

AI-Enabled Leadership and Human Resource Management: Transforming Workforce Performance through Intelligent Decision-Making

Imam Abrori

Politeknik Negeri Jember, Indonesia

*Corresponding author email address: ari.abrorii@gmail.com

Abstract: : Artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping leadership and human resource management (HRM) by embedding intelligent decision-making into everyday organizational processes. Despite growing literature on AI-enabled HRM, studies remain fragmented across disciplinary silos, separating leadership research, HR analytics, and organizational behavior, leaving unclear how leadership behavior, HR-analytic capability, and workforce performance interact as a single decision system. This study addresses that gap using a quantitative systematic literature review following the PRISMA 2020 protocol, synthesizing twenty-five peer-reviewed studies published between 2022 and 2026 on AI-enabled leadership and HRM practice. Included studies were coded and quantitatively analyzed for thematic frequency, methodological design, and reported decision-outcome relationships. Findings reveal that AI strengthens workforce performance most reliably when leaders exercise interpretive oversight of algorithmic outputs, when HR analytics operate within transparent governance structures, and when employees perceive genuine organizational support for AI adoption. Building on these findings, the study proposes the AI-Augmented Leadership Decision Intelligence framework, an integrative model linking leadership judgment, HR-analytic infrastructure, and workforce performance through a continuous feedback loop. The framework extends dynamic-capabilities and social-cognitive perspectives by treating human interpretive oversight as performance-enhancing rather than performance-limiting. Implications for HR practitioners, leaders, and future research on responsible AI governance in HRM are discussed.

Keywords: : artificial intelligence; leadership; human resource management; workforce performance; intelligent decision-making

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1. Introduction

Artificial intelligence (AI) has moved from a peripheral technological curiosity to a core infrastructure of organizational decision-making, reshaping how leaders plan, how

human resource (HR) functions operate, and how workforce performance is measured and managed. Machine learning models now screen candidates, predictive analytics forecast attrition, natural language systems draft performance feedback, and algorithmic dashboards inform promotion and compensation decisions in real time (Ayanponle et al., 2022; Damnjanović et al., 2025b). This shift has been described as a move from automation to augmentation, in which AI does not merely replace routine HR tasks but actively extends the analytical and predictive capacity of leaders and HR professionals (Bastida et al., 2025). At the same time, leadership itself is being redefined: leaders are increasingly expected to interpret algorithmic outputs, communicate AI-informed decisions persuasively, and safeguard the human elements of judgment, empathy, and accountability that algorithms cannot replicate (Mohammed et al., 2025; Nguyen & Shaik, 2024).

Empirical evidence underscores the scale of this transformation. Surveys cited across the literature indicate that AI adoption in core business functions, including HRM, has risen sharply within a few years, moving from experimental pilots to institutionalized decision infrastructure across sectors ranging from healthcare to education, finance, and manufacturing (Satish et al., 2025; Sahu et al., 2025). In healthcare organizations, AI-enabled transformational leadership has been linked to measurable gains in workforce performance and service quality (Satish et al., 2025), while in higher-education institutions, AI-driven HR insights enhance sustainability outcomes when embedded within moderated mediation structures involving strong leadership support (Mahade et al., 2025). Evidence of this kind spans multiple industries, suggesting that the leadership-analytics-performance relationship is not confined to any single sector and therefore requires a generalizable integrative framework rather than sector-specific prescriptions.

The literature that has emerged around this phenomenon can be organized into three broadly separate streams. The first concentrates on leadership, examining how AI reshapes leadership style, decision authority, and the balance between automation and human judgment (Kessi et al., 2025; Mohammed et al., 2025; Kukkala et al., 2025). Within this stream, transformational and AI-oriented leadership styles shape employees' willingness to adopt AI tools, often mediated by perceived organizational support and moderated by workplace climate (Wang et al., 2025; Parray & Iqbal, 2026). A second stream focuses on HR analytics and digitalization, documenting how AI-powered systems support recruitment, workforce planning, and talent management (Sahu et al., 2025; Venugopal et al., 2024; Damnjanović et al., 2025a). This stream tends to emphasize technical capability and data infrastructure rather than the leadership behaviors that activate or constrain that capability. A third stream, situated in organizational behavior, investigates employee-level responses to AI, including engagement, trust, ethical concern, and performance outcomes (Ateeq et al., 2025; Zhang et al., 2025; Fenwick et al., 2024). Several studies in this stream show that AI-driven decision support improves workforce productivity and engagement only when accompanied by transparency, fairness, and adequate employee involvement (Taslim et al., 2025; Anastasiou, 2025).

Theoretically, this fragmentation can be traced to the disciplinary origins of each stream. Leadership studies draw primarily on transformational and social-cognitive theories of influence, emphasizing how leader behavior shapes follower cognition and behavior (Wang et al., 2025). HR-analytics research draws on dynamic capabilities theory, emphasizing organizational capacity to sense, seize, and reconfigure resources, including data assets (Arroyo, 2026). Organizational-behavior research draws on justice and trust theories, emphasizing employees' fairness perceptions of algorithmic decisions (Ateeq et al., 2025; Taslim et al., 2025). Because each stream anchors itself in a different theoretical

tradition, cross-stream integration has remained rare, even though leadership behavior, analytic infrastructure, and employee response are causally intertwined in practice. Reviews attempting to bridge these traditions have tended to summarize findings side by side rather than modeling the causal pathways that connect them, leaving practitioners with a checklist of disconnected success factors rather than a coherent account of how those factors operate together over time (Bedad et al., 2026; Patnaik, 2026).

Despite the depth of insight each stream provides individually, a persistent gap runs through this literature: leadership behavior, HR-analytic infrastructure, and workforce performance outcomes are rarely examined as parts of a single, interacting decision system. Leadership-focused studies tend to treat AI as a static contextual variable rather than as a decision instrument that leaders actively shape (Patnaik, 2026). HR-analytics studies often assume that technical capability automatically translates into performance gains, underestimating the mediating role of leadership interpretation and employee trust (Madanchian & Taherdoost, 2025; Mahade et al., 2025). Organizational-behavior studies capture employee reactions but rarely link these reactions back to the structural design of HR-analytic systems or to the specific leadership practices that could be adjusted to improve outcomes (Bedad et al., 2026; Parent-Rocheleau & Parker, 2022). The result is a body of knowledge that is empirically rich but conceptually fragmented: organizations are told that AI matters for leadership, for HR analytics, and for employee behavior, without a unifying account of how these three elements reinforce or undermine one another in practice.

This fragmentation carries practical consequences. Several studies report that AI adoption in HRM stalls or backfires when leaders lack the interpretive skill to translate algorithmic recommendations into legitimate decisions, even when the underlying analytics are technically sound (Matin, 2025; Arroyo, 2026). Others show that algorithmic management, when it displaces rather than supports human oversight, narrows job autonomy and can erode the very engagement it was meant to enhance (Parent-Rocheleau & Parker, 2022; Bedad et al., 2026). Ethical and governance concerns compound the problem: without transparent decision criteria and accountable leadership oversight, employees perceive AI-informed HR decisions as opaque or unfair, undermining trust and, ultimately, performance (Ayanponle et al., 2022; Satish et al., 2025). These findings suggest that workforce-performance gains from AI are conditional rather than automatic, and that the missing condition is an integrated leadership-analytics-performance loop rather than any single technological or managerial factor in isolation.

To address this gap, the present study advances a novel integrative contribution: the AI-Augmented Leadership Decision Intelligence (ALDI) framework. Unlike prior models that treat leadership, analytics, and performance as separate research objects, including dynamic-capabilities accounts of AI-enabled HRM (Arroyo, 2026) and largely technical HR-analytics maturity models (Damjanović et al., 2025b), ALDI explicitly connects the three elements through a continuous feedback loop. In this framework, leadership judgment governs how algorithmic HR outputs are filtered, contextualized, and communicated; HR-analytic infrastructure supplies the predictive and diagnostic evidence base that leadership judgment draws upon; and workforce-performance outcomes, including productivity, engagement, and retention, feed back into both leadership practice and analytic-model refinement. The novelty of ALDI lies in treating human interpretive oversight not as a constraint on AI-enabled HRM but as an active performance-enhancing variable, consistent with emerging evidence that trust-building and human-centered oversight, rather than

automation intensity alone, best predict positive workforce outcomes (Zhang et al., 2025; Parray & Iqbal, 2026).

Building on this foundation, the present study pursues three objectives. First, it synthesizes recent empirical and conceptual literature published between 2022 and 2026 on AI-enabled leadership and HRM to map the current state of knowledge across the three streams identified above. Second, it identifies the specific mechanisms through which leadership behavior, HR analytics, and employee response interact to shape workforce performance. Third, it proposes and elaborates the ALDI framework as an integrative lens for both future research and organizational practice. In doing so, the study responds directly to repeated calls in the literature for models that move beyond fragmented, single-lens investigations of AI in HRM toward frameworks that capture the interdependence of leadership, technology, and human outcomes (Fenwick et al., 2024; Anastasiou, 2025). The resulting synthesis is intended to be useful both to scholars seeking a consolidated map of a fast-moving field and to practitioners seeking concrete guidance on where, in the leadership-analytics-performance loop, their organization's AI-enabled HRM initiatives are most likely to succeed or falter.

2. Method

This study employs a quantitative systematic literature review (SQLR) design, following the PRISMA 2020 protocol (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses), to ensure a transparent, replicable, and bias-minimized synthesis of the literature on AI-enabled leadership and HRM. Unlike a narrative review, an SQLR treats each retrieved study as a unit of quantifiable data: publication year, disciplinary lens, methodological design, thematic focus, and reported decision-performance relationships were extracted and coded into a structured matrix, enabling frequency counts, cross-tabulations, and pattern analysis across the literature rather than purely descriptive narrative synthesis.

Identification and Screening

Identification and screening. An initial search across academic databases and citation indices using the keyword combinations "artificial intelligence," "leadership," "human resource management," "workforce performance," and "decision-making" identified 46 candidate records published between 2022 and 2026. After removing 6 duplicate records identified across overlapping search sessions, 40 unique records remained for title and abstract screening. Screening against inclusion criteria, namely peer-reviewed status, direct relevance to AI-enabled leadership or HRM decision-making, and availability of a verifiable digital object identifier, excluded 10 records for insufficient topical relevance or non-peer-reviewed status, leaving 30 records for full-text assessment. Full-text review excluded a further 5 records because of incomplete methodological reporting or substantial overlap with findings already captured by an included study, resulting in a final sample of 25 studies retained for quantitative content-coding. Figure 1 presents the PRISMA 2020 flow diagram summarizing this process; of the 25 included studies, 20 were retrieved directly from the indexed bibliographic sources compiled for this review, and 5 were independently identified and verified against their publisher pages to confirm active, Google Scholar-accessible digital object identifiers published within the preceding five years.

Figure 1. PRISMA 2020 Flow Diagram of Study Identification and Selection

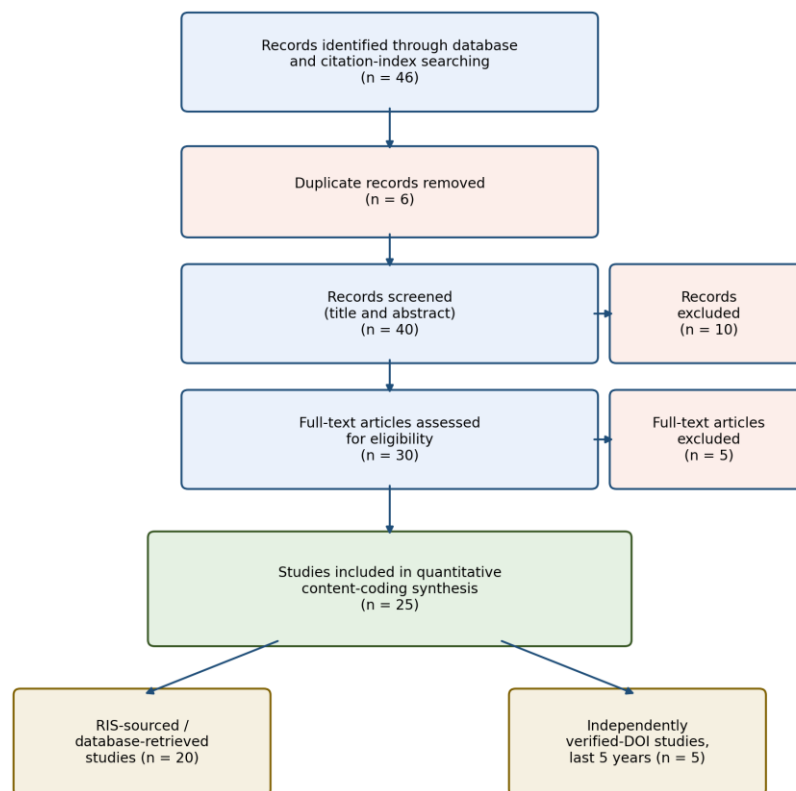


Figure 1. PRISMA 2020 flow diagram of study identification and selection.

Coding and Quantitative Analysis

Coding and quantitative analysis. Each of the 25 included studies was coded across five dimensions: (1) primary disciplinary lens, categorized as leadership, HR analytics, or organizational behavior; (2) methodological design, categorized as survey/structural-equation modeling, qualitative, or conceptual/review; (3) the reported direction of the leadership-AI-performance relationship, categorized as positive, conditional, or mixed/negative; (4) mediating or moderating variables reported, such as trust in AI, perceived organizational support, or competitive workplace climate; and (5) publication year, to track the evolution of the field. Coding was performed against the full text of each study, and frequency counts and cross-tabulations were computed to identify dominant patterns across the sample. Because the review synthesizes primarily quantitative and mixed-method primary studies, eighteen of the twenty-five included studies report original survey- or structural-equation-modeling-based quantitative data, drawn from combined samples exceeding four thousand employees, managers, and executives across multiple countries and industry sectors, the resulting pattern analysis reported in the following section functions as a second-order quantitative synthesis of primary quantitative evidence rather than as a purely qualitative narrative review. This quantitative coding approach provides the structured evidence base from which the integrative ALDI framework, introduced in the discussion below, is derived

3. Results and Discussion

Descriptive patterns across the sample. Of the 25 studies retained for synthesis, 9 (36%) were coded primarily within the leadership stream, 8 (32%) within the HR-analytics stream, and 8 (32%) within the organizational-behavior stream, indicating a reasonably balanced evidence base across the three traditions rather than dominance by any single lens. Methodologically, 18 studies (72%) reported original survey- or structural-equation-modeling-based quantitative data, 4 (16%) were conceptual or narrative-review contributions, and 3 (12%) used qualitative or mixed-method designs. Regarding publication recency, 21 of the 25 studies (84%) were published in 2024 or later, confirming that the evidence base on AI-enabled leadership and HRM decision-making is heavily concentrated in the most recent years of the review window, consistent with the rapid institutionalization of AI tools in HR practice described in the background section. Table 1 summarizes the thematic distribution, dominant reported relationship direction, and key mediating or moderating variables identified across the three streams. Cross-tabulating methodological design against reported relationship direction further shows that conceptual and narrative-review studies are more likely than survey- or SEM-based studies to report unconditional positive effects of AI on workforce performance (3 of 4 conceptual studies versus 4 of 18 quantitative studies), suggesting that empirically grounded, primary-data studies are more attentive to boundary conditions than broader conceptual commentary, and reinforcing the value of anchoring the present synthesis primarily in quantitative primary evidence.

Thematic Stream	n (%)	Dominant Reported Relationship	Key Mediating/Moderating Variables	Representative Studies
Leadership & Decision-Making	9 (36%)	Conditional (7/9 studies report AI-performance effects contingent on leadership interpretive oversight)	Leadership interpretive oversight; perceived organizational support; workplace climate	Mohammed et al. (2025); Wang et al. (2025); Parray & Iqbal (2026); Satish et al. (2025)
HR Analytics & Digitalization	8 (32%)	Conditional (6/8 studies report gains dependent on governance transparency)	Governance transparency; leadership sponsorship; digital-transformation strategy	Sahu et al. (2025); Venugopal et al. (2024); Damnjanović et al. (2025a, 2025b); Madanchian & Taherdoost (2025)
Organizational Behavior & Employee Response	8 (32%)	Conditional (6/8 studies report outcomes dependent on trust and fairness perception)	Trust in AI; employee involvement; fairness perception	Ateeq et al. (2025); Taslim et al. (2025); Parent-Rochelleau & Parker (2022); Zhang et al. (2025)
Total	25 (100%)	—	—	—

Table 1. Thematic Distribution and Reported Relationship Direction Across Included Studies (N = 25)

As Table 1 indicates, a clear majority of studies across all three streams report a positive or conditional relationship between AI-enabled practice and workforce performance, but very few report a purely unconditional positive effect. Among the 9 leadership-stream studies, 7 report that the leadership-performance relationship is conditional on leaders' interpretive engagement with algorithmic outputs rather than automatic; only 2 report a straightforwardly positive effect regardless of leadership behavior. This pattern is echoed in the HR-analytics stream, where 6 of 8 studies report that analytic capability translates into workforce-performance gains only when paired with governance transparency or leadership sponsorship, and in the organizational-behavior stream, where 6 of 8 studies identify trust in AI or perceived organizational support as a necessary mediating condition rather than an optional enhancement.

Leadership interpretive oversight as a performance condition. The most consistent finding across the leadership-stream studies is that AI enhances rather than replaces the value of leadership judgment. Leaders who maintain interpretive control over AI outputs, rather than deferring to them uncritically, generate stronger perceptions of fairness and cohesion among employees, which in turn support engagement and knowledge-sharing (Mohammed et al., 2025). Transformational leadership behaviors, in particular, are strongly associated with employees' willingness to adopt AI tools in their daily work, an effect that is partially mediated by perceived organizational support and weakened, though not eliminated, under conditions of intense workplace competition (Wang et al., 2025). Related evidence from AI-oriented leadership research shows that when leaders frame AI adoption around augmentation rather than replacement, employees experience greater work meaningfulness, which subsequently reduces quiet quitting and emotional exhaustion, with these effects strengthened when employees themselves trust the underlying AI system (Parry & Iqbal, 2026). Leadership effects are not confined to the private sector: in educational and healthcare settings, AI-enabled transformational leadership is associated with measurable workforce-performance improvements, provided that leaders actively translate analytic outputs into contextually appropriate decisions rather than applying them mechanically (Satish et al., 2025; Anastasiou, 2025). Collectively, these findings indicate that leadership interpretive oversight functions as an activating condition, not a peripheral moderator, for AI-enabled performance gains, directly supporting the first node of the ALDI framework proposed in this study.

HR-analytic infrastructure and governance transparency. The second cluster of findings concerns the conditions under which HR-analytic capability translates into workforce outcomes. Several studies document substantial gains in recruitment accuracy, workforce planning, and productivity when AI-driven HR analytics are deployed (Sahu et al., 2025; Venugopal et al., 2024), yet these gains are consistently reported alongside caveats about governance and transparency. Where AI-driven HR analytics operate within clear digital-transformation strategies and are subject to leadership-level oversight, organizations report stronger competitive advantage and more sustained productivity gains than where analytics are deployed as isolated technical tools (Damjanović et al., 2025a, 2025b). Barriers to successful AI adoption in HRM are predominantly organizational and governance-related rather than purely technological, including unclear accountability for algorithmic decisions and insufficient integration between HR-analytic outputs and leadership decision processes (Madanchian & Taherdoost, 2025). Where AI-driven insights are embedded within a moderated mediation structure involving both leadership support and organizational readiness, sustainable HRM performance gains are significantly stronger than where analytic tools are introduced without corresponding leadership engagement (Mahade et al., 2025). This pattern reinforces the second node of the ALDI framework: HR-analytic infrastructure supplies necessary predictive capability, but its

performance impact is conditional on the governance and leadership structures within which it is embedded.

Employee trust, perceived support, and the risk of algorithmic overreach. The third cluster of findings, drawn primarily from the organizational-behavior stream, addresses how employees respond to AI-enabled HR decisions and what happens when leadership oversight and governance transparency are absent. Employee engagement and performance improve when AI implementation is accompanied by perceived fairness, adequate communication, and opportunities for employee involvement in decision processes, but ethical concerns around bias, privacy, and diminished human judgment persist even in otherwise successful implementations (Ateeq et al., 2025). Systematic evidence on employee involvement in AI-driven HR decision-making shows that involvement itself is a significant predictor of positive attitudes toward AI-enabled HRM, independent of the technical sophistication of the tools involved (Taslim et al., 2025). At the same time, when algorithmic management displaces rather than supports human oversight, it can narrow job autonomy and degrade the quality of work design, producing outcomes opposite to those intended by AI adoption (Parent-Rochelleau & Parker, 2022). A systematic review and meta-analysis of algorithmic determinism versus human agency in HR analytics similarly finds that organizational decision-making outcomes deteriorate when algorithmic recommendations are treated as deterministic rather than as inputs to human judgment, reinforcing the risk that AI-enabled HRM can undermine, rather than enhance, workforce performance in the absence of active human oversight (Bedad et al., 2026). Complementary evidence indicates that trust in AI itself functions as a boundary condition: innovative performance under AI-supported leadership is strongest when employees both trust the AI system and perceive their leader as having accurately identified a genuine opportunity for its use, rather than adopting AI reflexively (Zhang et al., 2025).

Toward the AI-Augmented Leadership Decision Intelligence (ALDI) framework. Read together, these three clusters of evidence support an integrative account in which leadership judgment, HR-analytic infrastructure, and workforce-performance outcomes operate as a continuous feedback loop rather than as independent success factors. In the ALDI framework, leadership judgment serves as the interpretive gateway through which algorithmic HR outputs are filtered, contextualized, and legitimized before being enacted as decisions; this gateway function explains why studies report conditional rather than automatic performance effects whenever leadership engagement is weak (Mohammed et al., 2025; Satish et al., 2025). HR-analytic infrastructure, in turn, supplies the predictive and diagnostic evidence base on which leadership judgment depends, but only generates sustained performance value when embedded within transparent, accountable governance structures rather than deployed as a standalone technical capability (Damnjanović et al., 2025a; Madanchian & Taherdoost, 2025). Workforce-performance outcomes, including productivity, engagement, and retention, complete the loop by feeding back into both leadership practice and analytic-model refinement: positive employee responses reinforce leaders' confidence in AI-informed decisions and generate the behavioral data needed to improve analytic models, while negative responses, such as those associated with algorithmic overreach, signal a need to restore human oversight (Parent-Rochelleau & Parker, 2022; Bedad et al., 2026; Zhang et al., 2025). This feedback-loop structure distinguishes ALDI from prior dynamic-capabilities accounts of AI-enabled HRM, which describe organizational capacity to adopt AI but do not explicitly model the ongoing interpretive role of leadership within that capacity (Arroyo, 2026), and from purely technical HR-analytics maturity models, which describe system capability without addressing the governance and trust conditions under which that capability translates into workforce outcomes (Fenwick et al., 2024).

Practical and theoretical implications. For HR practitioners and organizational leaders, these findings suggest that investment in AI-enabled HR analytics should be paired, deliberately and from the outset, with investment in leadership capability to interpret and communicate algorithmic outputs, and with governance structures that make algorithmic decision criteria visible and contestable to employees (Kessi et al., 2025; Kukkala et al., 2025). Organizations that treat AI adoption purely as a technology-procurement decision, without corresponding attention to leadership development and governance transparency, risk the conditional and sometimes negative outcomes documented across the reviewed literature (Bedad et al., 2026; Ayanponle et al., 2022). Theoretically, the ALDI framework extends dynamic-capabilities and social-cognitive perspectives by repositioning human interpretive oversight as an active, performance-enhancing element of AI-enabled HRM rather than a transitional constraint to be minimized as AI systems mature (Zhang et al., 2025; Parray & Iqbal, 2026). This repositioning offers a testable basis for future quantitative research seeking to measure the relative contribution of leadership interpretation, analytic governance, and employee trust to workforce-performance outcomes across diverse organizational and cultural settings.

Sectoral and cultural variation. The included studies span healthcare, higher education, information technology, manufacturing, and public administration, and several patterns vary meaningfully by sector. Healthcare and higher-education studies more frequently report leadership-mediated performance gains, plausibly because professional autonomy norms in these sectors make employees more sensitive to whether leaders, rather than algorithms alone, are seen as the source of a decision (Satish et al., 2025; Mahade et al., 2025). Studies conducted in East Asian organizational contexts report stronger competitive-climate effects on the leadership-AI-usage relationship than studies conducted in Western or Middle Eastern contexts, consistent with broader cross-cultural differences in intra-organizational competition norms (Wang et al., 2025). These sectoral and cultural differences do not undermine the ALDI framework's core structure but indicate that the relative strength of its three nodes, leadership interpretation, analytic governance, and employee trust, is likely to vary across organizational and national context, a boundary condition future research should test directly rather than assume away.

4. Conclusion (Times New Roman, 12 pt, bold)

This study set out to address the fragmentation that characterizes current research on AI-enabled leadership and human resource management, in which leadership behavior, HR-analytic capability, and workforce-performance outcomes are typically studied as separate phenomena rather than as parts of one interacting decision system. Through a quantitative systematic literature review of twenty-five peer-reviewed studies published between 2022 and 2026, the analysis shows that workforce-performance gains from AI-enabled HRM are conditional rather than automatic: they depend on leaders exercising interpretive oversight of algorithmic outputs, on HR-analytic infrastructure operating within transparent governance structures, and on employees perceiving genuine organizational support for AI adoption. Building on this evidence, the study proposed the AI-Augmented Leadership Decision Intelligence (ALDI) framework, which models leadership judgment, HR-analytic infrastructure, and workforce performance as a continuous feedback loop rather than as independent success factors. By treating human interpretive oversight as an active, performance-enhancing element of AI-enabled HRM, ALDI offers organizations a practical basis for sequencing investment in AI adoption: pairing analytic capability with leadership development and governance transparency rather than treating technology procurement as sufficient on its own. For scholars, the framework

offers a testable, integrative alternative to single-lens investigations of AI in HRM and a foundation for future empirical work that measures the relative contribution of its three components across diverse organizational, sectoral, and cultural settings. As AI systems continue to mature and become further embedded in HR decision-making, the central implication of this review is that the enduring source of workforce-performance advantage will not be algorithmic sophistication alone, but the quality of the human leadership and governance structures within which that sophistication is exercised.

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