

AI-Enabled Employee Relations and Organizational Justice: A Systematic Review and PLS-SEM-Informed Conceptual Framework

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Abstract

AI is slowly changing how workers relate to each other, from algorithmic decision-making and digital communication platforms to worker surveillance and automated conflict resolution. The field is expanding rapidly, but research remains dispersed across human resource management, organizational behavior, information systems, and ethics. It does not fully consider the impact of AI-enabled HR procedures on employees' perceptions of fairness within the organization. This SLR, following PRISMA guidelines, includes 262 peer-reviewed articles from 2000 to 2025. We identified four thematic clusters: AI-enabled decision-making, digital surveillance, AI-mediated communication and trust, transparency, and emotional intelligence. Results indicate that algorithmic fairness, transparency, trust, perceived autonomy, and governance structures are important factors affecting distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice in AI-mediated work settings. PLS SEM is employed to develop a conceptual model linking AI-enabled HR initiatives, psychological mediators, environmental moderators, and employee outcomes. This review contributes to organizational justice and puts forward governance, explainable AI, employee voice, and emotionally sensitive leadership for fair and sustainable AI.

Keywords

Algorithmic Fairness; Artificial Intelligence (AI); Employee Relations; Organizational Justice; PLS-SEM

1. Introduction

AI is changing how people communicate, get feedback, are evaluated and feel justice in the workplace with impacts on current conceptions of organization and human resource (people) management (HRM). AI-powered tools encompass algorithmic recruitment platforms, HR analytics dashboards, and ML-based work performance monitoring systems (Colquitt et al., 2023; Tursunbayeva, 2024; Agrawal, 2025). They threaten traditional trust, autonomy and quality of

communication in the employee–organization relationship and equity. As companies deploy AI as a supplement or replacement for more traditional HR functions, issues of accountability, transparency and the ethical implications of data-driven decision-making come to the fore. The traditional approach to studying perceptions of fairness is based on organizational justice theory and predictably described by features of distributive, procedural, interpersonal and informational justice (Colquitt, 2001; Greenberg, 2011). However, the use of AI in HRM also poses problems with respect to these four pillars of justice. Some problems like algorithmic bias, insufficient explainability, non-transparent decision procedures and data quality are not evenly distributed. These challenges relate to fairness perceptions of employees, reactions to managerial decisions and the psychological contract in an increasingly digitalizing world of work. Emotional intelligence and cross-cultural awareness strengthen trust, respect, and legitimacy in AI-mediated employee relations because they help employees interpret technology-driven interactions with fairness and confidence (Ouyang et al., 2025). Research in HRM, organizational behavior, ethics and information systems indicates that the use of AI is likely to have both benefits and hazards. The AI, however, can be more consistent and efficient and it reduces human bias (Meijerink et al., 2021). However, AI-based monitoring and real-time automated decision-making might increase feelings of surveillance, reduce employee autonomy and make the logic behind managers' decision making opaque (Larsson, 2020; Ebner & Zeleznikow, 2015; Smolinski & Xiong, 2020). Although increased research focuses on algorithmic management, digital trust, technology-enabled HR practices, the literature is scattered. Importantly, there are relatively few studies that combine various perspectives to study the overall impact of AI-based employee relations on perceptions of organizational justice and the theoretical mechanisms that mediate these effects. Such a dispersion requires a careful review of the literature. A detailed synthesis of the findings of previous studies can identify common themes and contradictions in the literature and describe the role of AI-mediated exchanges in changing employees' perceptions of fairness in different organizational settings. Moreover, Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) has become a popular methodological tool to analyze multidimensional and complex relationships in HRM/organizational behavior studies [34]. The preceding research can be described so that it creates the base for a conceptual framework based on PLS-SEM (Hair et al., 2021; Sarstedt et al., 2022), which creates the base for following empirical research.

The goals of this study are fourfold:

- systematically review the literature on AI-based employee relations and organizational justice,
- identify the thematic trends and theoretical paths via which AI use relates to justice perception,
- adapt core constructs relevant for PLS-SEM-based modelling, and
- develop a PLS-SEM-based conceptual model to be empirically tested in future research.

1.1 Definition and Classification of AI-Enabled Employee Relations and Organizational Justice

AI-enabled employee relations refer to the application of AI technologies (e.g., ML, NLP, predictive analytics, automated decision-support systems) to HRM processes governing the employment relationship between employees and the organization. Researchers present AI as a socio-technical actor that shapes expectations, rights, and relationality—such as transparency, autonomy, privacy, and respect—across hiring, performance management, communication, scheduling, monitoring, and dispute resolution (Leicht-Deobald et al., 2019; Meijerink et al., 2021). Organizational justice is employees' perceptions of the fairness of workplace outcomes and processes, including communication, treatment by colleagues, and supervisors. While distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice are the most well-known constructs of the classical framework, the use of AI poses challenges for algorithmic justice, including reducing bias and ensuring transparency and explainability of algorithms within automated systems (Boothby et al., 2023; Agrawal, 2025). Previous research classifies employee–AI interaction into four dimensions: AI-mediated communication, algorithm-driven HR decisions, behavioral monitoring and predictive analytics, and AI-enabled conflict management. Rather than concerns around opacity, surveillance, and reduced relational warmth, each approach organizes and efficiently segregates views of justice in different ways.

1.2 Terminology and Sectoral Breakdown

AI-enabled employee relations research spans multiple disciplines, including HRM, organizational psychology, ethics, and information systems. Emerging terminology includes algorithmic management, AI-based HR, digital labor platforms, automated decision systems, machine-based communication, and HR analytics. Despite the different contexts, all these concepts show that AI technologies are changing employees, their expectations, and their relationships with colleagues at companies. Organizational justice language has met the same fate. Researchers are beginning to examine algorithmic transparency, explainable AI (XAI), perceived loss of autonomy, digital empathy, and trust in AI systems, in addition to traditional categories such as equality, transparency, and voice. Emotional intelligence is of fundamental importance in an AI-Mediated World to allow employees and managers to interpret digital interactions through a lens of empathy and fairness, and to integrate both psychological and technological perspectives when studying employee relations in today's climate. AI-Powered Employee Relations Is Everywhere. AI-powered recruitment and workforce analytics have the greatest impact on distributive and procedural fairness in the private sector. Health and education, professional autonomy and interpersonal justice, issues of accountability and openness, public policy, manufacturing, logistics, and gig-economy platforms raise surveillance, privacy, and fairness issues related to voice, thereby revealing the contingency of the AI-justice nexus.

1.3 Literature Gaps and Rationale for the Systematic Review

The rapid development of research on AI-based HRM has created several crucial gaps that need to be filled. Much of the IS research has focused on algorithm design, the HRM literature on the strategic level of implementation, and psychology research on the individual's perceptions. Few

studies have integrated these perspectives to investigate the joint impact of AI-enabled employee relations on organizational fairness. Prior work has generally addressed issues like as trust or algorithmic fairness in isolation, rather than as part of organizational justice or other more expansive justice definitions. From a justice point of view, researchers look at bias, and how fairness, equity, and procedural justice all contribute to the impact of AI. AI-HRM research has focused on distributive and procedural justice but focused less on interpersonal and informational justice.

On the other hand, culture and thinking styles as moderators in DWC have received scarce attention. Qualitative and experimental investigations are dominant but more sophisticated methods such as Partial Least Squares – Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) are rarely, if ever, employed and would be particularly appropriate for exploring latent constructs and complex mediation-moderation models. Such deficiencies require integrative analysis and a theoretical foundation.

1.4 Research Questions

The body of knowledge on AI-based HRM and employee experience is growing, yet prior research remains fragmented across sectors, theoretical perspectives, and methodological approaches. To date, the literature has mainly addressed either AI applications or justice issues, but has not considered the broader relationship between AI-enabled employee relations and organizational justice. Furthermore, there is a dearth of research on the role of AI in these views and the contextual factors that may moderate these interactions. To bridge these knowledge gaps, the present systematic literature review will be guided by the following research questions:

- Q1. What are the prevailing topic patterns and streams of research in the AI-enabled employee interactions and organizational justice literature?
- Q2. How does AI-HRP (AI-HR practices) influence employees' perception of distributive, procedural, interpersonal and informational justice?
- Q3. What psychological mechanisms (e.g., trust, transparency, perceived autonomy, emotional intelligence and technology self-efficacy) could mediate the relationship between AI-based employee relations and organizational justice outcomes?
- Q4. What are the possible moderators of the interaction between AI-based employee relations and organizational justice such as organizational culture and ethical governance, cross-cultural values, and monitoring mechanism?
- Q5. How to synthesize the results of the systematic literature research to a conceptual model with PLS-SEM for future empirical testing?

1.5 Theoretical Contribution

This paper makes key theoretical contributions to the AI, employee relations, and organizational justice literatures. First, it broadens the scope of traditional organizational justice theory to include

AI-driven workplace practices across the four dimensions of justice (distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational). Prior work has focused extensively on organizational justice within the context of human–computer interaction (HCI). Yet, there is an evident need to examine how algorithmic decision-making, digital surveillance, and AI-enabled communication may give rise to new (in)justice concerns that warrant additional theoretical exploration.

Second, it expands and deepens the emerging literature on AI-HRM by viewing AI not only as a technological tool but also as a socio-technical governance mechanism that shapes employees' perceptions, behaviors, and interactions within workplaces. This review integrates diverse literatures on human resource management, organizational behavior, information systems, and corporate ethics into a holistic analytical framework.

Third, the paper shows that trust in an AI system, perceived autonomy, surveillance, and technology self-efficacy are important psychological mediators of the relationship between AI-based HR approaches and organizational justice outcomes. The statement deepens understanding of how technology adoption shapes employees' perceptions of fairness. Fourth, our study contributes to the literature by developing a PLS-SEM conceptual model that integrates AI-led employee relations practices, psychological mediators, aspects of organizational fairness, contextual moderators and employee outcomes in one model. The model provides a theory-based foundation for future empirical investigation of increasingly complex direct, mediational, and moderational processes in AI-augmented work contexts. Together, these contributions extend organizational justice theory to digitally mediated work settings, and provide an integrated model explaining how human, technology, and governance elements influence perceptions of fairness in the age of artificial intelligence.

1.6 Study Scope and Conceptual Framing

We consider what this means for fairness at work concerning algorithmic decision-making, automated feedback loops, predictive surveillance, and AI-facilitated redress mechanisms. *The review evaluates peer-reviewed studies published from 2000 to 2025 and sourced from Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar.* It synthesizes empirical and conceptual studies informed by research on AI in HRM, employee relations, and organizational justice. Exclusion criteria: (non-technical studies or technical reports without evaluation), (non-English language studies), (studies of consumer rather than clinical technologies), (studies not formally published in the academic or white literature). The review draws together three somewhat linked positions on conceptualization. Organizational Justice Theory describes how individuals judge the fairness of their treatment. The theory suggests that people relate to justice through the four constructs of distributive justice, procedural justice, interpersonal justice, and informational justice. Sociotechnical systems theory emphasizes the co-evolution of technology and human activities in organizational routines. The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Trust Models are most often used to explain trust, autonomy, transparency, and monitoring in surveillance. From this perspective, AI-mediated employee relations emerge as a sociotechnical phenomenon that interferes with and alters individuals' sense of justice.

1.7 SLR Findings and Framework Development

An analysis of 262 publications in peer-reviewed journals identified four major clusters of themes: (i) AI-mediated decision making, (ii) digital monitoring and surveillance, (iii) AI-facilitated communication, and (iv) trust and transparency vis-à-vis culture and governance. These themes are embedded in a multilevel integrated theoretical model of AI-supported HR practices, employee cognitive-affective responses, organizational justice features and contextual moderators. In this sense, the synthesis provides a theoretical basis for future empirical studies based on PLS-SEM. The model advances theoretical research on AI-based employee relations and offers insight into maintaining fairness, trust, and ethical governance in digitally mediated work environments, where researchers can examine mediation and moderation effects simultaneously.

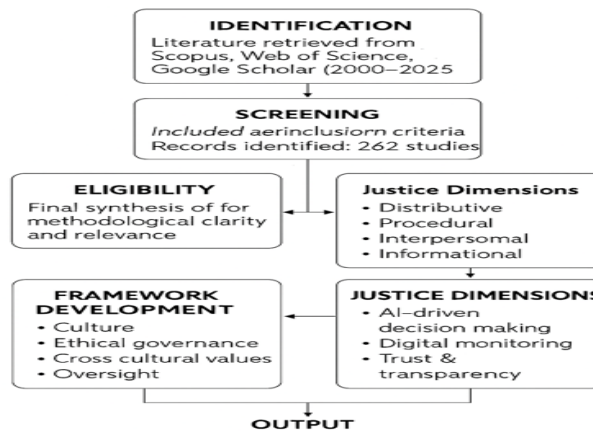


Figure 1. Conceptual Model: Construct Mediators, Moderators and Justice Dimensions for PLS-SEM

2. Definition and Classification of AI-Enabled Employee Relations and Organizational Justice

2.1 AI-Enabled Employee Relations: Definition

Historically, employee relations have been characterized precisely as communication and negotiation between employer and employee, conflict management and the creation of trust between the two (Lewicki et al., 2019). As AI technology is rolled out, these relational interactions are increasingly mediated by algorithmic systems that automate, augment, or facilitate basic HR activities. The bottom line is that employee relations are no longer just characterized by human-to-human relations but increasingly by hybrid human-AI relations. So, employee relations powered by AI can be seen as:

the use of AI-powered tools and algorithmic systems to support or manage employee–organization communication, decision-making, monitoring, and relationship management.

Recent studies indicate that AI integration has a socio-technical character and that AI systems do not function in isolation from human actors but are entangled with human organizational routines, governance structures, and sociocultural contexts (Larsson, 2020; Meijerink et al., 2021; AlShalhoob, 2025). Algorithms, machine learning and predictive analytics continue to shape the governance of work, the feedback mechanisms and the performance appraisal methods, and employee relations shift from face-to-face inter-personal exchange to digitally mediated and increasingly algorithmically crafted interaction (Tursunbayeva, 2024).

2.2 Classification of AI-Enabled Employee Relations

Research increasingly acknowledges the ubiquity of AI in shaping employee interactions at different levels of analysis. Four overarching themes were identified that reflected patterns in prior studies (Kim & Park, 2022; Venugopal et al., 2024).

AI-Mediated Communication

HR chatbots, automated feedback systems, and digital communication agents. Better engagement and availability may enable the production and consumption of content in a more effective way but may also affect the emotional depth and quality of the relationship, bringing problems concerning empathy and social interaction (Ebner, 2017; Falcão Filho, 2024).

Algorithmic HR Decision-Making

AI-based hiring, promotion and performance tools also speed up and standardize decisions. But they are also generating concerns about algorithmic bias, transparency and fairness – particularly when the logic underlying the judgements is obscure or poorly controlled (Raghavan et al., 2020).

AI-Based Monitoring and Predictive Analytics

This can be anything from for example electronic surveillance tools, behavioral analytics to tracking productivity or risk. Such policies could improve accountability and law-abidingness, but at a minimum, they do so while reducing worker privacy and autonomy, and they may sometimes foster fears of being controlled and monitored (Mateescu & Nguyen, 2019; Doellgast & Benassi, 2014).

AI-Supported Conflict and Grievance Management

Sentiment analysis, automated detection of disagreement, batching of complaints are ways to make conflict resolution more efficient and predictable. But in sensitive procedures they can depersonalize them and when poorly handled they can also undermine findings of respect and voice (Smolinski & Xiong, 2020). They also classify these applications into operational, relational and compliance related applications and mention the two-pronged impact of AI on organizations – improving efficiency and presenting challenges of fairness, trust and privacy.

2.3 Organizational Justice: Definition and Dimensions Organizational justice is a multi-level construct that reflects employees’ fairness judgements of the outcome and the process that yields these outcomes at the organizational level of analysis (Colquitt et al., 2023). The traditional philosophy of justice has four inter-related dimensions:

- **Distributive Justice:** a component of a person’s comprehensive sense of fairness with respect to outcomes such as income, promotions, and allocation of tasks.
- **Procedural Justice:** the fairness of the process that is used to arrive at the decision.
- **Interpersonal Justice:** Interaction characterized by respect, dignity, and propriety.
- **Informational Justice:** Righetti and Wio (p. 187; see also Kriesberg, 2017; Gelfand et al., 2017) describe informational justice as the “veracity, completeness and clarity of the explanations given for group and organizational decisions”.

The implications for these dimensions of AI adoption in HRM have not been studied yet. Openness, explainability and bias have been criticized in relation to algorithmic decision-making and even more so regarding procedural and informational justice (Ngo, 2025; Lima & Rahman, 2024). AI technologies can help improve consistency and mitigate some types of human subjectivity. But without proper oversight and management they can undermine fairness, erode trust and reduce employee buy-in.

2.4 Integrative Perspective

Employee relations and organizational justice enabled by AI should be understood within a framework of sociotechnical systems. AI is transforming the ways we communicate, decide, monitor and resolve conflicts and organizational justice theory offers a framework to evaluate the fairness of choices in terms of distributive, procedural, interpersonal and informational justice. Both these have shown how AI can be useful to efficiency, accountability and transparency but also harmful to autonomy, trust and empathy when misused or mistreated. The combination of definition and taxonomy forms the basis for quantitative analysis based on latent variable techniques such as Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). Future research can systematically study the effect of AI on perceptions of fairness and more broadly, employee work experiences in contemporary business, by linking AI-enhanced HR practices associated with justice dimensions and contextual factors such as organization culture and structure.

Domain	Examples / Applications	Justice Dimensions Affected
AI-Mediated Communication	HR chatbots, automated feedback, digital communication agents	Interpersonal justice (respect, empathy), Informational justice (clarity, transparency)
Algorithmic HR Decision-Making	Recruitment algorithms, promotion systems, performance appraisal tools	Distributive justice (fair outcomes), Procedural justice (fair processes), Informational justice
AI-Based Monitoring & Analytics	Productivity tracking, behavioral analysis, compliance and risk detection	Procedural justice (fair monitoring), Informational justice (explainability), Autonomy concerns

AI-Supported Conflict Management	Sentiment analysis, dispute detection, automated grievance triage	Interpersonal justice (respect in disputes), Procedural justice (fair resolution processes)
Operational AI Applications	Workforce planning, predictive analytics, appraisal systems	Distributive and procedural justice (fair workload, fair evaluation)
Relational AI Applications	Online dispute resolution, digital negotiation platforms	Interpersonal justice (trust, empathy), Informational justice (communication transparency)
Monitoring & Compliance AI	Surveillance systems, behavioral compliance tracking	Procedural justice (fair oversight), Informational justice (data use transparency)

Table 1. Classification of AI-Enabled Employee Relations and Organizational Justice Dimensions

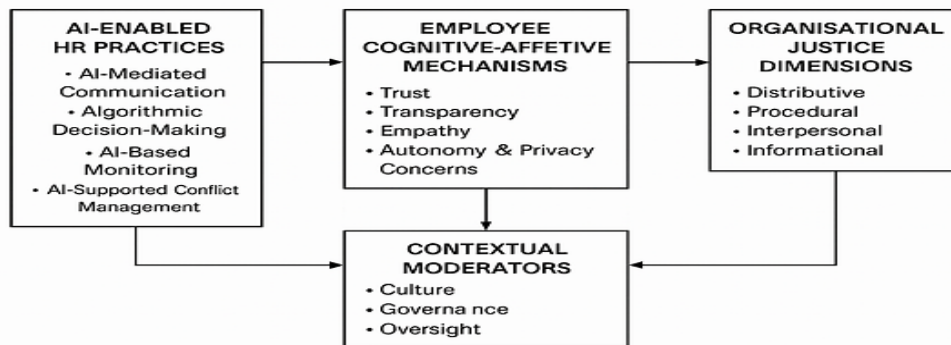


Figure 2. Conceptual Model of AI-Enabled Employee Relations and Organizational Justice

3. Methodology

In this study, we employ a systematic literature review approach to synthesize existing scholarly work on AI-mediated employee relations and organizational justice. We performed a literature review following the PRISMA 2020 principles to guarantee transparency, replicability and methodological rigor. The analysis was carried out at multiple levels to identify dominant themes, theoretical mechanisms and research gaps, and to build a conceptual model that can be tested empirically in future research using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) through deductive and inductive reasoning.

3.1 Data Sources and Search Strategy

The authors have carried out a detailed literature review from five major academic databases i.e. Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, ABI/INFORM and Google Scholar. The databases were selected for their multidisciplinary nature, good quality indexing norms, and usefulness for HRM, OB and IS research (Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2015; Halevi, Moed, & Bar-Ilan, 2017).

Search strings were developed using Boolean operators and truncation to provide the widest possible coverage without sacrificing relevancy. The key words were combinations of:

- artificial intelligence in HRM

- algorithmic management
- AI-enabled employee relations
- AI and organizational justice
- workplace fairness and AI
- digital bargaining
- AI-mediated communication
- algorithmic fairness

To ensure thorough coverage, we also screened reference lists of highly referenced and more current literature (referred to as reference chaining) which helped bring in the impact as well as the frontier of research especially from cross-disciplinary sources.

3.2 Timeframe and Language Criteria

The study traces digital HRM from its origins in 2000 to the latest AI-enabled workplace solutions in 2025. The theoretical background is based on fundamental research but we focus on research of 2018 because in this time frame a growing utilization of AI in HR can be observed. The review was limited to the English language literature only, to ensure conceptual consistency and interpretative comparability.

3.3 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion and exclusion were determined to gather quality studies that answer to our research topic.

Inclusion criteria:

- Articles, books and proceedings in refereed journals
- Research on the use of AI in HRM (such as in recruitment, appraisal, monitoring and dispute resolution)
- Research on AI in the context of employee interactions, fairness, trust or organisational justice
- Conceptual, empirical and methodological work with a strong theoretical basis
- Research on the employees' view of AI-supported processes.

Exclusion criteria:

- Pure AI research not involving HRM or justice implications could be left out
- Papers written in languages other than English.
- Papers published prior to 2000 or after 2025
- Studies of AI applications to customers only (e.g., marketing or customer-services chatbots)

The screening phase ensured that all the included papers provided socio-technical perspectives on AI in employment relations and organizational justice.

3.4 Screening and Selection Process

The selection procedure follows the PRISMA 2020 statement to ensure transparency and rigor. Combined database searches yielded 1200 entries across Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, ABI/INFORM, and Google Scholar. The review team screened titles and keywords of 980 records after de-duplication.

Studies not related to AI, HRM, and employee relations (ER) or organizational justice were discarded after title and keyword filtering. The investigators selected 430 data points to evaluate the abstract level. Out of the screened abstracts, 126 papers were eligible for full-text assessment.

The review uses the inclusion and exclusion criteria to conduct a full-text screening. It identifies 82 high-quality core studies on AI-enabled HR practices, employee relations, trust, fairness, transparency, or organizational justice. It then performs backward and forward citation analyses to confirm full coverage and avoid overlooking relevant work. Searches were also undertaken to identify more recent papers published up to December 2025 that could affect the validity of the findings. This new search method added 180 studies that met the inclusion criteria. The resulting sample of 262 peer-reviewed articles—comprising 82 core studies and 180 additional research pieces—provides the building blocks for the conceptual framework, which the review develops through a theme-based synthesis. Figure 1 presents the flow diagram outlining the identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion stages.

3.5 Data Extraction and Thematic Analysis

The review group extracted data in a controlled, methodical manner to ensure consistency and accuracy. Each paper was reviewed line by line to identify information on year of publication, research setting, methodological approach, domain of AI application, dimensions of employee engagement, components of organizational justice, and the principal outcomes of the study.

The thematic analysis proceeds in an iterative, systematic, and rigorous manner. The review initially skim-reads the full texts to identify themes related to AI-supported employee relations and organizational justice considerations. We discovered four significant themes: (1) AI-based decision making and views of justice, (2) AI-facilitated communication and employee interactions, (3) AI-based surveillance, autonomy, and privacy, and (4) trust, transparency, and technology self-efficacy.

The thematic synthesis uses both inductive and deductive logics. We constructed the deductive codes, which cover the four justice dimensions of distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice based on the established organizational justice (OJ) theory (Thibaut & Walker, 1975; Leventhal, 1980; Bies, 1987; Greenberg, 1990; Folger & Cropanzano, 1998; Lind & Tyler, 1988). Alongside this, they conducted an inductive analysis to identify emerging concepts and linkages within the research. The team then constructed the conceptual framework based on the principles of PLS-SEM. The next chapter presents the conceptual framework in accordance with the emergent thematic configuration from the review. The review team maintained the rigor

of the process and the dependability of the literature by systematically screening, selecting, and classifying studies according to PRISMA, ethical standards, and good-practice guidelines for systematic reviews. Researchers repeatedly compared and modified the thematic findings to improve conceptual clarity and ensure consistency with the study's aims.

3.6 Identification of Thematic Clusters

Thematic synthesis revealed four broad themes that nuanced the research on AI-mediated employee interactions and perceptions of organizational justice.

AI-Driven Decision-Making

This set is about the application of algorithms to recruit, promote, and assess work. AI improves efficiency and consistency, but issues of bias, transparency, and fairness remain in the notion of distributive and procedural justice (Agrawal, 2025).

Digital Monitoring and Behavioral Analytics

This cluster is dedicated to research on AI-enabled monitoring systems for surveillance, productivity and compliance. While these techniques can increase responsibility, they also introduce ethical dilemmas regarding privacy, autonomy and procedural fairness (Doellgast & Benassi, 2014).

AI-Mediated Communication

This issue features HR chatbots, digital negotiation platforms and automated grievance processing. efficiency and democratization, but at the sacrifice of emotional depth and nonverbal indications, necessitating trust and empathy for both interpersonal and informational justice (Ebner, 2017; Smolinski & Xiong, 2020; Falcão Filho, 2024).

Trust, Transparency, and Emotional Intelligence

This cluster examines psychological processes that shape people's conceptions of justice, including trust in AI-based systems, transparency, emotional intelligence, and technology self-efficacy. Cultural values and governance systems are important contingencies in employees' reactions to AI-based HR practices (Ouyang et al., 2025; Acikgoz et al., 2020). We developed the conceptual model from these theme clusters.

3.7 Framework Development and PLS-SEM Integration

We used thematic synthesis to propose a conceptual model that links AI-driven HR practices, employee cognitive-affective processes, types of organizational justice, and key contextual modifiers. More precisely, the framework includes:

- AI-enabled HR practices: communication, decision-making, monitoring, and conflict management
- Psychological mechanisms: trust, transparency, empathy, and perceived surveillance
- Justice dimensions: distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational
- Contextual moderators: organizational culture, ethical governance, cross-cultural values, and oversight mechanisms

The framework is designed for empirical examination using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM), which is particularly suited for analyzing complex models involving latent constructs, multiple mediators, and moderating effects (Hair et al., 2021). PLS-SEM allows us to analyze the direct relationships between artificial intelligence (AI) practices and justice judgements, as well as the indirect effects via psychological mechanisms, and the moderating effects of culture and governance simultaneously.

3.8 Bibliometric Mapping and Sectoral Analysis

We conducted a bibliometric mapping study alongside the thematic analysis to identify trends in publication, disciplinary dispersion, and fields of interest. The analysis shows a rapid increase in AI-HRM research after 2020, significant fragmentation across HRM, psychology, information systems, and legal studies, and relatively little cross-referencing between gig-economy research and typical corporate HR analytics. The review indicates that the bibliometric information and the thematic synthesis suggest a need for cross-sectoral and multidisciplinary collaboration to address the structural fragmentation evident in the literature.

4. Findings

4.1 Distribution of Themes Across the Reviewed Literature

Thematic analysis has revealed four main directions of research in the literature on AI-based employee interactions and organizational justice. Both themes were mentioned multiple times in the studies included in the evaluation and can be regarded as the key channels through which artificial intelligence impacts fairness perception at work and employee outcomes.

Theme	Description	Relative Frequency*
AI-Driven Decision-Making and Fairness	Algorithmic recruitment, promotion, performance appraisal, and compensation decisions	High
AI-Mediated Communication and Employee Interaction	Chatbots, virtual assistants, digital communication platforms, and employee engagement systems	Moderate
AI-Based Monitoring, Autonomy, and Surveillance	Employee tracking, performance monitoring, workplace analytics, and privacy concerns	High
Trust, Transparency, and Technology Self-Efficacy	Explainability, trust in AI systems, perceived fairness, and employee acceptance	Very High

Table 2. Major Themes Identified in the Literature

*Frequency classifications are based on the relative frequency of themes in the included studies but not by statistical calculation.

The results show that the most studied themes in the literature are trust, transparency and algorithmic fairness. On the contrary, interpersonal justice, informational justice and emotional intelligence in AI-augmented contexts are quite under-researched. This asymmetry suggests that the literature has focused more on the technical performance and managerial aspects of control than on the social and relational aspects of employee relations.

4.2 AI-Driven Decision-Making and Fairness

Artificial intelligence is now widely used to make decisions about hiring and selection, performance evaluation, promotion and workforce planning. The literature is almost unanimous in indicating that such systems increase the consistency, speed and the predictive validity of decisions and may reduce human subjectivity in decision-making. However, sometimes variables such as algorithm bias, transparency, limited explainability and lack of appeal or voice mechanisms challenge employee trust in the conclusions drawn by AI. The obvious relevance of these two issues to distributive justice lies in their impact on the perceived fairness of the conclusion, and on procedural justice in their impact on beliefs about the openness and validity of the decision-making process. While AI is thought to be inherently neutral, the studies reviewed caution that poorly controlled algorithms can perpetuate or exacerbate societal inequities (Raghavan et al., 2020; Ngo, 2025).

4.3 AI-Mediated Communication and Employee Interaction

The use of AI-enabled communication, such as HR chatbots, automated feedback systems, and digital negotiation platforms, has enhanced the scope and scale of organizational communication. These technologies help improve responsiveness and information transmission, but tend to make emotional richness, empathy, and relational depth worse. When they encounter human employees, they articulate such follow-on effects as impersonality and lower respect. The organization violated interpersonal justice by failing to treat employees with dignity and violated informational justice by withholding adequate and truthful explanations. The benefits/fuels for efficiency are clear, but detachment from emotion risks trust and relationship quality (Kim & Park, 2022), as highlighted in the literature.

4.4 AI-Based Monitoring, Autonomy, and Surveillance

Monitor, labor process and control AI-based tracking and behavioral analytics are increasingly used to monitor productivity, compliance and risk. These technologies, whilst being able to improve accountability and standardize performance, can produce feelings of surveillance, loss of autonomy and mental stress. The results indicate that the reactions of the employees are very much dependent on what is said, explained and stipulated about monitoring procedures. Unnecessary

and secret surveillance erodes procedural justice through the constriction of voice and control, and insufficient justifications erodes informational justice. Trust and legitimacy are greatly reduced when surveillance is perceived as an intrusion rather than an aid for monitoring (Mateescu & Nguyen, 2019; Leicht-Deobald et al., 2019).

4.5 Trust, Transparency, and Technology Self-Efficacy

Trust in an AI system seemed to be an important mediating variable between the implementation of AI-enabled practices and outcomes of organizational justice in all the research reviewed. Staff are more likely to buy into judgements made by AI when the algorithms are transparent, explainable and in line with the principles of the company. The literature also highlights the importance of emotional intelligence and cultural fit in employee response and technical self-efficacy. Resistance is often a result of dissonance or cultural incongruity (the opposite of cultural fit) while acceptance and perceptions of fairness are the result of emotionally intelligent leadership and ethically sound governance on all four justice dimensions – distributive, procedural, inter-relational and informational (Meijerink et al., 2021). These themes provide a good empirical base and a basis and support for the conceptual framework. Results also show that AI-enabled HR practices have an effect on organizational justice in the organizational context, but also through the individual employee’s thoughts and feelings, e.g. trust, perceptions of transparency, autonomy and emotional interpretation. The complexity and inter-dependence of these relations justify the need for a method capable of dealing with the complexity of the type of mediation and moderation relationship when exploring the relation between AI practices and justice outcomes, according to the literature. To examine such relations PLS-SEM has been highly recommended.

Theme	Opportunities	Challenges	Justice Dimensions Affected
AI-Driven Decision-Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Efficiency and consistency in recruitment, promotion, appraisal - Predictive accuracy in HR decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Algorithmic bias - Lack of transparency - Reduced trust in outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distributive justice (fair outcomes) Procedural justice (fair processes)
AI-Mediated Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Faster dispute resolution - Efficiency in communication - Accessibility across geographies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Loss of non-verbal cues - Reduced empathy - Risk of depersonalization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpersonal justice (respect, empathy) Informational justice (clarity, transparency)
Digital Monitoring & Behavioral Analytics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved accountability - Productivity insights - Compliance assurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Privacy concerns - Reduced autonomy - Misuse of surveillance data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procedural justice (fair monitoring) Informational justice (communication transparency)
Trust, Transparency & Emotional Intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transparent algorithms - Emotionally intelligent leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of explainability - Cultural 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All four dimensions: distributive, procedural,

	- Strengthened fairness perceptions	misalignment - Erosion of trust	interpersonal, informational
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Table 2. Thematic Findings of AI-Enabled Employee Relations and Organizational Justice

4.6 Cross-Thematic Synthesis and Framework Development

The findings also reveal several important co-relationships beyond the specific themes. First, it is assumed that ADM influences the trust of employees in a company, which is the antecedent of the perception of procedural and distributive fairness. Second, the application of AI-based systems for monitoring and tracking employees creates a tension between organizational efficiency and employee autonomy, mediated through privacy and surveillance concerns that impact perceptions of justice. Third, transparency is an important feature of the relation between an AI application and organizational justice. That is to say, the more transparent and explainable the decision process is, the fairer the conclusions based on AI are perceived by the employees.

Furthermore, the findings reveal that employees' reactions to AI are not purely technology based. Organizational cultural norms, ethical governance practices, leadership behaviors, and employee engagement shape the extent to which AI systems enhance or diminish fairness perceptions. Researchers must understand the "justice" of AI-enabled work practices as a socio-technical construct in which technological affordances interact with human, organizational, and institutional elements.

In summary, the present findings support the development of the proposed PLS-SEM-informed conceptual model, showing that AI-enabled HR practices affect employee outcomes through a sequence of psychological and organizational mechanisms rather than direct effects.

4.7 PLS-SEM-Informed Conceptual Framework

Based on the main findings of the systematic literature review, this study develops a conceptual model using PLS-SEM to examine the effects of AI-enabled HR practices on employees' perceptions of organizational fairness and their consequences. Since AI activities, psychological mechanisms, and justice perspectives are multidimensional and interrelated, PLS-SEM is particularly well-suited to modeling complex mediation and moderation effects involving latent constructs.

Framework Structure

The proposed model integrates four interrelated construct groups:

- **AI-Enabled Employee Relations (Exogenous Constructs):**
AI-mediated communication, algorithmic decision-making, AI-based monitoring, and AI-supported conflict and grievance management.

- **Psychological Mechanisms (Mediating Constructs):**
Trust in AI systems, perceived autonomy, perceptions of surveillance, and technology self-efficacy.
- **Organizational Justice (Endogenous Constructs):**
Distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice.
- **Employee Outcomes (Final Endogenous Variables):**
Job satisfaction, organizational trust, work engagement, and acceptance of AI systems.

The proposed model provides a theoretical grounding for mechanisms that capture the socio-technical and relational subtleties of AI integration in employee relations. AI-based HR practices would likely have direct effects on important employee psychological processes such as trust in AI systems, perceived autonomy, and surveillance perceptions. Such psychological processes are the mediators of the effect of AI practices on perceptions of organizational justice and thus on employees' assessments of outcomes (distributive justice), procedures (procedural justice), interpersonal treatment (interpersonal justice) and information (informational justice). The model also considers the moderating effect of ethical governance structures and oversight procedures and organizational culture, as these could increase or decrease the perceived fairness in AI-assisted settings. Finally, it is proposed that perceptions of organizational justice are positively related to relevant employee outcomes such as job satisfaction, organizational trust, work engagement and adoption of AI systems. In contributing to the body of work on AI-enabled employee relations, the model ties these streams together in a theoretically integrated and methodologically rigorous depiction of AI practices, fairness perceptions, and employee outcomes. The paradigm extends the mechanical or technocentric approaches by incorporating trust, transparency, and perceived autonomy as central mediating processes, and cultural and governance factors as important moderating factors. Most importantly, the model provides a good basis for empirical verification of its relations using the statistical technique of Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The approach enables the simultaneous examination of complex mediation and moderation effects, thereby enhancing the theoretical and empirical promise of organizational justice in AI-rich work settings.

4.8 Research Propositions

Based on the general literature review and the conceptual framework derived from PLS-SEM, a set of research propositions is proposed to facilitate prospective future research in AI-enabled employee interactions and organizational justice.

Psychological Mechanisms and HR Practices Powered by AI

P1: Communication techniques driven by AI have a positive impact on employees' trust in AI-based HR systems.

P2: Algorithmic decision-making transparency strengthens employees' perceptions of autonomy and fairness.

H3: AI-based surveillance and monitoring hurt perceived autonomy and have a negative effect on the perception of surveillance in medical employment.

P4: If an AI-based dispute/grievance management procedure in ASEAN, an organization of openness and explainability, it further improves employee faith in procedural justice.

Psychological Processes and Organizational Justice

P5: Trust in the AI System is a positive predictor of distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice.

P6: Autonomy perceptions are positively associated with perceptions of organizational justice.

P7: Perceptions of surveillance weaken employees' organizational justice perceptions.

P8: Technology self-efficacy is positively related to employees' intention to adopt AI-enabled HR practices and perceptions of fairness.

Organizational Justice and Employee Outcomes

P9: Fairness perceived by an employee in an organization has a positive effect on employee job satisfaction.

P10: Perceptions of organizational justice positively influence organizational trust and work engagement.

P11: Organizational justice perceptions strengthen employees' acceptance and continued use of AI-enabled HR systems.

Moderating Effects

P12 Organizational culture, ethical governance, and systems of oversight will moderate the effect of AI-enabled HR practices on organizational justice, such that higher levels of ethical governance/oversight will increase positive justice judgments.

The above propositions provide a theoretically grounded and empirically testable study agenda for future PLS-SEM studies. This paradigm enables researchers to simultaneously examine direct, mediating, and moderating links, advancing understanding of justice, trust, and employee outcomes in AI-enabled workplaces.

5. Implications

In other words, AI is reconceptualized as a socio-technical governance instrument, rather than an apolitical efficiency-improving tool, drawing on work on HRM, employee relations, and organizational justice. The article links algorithmic fairness, transparency, explainability, and digital empathy to traditional justice theory. The study argues that distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice remain essential constructs, but organizations must adapt them to AI-mediated decision systems. It also shows that trust, autonomy, and emotional intelligence shape employees' justice beliefs, functioning as the key psychological mechanisms through which AI-enabled HR practices influence perceptions of fairness.

First, our work demonstrates the benefits of a systematic literature review combined with a PLS-SEM-based conceptual model to examine a multifaceted socio-technical process from a methodological perspective. This holistic approach fills the gaps in the previous literature and lays the door for further empirical studies on AI-enabled HR domains, including latent variables and contextual contingencies.

Results show that AI wins not because it is more technically adept, but because employees see it as fairer, more transparent, and more trustworthy. To foster justice and trust in hybrid human-AI

systems, organizations should focus on explainable AI, hands-on decision-making, participative methods, and emotionally intelligent leadership.

From a governance perspective, the proliferation of AI-facilitated interactions requires greater ethical protections, transparency, and explainability, as well as formalized mechanisms for employee voice to counter potentially unfair impacts and hold organizations that deploy these powerful tools to account. The impact is most profound in the domains of autonomy, privacy, and public trust. In the future workplace, integrating AI technology with organizational justice theory is necessary to achieve legitimacy.

6. Limitations and Future Research Agenda

6.1 Limitations

This review utilized a thematic synthesis approach and did not focus on bibliometric techniques; hence it did not focus on citation practices, cooperation networks or the intellectual structure of the field.

6.2 Future Research Agenda

Future studies can integrate thematic synthesis and bibliometric analysis by using tools such as VOSviewer, CiteSpace, or Biblioshiny to complement systematic literature reviews. These can shed light on the intellectual structure, citation networks, co-authors, keyword evolution, and emerging research clusters in the study of AI-employee interactions and organizational justice. The combination of thematic and bibliometric approaches provides a clearer understanding of the discipline's evolution and potential research areas.

7. Conclusion

In this paper, we present a systematic literature review of AI-enabled employee relations and organizational justice and how AI influences fairness, trust, transparency, autonomy, and employee experiences in the workplace. The results indicate that perceived fairness in employee relations is more important for predicting the effects of AI on employee relations than AI's actual competence.

In this work we apply the notion of organizational justice to the novel situation of AI-driven organizations. On PLS-SEM a conceptual model is developed comprising AI-based HR practices, psychological processes, types of organizational justice, situational factors and employee outcomes. The findings also underscored the importance of openness, ethical governance and employee participation in fostering trust and justice in AI-driven workplaces.

Future research could test the theoretical model, extend it to other types of organizations and culture, and investigate the effects of AI adoption on employee relationships and organizational

justice over time. As AI becomes more embedded into the workplace, justice, accountability and trust will continue to be critical for an organization to survive and thrive.

There have been many expressions of concern about the environmental implications of global food systems, and it is well known that they are major contributors to climate change, loss of biodiversity and water pollution. There is a need to reform these systems, international groups, national governments and civil society have said. The challenge is to find policies and practices that can help build more sustainable and resilient food systems. The notion of ‘sustainable food systems’ is very wide-ranging and encompasses such areas as food production, processing, distribution, consumption and waste management etc. Also, it has elements of social equality, economic feasibility and cultural compatibility [a/n]. Priorities and methods will vary by domain, and there is no one definition of what constitutes sustainable food systems. There is however consensus that sustainable food systems should be environmentally sound, socially just and commercially viable.

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