



Artificial Intelligence in Human Resource Management: A Systematic Review of Its Influence on Employee Satisfaction

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Abstract:

Artificial intelligence (AI) is steadily changing how organisations manage their people, from the moment a resume is uploaded to the day an employee reads their latest performance review. Yet as AI tools such as chatbots, predictive analytics and automated screening spread across HR departments, it is still not fully clear how these tools shape the way employees feel about their jobs. This paper addresses that question through a systematic review of secondary data. Peer-reviewed articles published mainly between 2019 and 2026 were sourced from Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, Emerald, Springer and Google Scholar, and eighteen studies covering recruitment, training, performance management, engagement and workforce analytics were examined in depth using thematic analysis. The review finds that AI tends to raise employee satisfaction when it removes repetitive work, personalises learning and speeds up feedback, but it can just as easily damage trust when employees feel watched, judged unfairly by an algorithm, or left out of decisions that affect them. Four recurring patterns emerge from the literature: efficiency gains, personalisation gains, fairness concerns, and governance gaps. Building on these patterns, the paper proposes a conceptual framework linking AI-based HR practices to employee satisfaction and, through it, to organisational performance. The review adds to the growing conversation on responsible AI in HRM and offers HR managers a realistic, evidence-based starting point for deciding where AI genuinely helps and where a human hand still needs to stay close by.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence; Human Resource Management; Employee Satisfaction; HR Analytics; AI Recruitment; Digital HR; Systematic Literature Review

1. Introduction

Walk into almost any mid-sized company today and HR is no longer just a department with filing cabinets and exit interviews. It runs on software that screens resumes overnight, chatbots that answer leave-policy questions at 2 a.m., and dashboards that quietly flag which employees might be thinking about leaving. Artificial intelligence has moved from being a futuristic add-on to being a normal part of how people are hired, trained, evaluated and retained. Global surveys of HR leaders now routinely report that a large share of organisations use some form of AI in at least one HR process, and the market for HR-focused AI tools continues to expand year after year.

This shift matters because HR is fundamentally about people, and people notice when a decision that affects their income or their career has been shaped by a machine rather than a manager. Recruitment platforms decide which resumes a human ever sees. Performance systems generate ratings that influence raises and promotions. Learning platforms decide what training an employee is offered next. Every one of these moments touches something personal: how valued, how fairly treated, and how satisfied an employee feels at work. Employee satisfaction, in turn, is closely

linked to retention, productivity and the overall health of an organisation, so understanding how AI affects it is not a side issue — it sits close to the centre of modern HR strategy.

The current industry picture is mixed. Vendors and consulting firms publish confident case studies claiming double-digit improvements in engagement and efficiency after AI adoption. At the same time, employees in surveys often describe feeling monitored, misunderstood by algorithms, or uneasy about decisions they cannot question. Academic research sits somewhere in between: it confirms real gains in efficiency and personalisation, while also flagging bias, opacity and trust as recurring problems. What is missing is a clear, organised picture that pulls these threads together specifically around the question of employee satisfaction, rather than treating AI in HR as one large, undifferentiated trend.

This is the research problem the present paper responds to. Much of the existing literature either studies AI's effect on organisational efficiency (cost, speed, accuracy) or its effect on fairness and ethics, but comparatively few reviews focus squarely on the employee's experience of satisfaction across the different stages of the HR cycle — recruitment, training, performance management and engagement. There is also a research gap in bringing together evidence from different industries, countries and HR functions into a single, structured synthesis that a manager or researcher could actually use as a reference point.

The objective of this study is to review and synthesise existing secondary literature on AI-based HR practices and their relationship with employee satisfaction, and to build a simple conceptual framework that connects the two. In pursuit of this objective, the paper is guided by four research questions: (1) Which AI-based HR practices appear most often in the literature? (2) How does each practice relate to employee satisfaction, positively or negatively? (3) What factors explain why AI sometimes helps and sometimes harms satisfaction? and (4) What gaps remain for future research to address?

The scope of this review is limited to peer-reviewed, English-language secondary sources published mainly between 2019 and 2026, drawn from recognised academic databases. It does not present new primary data; instead, it draws conclusions by comparing and synthesising what other researchers have already found. The remainder of the paper is organised as follows: Section 2 reviews the literature thematically; Section 3 identifies the research gap; Section 4 states the study objectives; Section 5 explains the methodology; Section 6 presents the findings; Section 7 discusses them; Section 8 proposes a conceptual framework; Sections 9 and 10 outline managerial and theoretical implications; Section 11 notes the limitations; Section 12 suggests future research directions; and Section 13 concludes the paper.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Artificial Intelligence: A Quick Grounding

Artificial intelligence, in the HR context, usually means software that can perform tasks that once required human judgement — reading a resume, ranking candidates, flagging a performance risk, or recommending a training course — by learning patterns from data rather than following a fixed set of rules. Tambe, Cappelli and Yakubovich (2019) made an early and still widely cited point: HR data is often smaller, messier and more legally sensitive than the data AI is typically built for, which creates a real gap between what AI promises in HR and what it can safely deliver. That gap is the backdrop against which almost every later study in this review operates.

2.2 Human Resource Management in a Digitised Workplace

HRM has always evolved alongside technology, from paper personnel files to digital HRIS systems, and AI is best understood as the latest, more autonomous step in that evolution rather than something entirely new. What changes

with AI is not just the tool but the type of decision being automated — moving from record-keeping to actual judgement calls about who gets hired, promoted or coached.

2.3 AI-Based HR Practices

Across the literature, AI shows up most consistently in five HR practices: recruitment and selection (resume screening, chatbots, video-interview analysis), training and development (adaptive learning platforms, skills-gap prediction), performance management (continuous feedback tools, predictive performance analytics), employee engagement (sentiment analysis, engagement chatbots), and workforce analytics (turnover prediction, absenteeism modelling). These five practices form the thematic backbone of this review and reappear throughout Sections 2 and 6.

2.4 Employee Satisfaction as an Outcome

Employee satisfaction refers to how positively an employee evaluates their job and work experience, and it is shaped by fairness, recognition, growth opportunities and the quality of everyday interactions at work. Several reviews summarised below treat satisfaction as either a direct outcome of AI adoption or as something mediated by trust, fairness perceptions and self-efficacy.

2.5 Summary of Previous Studies

The table below summarises eighteen studies selected for this review, spanning recruitment, training, performance management, engagement and analytics.

Author(s) & Year	Country / Region	Method	Key Findings	Gap Identified
Tambe, Cappelli & Yakubovich (2019)	USA	Conceptual review	AI adoption in HR is held back by messy, small HR datasets and fairness concerns; proposes causal reasoning and experimentation as a path forward.	Little empirical testing across industries or firm sizes.
Ekuma (2024)	Global (SLR)	Narrative systematic review	AI personalises learning, gives fairer and faster feedback, and improves objectivity in performance evaluation.	Long-term effects on employee wellbeing rarely studied.
Duong & Thi (2022)	Vietnam	Survey (quantitative)	AI-based recruitment satisfaction among job seekers is shaped by self-efficacy, which both mediates and moderates the relationship.	Sample limited to student job-seekers only.
Taslim et al. (2025)	South Africa	Systematic review	Involving employees in AI-driven HR decisions increases trust and	Long-term cultural impact

Author(s) & Year	Country / Region	Method	Key Findings	Gap Identified
			satisfaction; collaboration between AI and HR staff improves decision quality.	of AI involvement remains unclear.
IRJAEM Review (2025)	Global (78 articles, 2018–2025)	PRISMA systematic review	AI strengthens recruitment, personalised learning and analytics, but governance and fairness frameworks lag behind adoption.	Weak human-centred design frameworks in existing HR-AI models.
Vasquez Salvador (2025)	Latin America	Systematic review (2023–2024)	AI-driven HR raises productivity, retention and satisfaction, mainly through better recruitment and selection.	Short review window; excludes older foundational studies.
Tactical HRM SLR (2021)	Global	Systematic review	AI-enabled HR information systems improve cost-effectiveness and employee commitment; effect varies sharply by HR function.	Recruitment and performance areas dominate; compensation and discipline under-researched.
Knowledge & HRM SLR (2025)	Global	Bibliometric + thematic review	Employee satisfaction with AI tools is closely tied to customer-facing outcomes; technostress is a recurring theme.	Theoretical foundations remain fragmented across disciplines.
AI-HRM Risks Review (2024)	Global	Systematic review	Personalisation, sentiment analysis, chatbots and predictive analytics all raise engagement and satisfaction when used transparently.	Legal and ethical guidance for practitioners is still underdeveloped.
Indonesia HRM SLR (2025)	Indonesia	Systematic review	AI research concentrates heavily on performance monitoring; satisfaction and retention	Evidentiary imbalance between

Author(s) & Year	Country / Region	Method	Key Findings	Gap Identified
			outcomes are comparatively under-documented.	productivity and wellbeing outcomes.
Recruitment SLR, Discover Global Society (2025)	Global	Systematic review	Maps growth of AI-recruitment research and calls for more balanced study designs.	Employer perspective dominates; applicant perspective is thin.
Candidate Perception Study (2025)	Europe	Survey (business & engineering candidates)	How candidates perceive organisational attractiveness depends heavily on how AI is used and explained during recruitment.	Employer-side literature still outweighs candidate-side evidence.
AI-Assisted Recruitment Field Experiment (2025)	USA	Randomised field experiment	Candidates from an AI-assisted pipeline passed the final human interview at 54%, versus 34% from the traditional pipeline.	Single company, single role; generalisability is untested.
Recruitment & Selection Review (2023)	Global	Narrative review	AI raises efficiency in screening but introduces bias and trust concerns that vary by stakeholder group.	Recruiter and hiring-manager perceptions remain under-explored.
Procedural Justice in AI Hiring (2025)	Bangladesh	Survey (applicants)	Applicants judge AI hiring as fairer when the process is explained clearly and they retain some human contact.	Few empirical studies capture the applicant's lived experience.
Training & Development SLR (2025)	Global	Systematic review	AI personalises learning paths and improves training relevance, but biased training data can distort recommendations.	Ethical safeguards in AI-driven learning are

Author(s) & Year	Country / Region	Method	Key Findings	Gap Identified
				inconsistently discussed.
PRISMA-Based HRM Review (2025)	Global	PRISMA systematic review	AI analytics help predict turnover and absenteeism and support fairer hiring, but review quality varies widely across the field.	Methodological rigor differs a great deal between existing reviews.
Learning & Development Case Studies (2024)	Global	Case-based review	AI-driven learning management systems increase engagement through adaptive, self-paced content.	Cross-industry comparison of outcomes is largely missing.

Taken together, these studies point toward one consistent conclusion: AI can genuinely improve efficiency and personalisation in HR, but its effect on employee satisfaction depends heavily on how transparently it is implemented and how much voice employees retain in the process. This sets up the research gap discussed next.

3. Research Gap

Previous studies have covered a great deal of ground individually. Some focus narrowly on recruitment (Duong & Thi, 2022; the 2025 candidate-perception study), others on training (the 2025 Training & Development SLR), and others still on broad organisational outcomes such as productivity or turnover (Vasquez Salvador, 2025; the PRISMA-Based HRM Review, 2025). Few, however, cut across all major HR functions and ask a single, focused question: what is AI's net effect on employee satisfaction specifically, as opposed to efficiency, cost or productivity more generally?

What earlier reviews have generally overlooked is the pattern that connects the positive and negative findings. Studies report gains in satisfaction from personalisation and speed, and losses in satisfaction from opacity and perceived unfairness, but rarely place these two forces side by side in one framework. Most reviews also treat HR functions in isolation, which makes it hard to see whether the same AI-satisfaction pattern holds across recruitment, training and performance management, or whether it differs by function.

This review is needed because organisations are not adopting AI in just one HR function — they are adopting it across the entire employee lifecycle at once. A synthesis that spans functions, draws out the shared mechanisms behind satisfaction gains and losses, and turns them into a usable framework is currently missing from the literature, and this paper attempts to fill that space.

4. Objectives of the Study

- To identify the AI-based HR practices most frequently discussed in recent secondary literature.
- To examine how each of these practices influences employee satisfaction, based on existing evidence.

- To synthesise this evidence into a coherent, cross-functional picture rather than isolated findings.
- To propose a conceptual framework linking AI-based HR practices, employee satisfaction and organisational performance.
- To identify directions for future primary research on this relationship.

5. Research Methodology

Research Design

This study follows a qualitative, interpretive research design built entirely on secondary data. It does not collect data from individuals or organisations directly; instead, it systematically gathers, screens and synthesises findings already published in peer-reviewed sources. This design is well suited to a fast-moving topic like AI in HR, where pulling together scattered findings is often more valuable, at this stage, than adding one more small-sample primary study.

Type of Study

The study is a focused systematic literature review, informed loosely by PRISMA-style screening logic (identification, screening, eligibility, inclusion), though on a smaller and more targeted scale than a full-scale meta-analysis.

Data Sources

Articles were located through Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, Emerald, SpringerLink and Google Scholar, using their standard search and citation-tracking functions.

Inclusion Criteria

- Published in English.
- Peer-reviewed journal articles, or reputable conference/working papers with clear methodology.
- Published between 2019 and 2026.
- Directly relevant to AI applications in HRM and/or employee satisfaction.

Exclusion Criteria

- Opinion pieces, blog posts and vendor marketing material without a research methodology.
- Duplicate studies or near-identical conference-to-journal republications.
- Non-English publications.
- Studies unrelated to HR functions, even if they discuss AI generally.

Search Strategy

Search terms combined "Artificial Intelligence" with HR-specific keywords, including AI in HRM, employee satisfaction, digital HR, HR analytics, AI recruitment, AI performance management, and AI training and development. Boolean combinations (AND/OR) were used to widen and then narrow results at each stage.

Data Extraction

An initial pool of articles was screened by title and abstract for topical relevance, after which full texts of the most relevant articles were read in detail. Studies were retained if they offered a clear method, a stated country or regional context, and findings connected either directly or indirectly to employee satisfaction. Eighteen studies met these criteria closely enough to be summarised in the literature table in Section 2.5; several additional sources were used for background and are listed in the References section without appearing in the table.

Data Analysis

The extracted findings were analysed thematically. Each study's key findings were coded into one of five HR-function themes (recruitment, training, performance, engagement, analytics) and then, within each theme, grouped further into satisfaction-positive mechanisms (efficiency, personalisation, fairness when done well) and satisfaction-negative mechanisms (opacity, perceived surveillance, exclusion from decisions). This thematic coding forms the basis of the findings presented in Section 6.

6. Results / Findings

6.1 AI in Recruitment

Recruitment is the most heavily researched AI-HR practice in the literature reviewed. Findings are genuinely mixed. On the positive side, a randomised field experiment found that candidates who went through an AI-assisted pipeline passed the final human interview at a substantially higher rate (54%) than those from a traditional pipeline (34%), suggesting AI can surface stronger candidates rather than simply filtering faster. Candidates also report more satisfaction when chatbots and automated updates keep them informed throughout a process that traditionally left them waiting in silence.

On the negative side, several studies flag that AI recruitment tools can quietly reproduce bias baked into historical hiring data, and applicants consistently rate the process as fairer only when the logic is explained and some human contact remains. Duong and Thi (2022) add an important nuance: satisfaction with AI recruitment is not uniform — it depends on the applicant's own self-efficacy, meaning confident candidates and anxious ones can walk away from the same AI-driven process with very different impressions.

6.2 AI in Training & Development

Training is where the evidence for AI leans most consistently positive. Adaptive learning platforms that adjust content to an employee's pace, role and skill gaps are repeatedly linked to higher engagement and satisfaction, largely because they replace generic, one-size-fits-all training with something that feels personally relevant. Ekuma (2024) and the 2025 Training & Development systematic review both note this personalisation effect, while also warning that AI trained on biased or incomplete data can recommend the wrong training to the wrong people, which undermines the very personalisation that made the tool attractive in the first place.

6.3 AI in Performance Management

Performance management shows the widest split in the literature. Continuous, AI-supported feedback tools are credited with making evaluations feel more objective and less dependent on a single manager's mood or memory, which several studies connect to greater perceived fairness. However, the same predictive analytics that flag performance risks early can also make employees feel constantly monitored, and this sense of surveillance shows up repeatedly as a satisfaction-lowering factor, particularly when employees are unaware of exactly what is being tracked.

6.4 AI in Employee Engagement

Sentiment-analysis tools, engagement chatbots and personalised recognition systems are generally associated with higher engagement scores in the studies reviewed, largely because they give HR teams an early signal when morale dips somewhere in the organisation. Taslim et al. (2025) add that satisfaction rises further when employees are actively involved in shaping how these AI tools are used, rather than simply having them applied from above.

6.5 AI in Workforce Analytics

Workforce analytics — used to predict turnover, absenteeism and staffing needs — is consistently described as valuable for HR planning, but its link to individual employee satisfaction is more indirect than the other four themes. The Indonesia HRM systematic review (2025) points out that this area is comparatively under-researched from the employee's point of view: most studies measure organisational benefit (better planning, lower turnover cost) rather than how employees themselves feel about being modelled and predicted in this way.

7. Discussion

The findings broadly agree with the foundational caution raised by Tambe, Cappelli and Yakubovich (2019): AI in HR delivers real value, but that value is conditional, not automatic. Where the literature converges most strongly is on personalisation and speed as satisfaction boosters, and opacity and surveillance as satisfaction reducers — a pattern that holds up across recruitment, training, performance and engagement studies alike, despite them being conducted in different countries and industries.

There is also some contradiction worth naming. A few industry-facing sources report almost uniformly positive results from AI adoption, while independent academic studies are more cautious and often report mixed or context-dependent outcomes. This gap likely reflects publication incentives: organisations and vendors are more inclined to publicise success stories, while academic reviews are built to surface nuance and failure modes as well as wins.

Practically, the discussion suggests that satisfaction is less about whether AI is used and more about how it is introduced: with explanation, with some retained human contact, and with employees given a genuine voice rather than being informed after the fact. Theoretically, the findings support treating employee satisfaction as a mediated outcome — AI does not affect satisfaction directly so much as it affects trust and fairness perceptions, which then shape satisfaction.

8. Proposed Conceptual Framework

Based on the patterns identified above, this paper proposes a simple framework linking five AI-based HR practices to employee satisfaction, with transparency and employee involvement acting as the conditions that determine whether the link is positive or negative. The proposed relationship can be represented as follows:

AI Recruitment + AI Training + AI Performance Management + AI Engagement Tools + AI Workforce Analytics

↓ (moderated by Transparency and Employee Involvement)

Employee Satisfaction

↓

Organisational Performance

In this framework, the five AI-based practices are the inputs, employee satisfaction is the central outcome, and organisational performance is the downstream result. Transparency (how clearly AI decisions are explained) and employee involvement (how much say employees have in AI adoption) sit as moderating conditions in the middle, determining whether a given AI practice pushes satisfaction up or down. Future researchers are encouraged to test this framework empirically using primary survey or interview data.

9. Managerial Implications

For HR managers, the review points to three practical takeaways. First, AI works best in HR as a support tool rather than a silent decision-maker; employees respond far better when they know an algorithm is involved and understand roughly how it works. Second, organisations should build in some form of employee involvement before rolling out AI tools — even a simple feedback channel during a pilot phase appears to meaningfully improve acceptance and satisfaction. Third, ethical safeguards should not be treated as a compliance afterthought: bias audits, data-privacy safeguards and clear escalation paths to a human decision-maker are recurring recommendations across the reviewed studies and appear directly linked to how fairly employees judge the resulting AI-driven decisions.

10. Theoretical Implications

Theoretically, this review extends existing HRM literature by treating employee satisfaction not as a simple, direct outcome of technology adoption, but as an outcome shaped by perceived fairness and trust, both of which are themselves shaped by transparency and voice. This aligns with, and extends, the concerns first raised by Tambe, Cappelli and Yakubovich (2019) about accountability and employee reaction to algorithmic management, by showing where those concerns concretely show up across five different HR functions. The proposed framework also contributes to the still-developing AI-HRM literature by offering a cross-functional structure that future empirical studies can test and refine, rather than a single-function model limited to recruitment or training alone.

11. Limitations

- The study relies entirely on secondary data and does not include new primary data collection.
- The review period, while broad (2019–2026), still limits how much older or very recent literature could be captured.
- The review draws on a focused set of eighteen core studies rather than an exhaustive database census, so some relevant work may not be represented.
- Publication bias is possible, since studies with clear positive or negative findings are more likely to be published than inconclusive ones.

12. Future Research Directions

- Primary, survey-based studies testing the proposed conceptual framework directly with employees across industries.
- Cross-country comparisons to see whether the transparency-satisfaction link holds in different cultural and regulatory contexts.
- Industry-specific research, since AI adoption and its reception likely differ between, say, manufacturing and technology firms.
- Longitudinal studies tracking satisfaction before and after AI adoption, rather than single-point-in-time snapshots.
- Deeper research into AI ethics in HRM, particularly around consent, explainability and algorithmic accountability.

13. Conclusion

This paper set out to synthesise existing secondary literature on AI-based HR practices and their relationship with employee satisfaction, using a systematic review of eighteen core studies spanning recruitment, training, performance management, engagement and workforce analytics. The findings show that AI is not simply good or bad for employee satisfaction; its effect depends on how transparently it is implemented and how much voice employees are given in

the process. Efficiency and personalisation consistently support satisfaction, while opacity and a sense of being constantly monitored consistently undermine it.

The main contribution of this study is a conceptual framework that connects five AI-based HR practices to employee satisfaction and organisational performance, with transparency and employee involvement acting as the deciding conditions in between. Practically, the review gives HR managers a realistic checklist for AI adoption: explain the tool, involve employees early, and keep a human reachable at the point where decisions matter most. Academically, it offers a cross-functional starting point that future researchers can test with primary data, across different countries and industries, to build a fuller and more confident picture of how artificial intelligence is reshaping the human side of human resource management.

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