley (2019)	AI (Robotics) in HRM streamlines the managerial operations of tracking billable hours, employee attendance, workload, recruitment, and training, in addition to decision-making support and the drawbacks of this interaction.
	Njoku E. <i>et al.</i> (2019)	Digital analytics and machine learning/AI-driven productivity tools to create and sustain competitive advantage.
	Bhardwaj <i>et al.</i> (2020)	Presence of AI can be seen in the functions, namely, (a) talent acquisition, (b) workplace learning and performance, (c) performance management and (d) retention.
	Abdeldayem & Aldulaimi (2020)	Opportunities and challenges of implementing AI technology in workforce management.
	Johnson R.D. <i>et al.</i> (2020)	eHRM and AI tools in the recruitment and selection process.
	Oswald F.L. <i>et al.</i> (2020)	AI and big data.
	Kshetri N. (2020)	AI machines in recruitment, selection, development, retention, and improving the work adequacy.
	Pillai & Sivathanu (2020)	AI technology in talent management
	Malik <i>et al.</i> (2020)	HR managers need to acquire new advanced skills for HRM functions
	Vardarlier & Zafer (2020)	AI tools to acquire the best workforce for the organisation
	Baldegger <i>et al.</i> (2020), Chang K. (2020), Khaliq <i>et al.</i> (2022)	Perception of AI in human resources management
	Chang K. (2020)	Role of AI at organisational level, managerial level, and individual job level
	Korepin <i>et al.</i> (2020), Kaizer <i>et al.</i> (2020)	E-learning
	Tewari & Pant (2020)	Benefits of AI- streamlining HR functions, reducing operational costs
2021 to present	Tong <i>et al.</i> (2021)	Artificial intelligence (AI) is used to evaluate employee performance and provide performance feedback.
	Votto <i>et al.</i> (2021)	Use of AI in recruitment, employee training and development, employee performance evaluation, compensation analysis and discipline management.
	Kot <i>et al.</i> (2021)	AI recruitment and the reputation of an employer.
	McNeese <i>et al.</i> (2021), Song <i>et al.</i> (2022), Del Giudice <i>et al.</i> (2023)	AI and human teaming
	Giermindi <i>et al.</i> (2021)	Six potential dangers of people analytics: illusion of control and reductionism, self-fulfilling prophecies, foster path dependencies, impair transparency and accountability and reduce employee autonomy.
	Nankervis <i>et al.</i> (2021)	Government policies and integration of AI technology in HRM.
	Dixon <i>et al.</i> (2021), Khaliq <i>et al.</i> (2022), Basu <i>et al.</i> (2023)	Robots/ AI and their impact on employment.
	Majumder & Mondal (2021)	Chatbot is one of the most effective tools for communication with employees with no human intervention.
	Kong <i>et al.</i> (2021)	The adverse effect of AI on human capital
	Malik <i>et al.</i> (2022)	Chatbots-advocates that the HR functions that involve communication and interaction with the workforce, repetitive and analytical in nature, should be AI-driven
	Vrontis <i>et al.</i> (2022)	Impact of AI directed towards HR strategies that include human-robot alliance, deciding and learning opportunities, job replacement and, in addition to that, includes HR activities, namely recruitment, training, and job performance
	Zehir <i>et al.</i> (2022)	AI streamlines HR functions and improves their efficiency
	Arslan <i>et al.</i> (2022)	Human-robot team interaction
	Bankins S. (2021), Charlwood <i>et al.</i> (2022)	Ethical implementation of AI
	Pan <i>et al.</i> (2022)	Facilitators and constraints of companies' AI adoption behaviour during employee recruitment.
	Black <i>et al.</i> (2021)	The AI tools are likely to reduce recruitment costs and increase the value of human capital. the negative consequences of not acquiring AI tools will lead to greater investment in AI recruitment in future.
	Malik <i>et al.</i> (2022)	AI and personalised communication and knowledge sharing
	La Torre D. <i>et al.</i> (2023)	AI's capability to reduce operational costs, boost efficiency, and enhance customer interaction.
	Pereira <i>et al.</i> (2023)	AI's impact on the workplace. HRM specifically human resource planning, training & development, health, safety and wellbeing, performance management and appraisal, employee & labour relations and lastly recruitment & selection at different levels in the organisation
	Rodgers <i>et al.</i> (2023)	Need to add ethical dimensions in HR management
	Malik <i>et al.</i> (2023)	AI assistance augments employee experience, employee engagement, productivity and potency of HR functions
	Fenwick <i>et al.</i> , (2024)	Role of people in human-centric adoption of AI and digital transformation.
	Madanchian & Taherdoost, (2025)	Explains the role of AI in transforming people management. It focuses on various challenges, enables and ethical implications

Source: Author's own compilation based on citation data retrieved from Scopus and analyzed using VOSviewer

According to the articles retrieved from Scopus and the analysis conducted using VOSviewer, it was noted that in the 1990s, expert systems were introduced in people management to facilitate decisions related to job evaluation, thereby setting the stage for AI in this domain. In the early 2000s, decision support systems were developed to assist managers, and AI began to play a role in the recruitment process. From 2011 onwards, the application of neural networks, genetic algorithms, and text mining was documented. People management managers began analyzing individuals' social media presence and interactions to understand their personalities and used semantic analysis, which supports organizations in recruitment by enhancing the efficacy of the process in identifying the best candidates. Additionally, studies have discussed the presence of AI in other operations apart from recruitment in people management, namely manpower planning, employee training and development, performance evaluation, compensation management, and employee relationship management. Nevertheless, areas such as AI's role in compensation management and employee relationships have not been extensively covered by the research community. Organizations have introduced VR and AR for employee training.

During this phase, two major operations of people management where AI was widely used were recruitment and training and development. Research during this time highlighted the emergence of new job profiles such as data scientists, business analysts, developers, and system managers, as AI became more prevalent in organizations. A study also examined the use of the Internet of Things (IoT) devices for data collection to facilitate more logical and accurate decision-making. However, this study also raised questions about privacy and data security. To address the issue of absenteeism and its prediction, fuzzy neural networks were explored. With continuous advancements in technology, studies emphasized the upskilling of HR to remain employable. Since 2020, AI-generated feedback has been widely used for more logical decision-making. A growing number of firms have adopted AI to manage HR, even in discipline management. However, no substantial study on how AI is used in discipline management has been identified. Researchers have underscored the positive impact of AI in recruitment and training. Currently, discussions among researchers are centered on the advantages of AI-human collaboration for improved economic outcomes. Studies have also investigated the impact of introducing robots to humans and robot-human teams. AI has also proven to be a game changer in ensuring personalized communication and training through chatbots. While existing literature primarily focuses on the organizational impact of AI, recent studies are shifting towards understanding its impact at the team and individual levels. Ethical considerations, AI acceptance, and fear of job displacement are becoming major topics of discussion among stakeholders.

Drivers and Outcomes of the Inclusion of AI Technologies in People Management Practices (RQ3)

The drivers and outcomes associated with the inclusion of AI in people management are identified through a bibliometric analysis of

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articles extracted from Scopus. By employing keyword cluster analysis, drivers, outcomes, and enablers were determined. This analysis allows a deeper understanding of the factors promoting AI's inclusion in people management and its resultant effects, thereby providing more insight into the current technological landscape. Moreover, enabling technology like big data have been discussed to offer a more comprehensive view of innovative technology that prompted its absorption into the domain of people management. The findings indicate that the primary drivers prompting the inclusion of progressive technologies, specifically AI, in various organizational practices for managing personnel are as follows:

Drivers of AI Technologies in People Management Practices

1) Fourth Industrial Revolution

The Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), popularly known as Industry 4.0, is revolutionizing both the manufacturing and service sectors. The sophisticated technologies introduced by 4IR serve as the foundational connection between the physical and digital worlds (Xu *et al.*, 2018). This contemporary era of innovation is stimulating the emergence of AI-human teams (Eberhard *et al.*, 2017) and the collaboration of logical machines and intelligent software, ensuring automation (Ibarra *et al.*, 2018). The progressive technology of AI is recognized as the agent of 4IR (Hecklau *et al.*, 2016). Incorporating intelligent technology within the context of people management yields positive outcomes for both management and the workforce (Sekhri and Cheema, 2019), such as processing large volumes of data for recruitment (Upadhyay and Khandelwal, 2018) and recommending personalized skill-upgrading programs (Poquet and De Laat, 2021).

2) Talent Management Efficiency

Recruitment is a monotonous and challenging process that requires mechanization to address these challenges (Gupta *et al.*, 2018). Utilizing ML and algorithms enhances the efficiency of recruitment and professional training (Jia *et al.*, 2018). Organizations can foresee the duration of workers' tenure with the help of algorithms (Moyo *et al.*, 2018) and identify applicants are likely to excel in their roles (Johnson *et al.*, 2020). It reduces human biases (Kshetri, 2021). Furthermore, AI tools enable managers to receive timely feedback, learning and training, and control, which prompts enhanced output, greater job satisfaction, and reduced attrition (Burnett and Lisk, 2021).

3) Personalized People Management Practices

With the evolution of people management, the focus is shifting towards providing more customized and personalized practices to the workforce (Malik *et al.*, 2022). In addition to attracting talent, personalized and hyper-personalized practices also create a positive experience for employees (Malik *et al.*, 2022; Hornung *et al.*, 2009). The inclusion of AI-supported tools and applications has enabled the absorption of personalized approaches

into various functions of people management, namely talent training and development, employee mentoring, performance management, and administering HR queries (Malik *et al.*, 2022). Additionally, employees favor AI-backed communication tools, as they believe these make information transfer more effective and personalized (Malik *et al.*, 2022).

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4) Gaining a Competitive Edge

In the rapidly evolving business world characterized by technological advancements, organizations have turned to leveraging human capital to gain a competitive advantage (Khandekar and Sharma, 2005; Stofkova and Sukalova, 2020). More attention is being directed towards incorporating smart technologies to enhance outcomes (Schleicher *et al.*, 2018). To enhance their capabilities, comprehensive functioning technologies such as HR information systems and AI are employed to align with strategic objectives (Hilman and Kaliappen, 2015).

The main outcomes appear to be as follows:

Enabling technology for the inclusion of AI technologies in people management practices

Big Data

The usage of digital technology has led to the generation of quick, large volumes and variety of data, termed big data. Technology allows business organizations to gather, analyze, store, manage data using algorithms (Oswald *et al.*, 2020). In the contemporary context, the people management sector manages real-time data on workforce metrics, sourced from various channels (García, 2018), including both intramural and extraneous roots (Roberts, 2013). The increased utilization of HR analytics and big data has boosted the requirement for professionals with distinct competencies (Barnes, 2014). HR decision-making is now supported by analytics in business organizations (Hamilton and Sodeman, 2020).

Outcomes of inclusion of AI technologies in people management practices

Enhanced Efficiency in Data Management and Recruitment

AI streamlines the recruiting process by automating processes such as screening, predicting job suitability, and processing massive datasets, resulting in more accurate and expedited hiring decisions (Upadhyay and Khandelwal, 2018; Sekhri and Cheema, 2019).

Enhanced Workforce Development

AI possesses the ability to suggest customized skill-upgrading programs for employees, promoting continual learning and professional growth. This results in a workforce that is more adaptive and proficient (Poquet and De Laat, 2021).

Enhanced Employee Retention and Satisfaction

AI tools deliver tailored communication, manage learning and development programs, and provide timely feedback, which contributes to increased job satisfaction and reduced turnover rates (Burnett and Lisk, 2021; Malik *et al.*, 2022).

The integration of AI into people management methods provides fresh, data-driven insights, removes biases, and establishes more equitable and efficient management systems (Kshetri, 2021; Johnson *et al.*, 2020).

Ethical framework for AI in people management

The rapid advancements in AI and the surge in its adoption have prompted critical ethical discussions regarding its responsible implementation and usage. Ethics in AI, like any other ethical belief, lacks well-established mechanisms, unlike law. Unethical behavior may result in a questionable reputation but does not incur punishments or penalties. Therefore, organizations may adopt an ignorant approach while implementing AI in people management. Thus, the ethical framework for AI application in people management is emerging as a crucial field of research (Hagendorff, 2020). Managers may make erroneous decisions or adopt different approaches to problem-solving. AI tools are trained by humans or by data provided by humans, so there is a probability that AI tools may inherit these variabilities, leading to inconsistent results and raising concerns about their reliability and precision (Lenskjold, 2024). One major obstacle adversely influencing the workforce and organizations is decision bias due to biased data input (Soleimani *et al.*, 2022). For employees, decisions supported by biased AI can lead to discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender, or social status. These factors further negatively impact productivity, performance management, loyalty, and career growth (Connelly *et al.*, 2021). From the organization's perspective, biases in AI-backed decisions may lack transparency and result in reputational damage, inaccurate decisions, and flawed financial projections (Garg *et al.*, 2021). Given that the data or input for AI tools originates externally and is generated by humans, any biased data will have a pernicious effect on stakeholders (Haefner *et al.*, 2021). As the adoption of AI gains traction, issues surrounding data privacy and security are becoming increasingly prominent. AI necessitates vast amounts of data, including sensitive information such as images, speech, social media interactions, financial transactions, and even health records. This data, when used as input to train AI and for analysis, becomes prone to security and privacy infringements (Lacmanovic, 2023). Critical ethical concerns are incorporated to develop a framework for the responsible use of AI technology in the field of people management. The framework emphasizes ethical considerations such as unbiased decision-making, data privacy, and security. The study focuses on areas that consider the ethical and humanistic approach to implementing AI in people management, rather than solely concentrating on subjects discussing the impact of AI on improving productivity and efficiency.

5. Discussion

This research has demonstrated that the integration of AI into people management is not merely a technological advancement but also a profound transformation in how firms view and engage with their employees. The

results indicate that there are both substantial challenges and potential opportunities. These observations have significant implications for both researchers and practitioners alike.

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Scholarly Contributions

Our findings respond to recent calls for rethinking the future of management studies by emphasizing the need for research that is not only technologically informed but also human-centered, ethically responsible, and impactful for organizations and society at large (Ciampi *et al.*, 2025).

This research advances the current knowledge regarding the role of AI in people management from an academic perspective by advocating for a comprehensive, humanistic approach that transcends operational efficiency. Traditional models of people management have primarily concentrated on AI's ability to optimize tasks, including recruitment, training, and workforce analytics (Dwivedi *et al.*, 2019). However, this investigation underscores the urgent necessity for a more comprehensive theoretical framework.

This study, grounded in the Humanistic Management paradigm, emphasizes the importance of fairness in the workplace as the foundation of organizational strategy (Pirson, 2017). It advocates for a fundamental shift in the people management approach, acknowledging the intrinsic value of employees as contributors to the success of the organization, rather than viewing them merely as economic resources. This change is essential at a time when the human aspects of employment may be reduced to transactional activities due to the growing autonomy of AI. Additionally, this investigation facilitates research that addresses the ethical implementation of AI in people management, thereby bridging the gap between technological and ethical considerations. The literature lacks a complete ethical framework that guarantees the design and implementation of AI systems in a manner that safeguards employee privacy, mitigates algorithmic biases, and cultivates trust (Brynjolfsson and Mitchell, 2017). As AI becomes increasingly integrated into people management practices, it is imperative to provide a framework that will facilitate future scholarly research.

Practical Implications

The findings hold considerable significance for practitioners, particularly those responsible for people management and organizational management. AI has the potential to enhance productivity when adopted with care. One of the primary obstacles is ensuring that AI enhances human capabilities rather than supplanting them, thereby protecting professional identity and job security.

One of the most urgent concerns is the potential for AI to replace human labor, resulting in job insecurity and reduced workplace stability. To mitigate this issue, firms could implement AI systems that increase employee autonomy by delegating routine responsibilities, thereby allowing employees to concentrate on more personally gratifying, strategic, and creative endeavors.

However, it is imperative to exercise caution to prevent AI from infiltrating domains that necessitate moral judgment or intricate decision-making, as this might undermine human autonomy and impede personal growth. In areas where ethics and creativity are of utmost importance, AI should serve as an enabler rather than a replacement for human judgment. Additionally, AI presents substantial opportunities to enhance employee support and satisfaction in the workplace. Predictive analytics, AI-driven support initiatives, and NLP tools, such as chatbots, can assist in the real-time monitoring and enhancement of both physical and psychological health. By proactively addressing issues like stress, burnout, and absenteeism, these techniques contribute to a more engaged and efficient workforce. Investments in AI technologies designed to promote a supportive work environment can result in greater productivity, reduced attrition, and enhanced employee satisfaction for organizations. By emphasizing fair and responsible organizational practices, companies can demonstrate their commitment to a more sustainable and ethical approach to people management.

Furthermore, the rapid deployment of AI presents serious ethical challenges; therefore, it is crucial that AI is regulated by explicit ethical principles to guarantee transparency, accountability, and justice. To preserve the trust between employees and the firm, leaders must integrate AI with a commitment to data protection. Organizations that neglect to address these concerns risk legal ramifications, as well as damage to their reputation and employee morale.

Finally, the human element of labor must not be disregarded, despite the allure of AI's potential for enhanced efficiency and innovation. Organizations must achieve a harmonious balance between the adoption of AI-driven innovations and the preservation of a human-centered work environment. The integration of AI should not be interpreted as a substitute for human labor but rather as a tool that can complement and enhance human talents.

In doing so, leaders, managers, and entrepreneurs play a critical role in ensuring that AI is integrated in alignment with the ethical norms and values of the firm. This approach will assist enterprises in developing a culture of respect, trust, and accountability, which are critical elements of long-term success in the age of AI.

These insights contribute to the existing body of academic knowledge and are also relevant for practical application within organizations. The frameworks provide a guideline for an ethical and responsible approach to AI implementation, ensuring that employee autonomy is preserved in the workplace.

6. Conclusion

This study proposed a SLR encompassing 375 documents aimed at investigating the integration of AI into people management practices. The findings reveal relevant scholarly and practical implications, highlighting that while AI possesses substantial potential in improving operational

processes-particularly in areas like recruitment, training, and performance management-it also raises critical challenges. AI's ability to automate tasks and processes can foster productivity; however, it also risks depersonalizing interactions, diminishing worker autonomy, and exacerbating concerns over job displacement. These issues call for a more balanced approach that harmonizes AI-driven efficiency with responsible and human-centric management principles.

This study is not without its limitations, yet it can serve as a compelling foundation for future research. First, the analysis was restricted to papers in the Scopus database, which may not adequately represent the numerous perspectives and emerging studies available in various languages and countries. Consequently, the results may indicate a predilection for more technologically advanced countries and industries, potentially overlooking the distinctive obstacles that developing regions and smaller firms encounter. Second, the study's emphasis on academic literature may result in a partial representation of practical applications of AI in real-world organizational contexts. Data from firms actively integrating AI into their HR practices, as well as empirical case studies, could offer a more comprehensive understanding of the benefits and pitfalls associated with AI integration. In conclusion, this study only briefly addresses the ethical issues of AI in people management, yet these issues warrant additional investigation. Future research must concentrate on creating solid frameworks that safeguard employee autonomy, address algorithmic biases, and tackle privacy concerns.

Despite the presence of these constraints, our investigation suggests an extensive research agenda that emphasizes numerous critical domains:

Ethical AI Frameworks: A crucial topic for future research involves the establishment of ethical criteria for integrating AI into people management practices. These frameworks must address critical challenges, including transparency, algorithmic fairness, and data privacy protection.

Cross-Cultural Applications: Future research should investigate the degree to which AI in people management may be customized to accommodate varying cultural contexts and organizational sizes. It is particularly important to explore how AI interacts with diverse cultural norms, legal frameworks, and workforce dynamics, especially in SMEs and developing nations, as AI becomes more ubiquitous globally.

Longitudinal Research on the Impact of AI: Long-term studies are required to assess the effects of AI on organizational performance, job satisfaction, and employee productivity over time. This research has the potential to provide valuable insights into how AI affects work-life balance, workplace environment, and job security, as well as how these factors evolve as AI continues to transform people management techniques.

Perception of AI by Employees: Investigating employee perceptions regarding the integration of AI into their work environments is essential. By understanding employee attitudes toward AI, particularly their concerns about autonomy, job displacement, and ethical technology use, firms can develop AI systems that are more aligned with employee expectations and the organization's values.

AI Compensation and Benefits: Future studies should explore the potential of AI to innovate compensation structures, benefits administration, and pay equity, given the underutilization of AI in compensation management. The results of this study may demonstrate how AI-driven solutions could contribute to developing more transparent and equitable compensation systems, thereby improving employee satisfaction and retention.

Individualized Employee Development: The utilization of AI for personalized employee training and development is another potential field of research. Future research could investigate how AI-driven platforms can customize learning and development programs to meet the unique needs of individual employees, thus promoting ongoing engagement and growth within the workforce.

By concentrating on these areas, future research can yield critical insights into the effective application of AI to improve organizational efficiency. For lasting success in a future where AI is rapidly transforming employment, it is essential to ensure that new technologies facilitate sustainable management practices and promote employee growth.

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