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A bibliometric analysis of algorithmic governance and employee experience in the modern workplace

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ABSTRACT

The diffusion of artificial intelligence in organizations is reshaping how work is allocated, monitored, evaluated, and disciplined through algorithmically mediated management. This article maps the intellectual landscape at the intersection of algorithmic governance, seenn as the rules, oversight mechanisms, and accountability arrangements guiding workplace algorithms, and employee experience, defined as employees' perceptions of fairness, autonomy, trust, well-being, and recognition. Using a bibliometric analysis of 295 Scopus-indexed peer-reviewed journal articles, the study examines publication trends, influential journals and authors, and the field's conceptual structure. Analyses were conducted using Biblioshiny and complemented with VOSviewer network visualizations of co-authorship, co-citation, and keyword co-occurrence. Findings show a sharp rise in research output from 2020, with strong concentration since 2022. The field's conceptual core centers on artificial intelligence, algorithmic management, control, and the gig economy, while employee-experience themes such as autonomy, engagement, job satisfaction, and well-being are becoming more closely linked to governance mechanisms including transparency, contestability, accountability, and human oversight. The literature is evolving from platform-focused studies of control toward broader debates on responsible, human-centered AI, offering useful insights for organizations, HR professionals, and policymakers designing fair and transparent algorithmic workplaces.

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Introduction

The rapid diffusion of artificial intelligence (AI) within organizations is profoundly transforming how work is managed, evaluated, and experienced. Algorithmic systems are increasingly deployed to support or automate decisions related to recruitment, performance evaluation, task allocation, monitoring, and discipline. As a result, managerial authority and control are progressively embedded in data-driven systems rather than exercised exclusively through human judgment. This shift reflects the broader emergence of algorithmically mediated management, in which organizational decision-making is increasingly shaped by computational models and analytics (Duggan et al., 2020; Kellogg et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2015).

Within management and human resource management (HRM) research, this transformation has generated growing interest in algorithmic governance. Algorithmic governance refers to the organizational principles, rules, and oversight mechanisms that structure how algorithmic systems are designed, implemented, and regulated in the workplace. Rather than treating algorithms as neutral or purely technical tools, researchers emphasize that they embed managerial assumptions, redistribute power, and reshape employment relationships (Burrell & Fourcade, 2021; Jarrahi et al., 2020). Recent studies highlight that algorithmic governance has become a central concern for contemporary organizations, raising persistent tensions between efficiency and fairness, transparency and opacity, and control and autonomy (Zhang

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et al., 2025). At the same time, the growing reliance on algorithmic systems has significant implications for employee experience. Employee experience captures how employees perceive and make sense of their work environment, including perceptions of fairness, autonomy, trust, well-being, and recognition. Moving beyond traditional constructs such as job satisfaction or engagement, recent research conceptualizes employee experience as a multidimensional phenomenon shaped by organizational practices, technologies, and social relationships (Panneerselvam & Balaraman, 2022). Unlike job satisfaction or work engagement, which capture specific attitudinal states, employee experience refers to a broader and more integrative construct encompassing employees' cumulative cognitive, emotional, and relational responses to organizational practices over time. Empirical evidence shows that employee experience is strongly associated with key individual and organizational outcomes, including organizational commitment, burnout, turnover intentions, and emerging forms of disengagement such as quiet quitting (Lee et al., 2025). These diverse constructs can be understood as manifestations of a broader tension between control-oriented algorithmic governance and employees' lived experiences of work.

The intersection of algorithmic governance and employee experience has therefore become increasingly salient as algorithmic management systems mediate everyday work interactions. Existing research suggests that algorithmic systems can simultaneously enhance coordination and generate negative employee experiences, particularly when they intensify surveillance, reduce autonomy, or undermine privacy (Ajunwa et al., 2017; Reimann & Diewald, 2025). Importantly, evidence indicates that employees' concrete experiences of algorithmic management, such as constant monitoring, automated evaluations, or limited opportunities for voice, are more consequential for well-being and workplace relationships than the mere presence of algorithmic technologies (Reimann & Diewald, 2025). Other studies further reveal the ambivalent nature of algorithmic decision-making, showing that employees' domain expertise may both complement and conflict with algorithmic outputs, thereby generating tensions between professional judgment and algorithmic authority (Allen & Choudhury, 2022). These findings underscore that algorithmic systems do not deterministically shape work outcomes; instead, their effects depend on how they are governed and how employees interpret and experience algorithmic decisions.

Despite the rapid expansion of research on algorithmic management, AI governance, and employee experience, the literature remains fragmented across disciplinary boundaries. Studies on algorithmic governance often prioritize ethical, legal, or structural concerns. At the same time, research on employee experience typically focuses on psychological or behavioral outcomes without fully engaging with governance mechanisms embedded in AI-driven management systems (Ali et al., 2023; Majrashi, 2025; Niu et al., 2026). As a result, the cumulative understanding of how algorithmic governance and employee experience are conceptually connected, and how this research domain has evolved, remains limited.

To address this gap, this study conducts a bibliometric analysis of 295 peer-reviewed articles indexed in Scopus within the field of business and management. By systematically mapping publication trends, influential authors and journals, and dominant thematic clusters, this article provides a structured overview of the intellectual landscape at the intersection of algorithmic governance and employee experience. In doing so, it contributes to management and HRM research by clarifying how algorithmic governance has been theorized in relation to employees lived experiences and by identifying key trajectories for future research on responsible and human-centered AI in the modern workplace.

Despite this growing body of research, the literature remains fragmented around a central tension between algorithmic control and employee experience, as studies simultaneously highlight efficiency gains and deteriorations in autonomy, trust, and well-being, without clearly integrating these perspectives.

Therefore, the objective of this study is to provide a comprehensive bibliometric overview of research at the intersection of algorithmic governance and employee experience within the business and management literature. Specifically, it examines the temporal evolution of scholarly work in this domain, identifies the most influential authors, journals, and academic communities shaping the field, and uncovers the dominant themes and conceptual clusters structuring the literature. In addition, the study analyzes how research trajectories and thematic emphases have developed over time. Accordingly, this bibliometric analysis is guided by the following research questions:

RQ1. How has research on algorithmic governance and employee experience evolved in management literature?

RQ2. Which authors, journals, and academic communities have most strongly structured and consolidated research on algorithmic governance and employee experience within the business and management literature?

RQ3. What are the dominant themes and conceptual clusters characterizing the current structure of research on algorithmic governance and employee experience?

RQ4. How have these themes and conceptual structures evolved over time?

Each research question is addressed using specific bibliometric techniques, including performance analysis for RQ1, co-authorship and co-citation analysis for RQ2, keyword co-occurrence and thematic mapping for RQ3, and thematic evolution analysis for RQ4 as explained in the methodology section.

Literature review

Algorithmic governance

Recent research highlights that algorithmic governance has become a central concern in contemporary organizations as algorithmic systems increasingly mediate managerial decision-making and control processes (Burrell & Fourcade, 2021; Jarrahi et al., 2020; Kellogg et al., 2020). Within management research, algorithmic governance refers to the organizational rules, oversight mechanisms, and accountability arrangements that structure how algorithmic systems are designed, implemented, and regulated in the workplace (Burrell & Fourcade, 2021; Kellogg et al., 2020). Researchers emphasize that algorithms are not neutral artifacts; instead, they embed managerial assumptions and redistribute power by shaping how work is allocated, monitored, and evaluated (Burrell & Fourcade, 2021; Kellogg et al., 2020). While related, these concepts capture distinct dimensions of algorithmically mediated work. Algorithmic management refers to the use of algorithms to coordinate and direct work processes, whereas algorithmic control emphasizes monitoring and performance enforcement mechanisms. In contrast, algorithmic governance encompasses the broader organizational and institutional arrangements that regulate how these systems are designed, implemented, and overseen.

Prior studies have examined the implications of algorithmic governance for control, transparency, and fairness. Research suggests that algorithmic systems may enhance standardization and efficiency while simultaneously increasing opacity and limiting employees' ability to understand or contest decisions (Ajunwa et al., 2017; Ananny & Crawford, 2018). Recent work further conceptualizes algorithmic management as a socio-technical governance system embedded in information systems, reshaping authority, accountability, and employee experience across organizational contexts (Cameron et al., 2023).

These dynamics pose significant governance challenges regarding responsibility, explainability, and human oversight. Recent contributions further underline that organizations face persistent tensions between efficiency and equity when relying on algorithmic systems, particularly in HRM contexts where decisions directly affect employment relationships (Zhang et al., 2025). In addition, emerging legal and institutional perspectives highlight the role of regulatory frameworks and labor protections in shaping how algorithmic governance is implemented and contested in practice.

More recent management-oriented research has focused on governance frameworks designed to support the responsible and ethical adoption of AI. Studies emphasize the importance of transparency, accountability, and human-in-the-loop arrangements to mitigate risks related to bias, surveillance, and loss of managerial discretion (Breidbach, 2024; Venugopal et al., 2024). This body of research suggests that algorithmic governance is a multidimensional construct encompassing technical, organizational, and ethical considerations, and that governance choices play a critical role in shaping how algorithmic systems are enacted in organizational settings.

Employee experience

Employee experience has gained increasing prominence in management and HRM research as researchers seek to better understand how employees perceive, interpret, and make sense of their work

environment (Panneerselvam & Balaraman, 2022; Plaskoff, 2017). It broadly refers to employees' cognitive, emotional, and relational responses to organizational practices, encompassing perceptions of fairness, autonomy, trust, well-being, and recognition (Lee et al., 2025; Panneerselvam & Balaraman, 2022; Plaskoff, 2017). Moving beyond traditional constructs such as job satisfaction or engagement, recent studies conceptualize employee experience as a holistic and multidimensional phenomenon shaped by organizational processes, technologies, and social interactions (Panneerselvam & Balaraman, 2022).

Empirical evidence demonstrates that employee experience is closely associated with a range of individual and organizational outcomes. Research published in leading HRM journals indicates that positive employee experiences are associated with higher levels of organizational commitment and retention. In contrast, negative experiences are linked to burnout, disengagement, and increased turnover intentions (Lee et al., 2025). Recent contributions have also drawn attention to emerging forms of disengagement, such as quiet quitting, which reflect evolving expectations regarding work, managerial support, and organizational fairness.

More recently, research has examined the role of digital technologies and data-driven management practices in shaping the employee experience. Studies suggest that technology-mediated work arrangements can both enhance and undermine employee experience, depending on how they influence autonomy, feedback, and perceptions of control (Reimann & Diewald, 2025). Taken together, these findings indicate that employee experience is not solely a function of individual attitudes but is powerfully shaped by organizational design choices and managerial practices within technology-enabled work environments. In particular, algorithmic and AI-driven systems reshape employee experience by mediating key aspects of work such as task allocation, evaluation, and feedback, thereby directly linking digital governance mechanisms to employees' perceptions of autonomy, fairness, and control.

Algorithmic governance and employee experience

An emerging body of research indicates a close, multifaceted relationship between algorithmic governance and employee experience in contemporary organizations. Recent studies suggest that governance arrangements embedded in algorithmic systems shape employees' perceptions of fairness, autonomy, and control at work. Research highlights that algorithmic management practices influence employee experience through mechanisms such as transparency in decision-making, the degree of human oversight, and the perceived legitimacy of algorithmic authority (Ajunwa et al., 2017; Kellogg et al., 2020; Reimann & Diewald, 2025). In particular, governance mechanisms that clarify responsibility and allow for human intervention appear to mitigate adverse employee reactions to algorithmic control. For example, when employees can contest algorithmic performance evaluations or receive explanations from managers, they are more likely to perceive decisions as fair and legitimate. In addition, growing attention has been paid to the role of organizational and managerial practices in mediating the relationship between algorithmic governance and employee experience. Studies show that employees' responses to algorithmic systems are shaped by leadership behaviors, communication practices, and the extent to which algorithmic decisions are framed as supportive rather than punitive (Allen & Choudhury, 2022; Tandon et al., 2025). Research further suggests that algorithmic governance affects employee experience not only through control and surveillance, but also through its interaction with employees' professional expertise, identity, and sense of recognition within AI-mediated work environments (Breidbach, 2024; Venugopal et al., 2024).

Overall, the current state of research at the intersection of algorithmic governance and employee experience highlights several recurring factors that shape employees' experiences of algorithmic management, including transparency in governance, accountability mechanisms, human-in-the-loop arrangements, leadership practices, and organizational culture. While prior studies underline the importance of algorithmic governance for shaping employee experience, there remains a limited understanding of how these factors evolve and how research themes have developed across disciplinary boundaries. Moreover, although emerging work addresses issues such as algorithmic aversion, trust, and acceptance, the joint evolution of algorithmic governance and employee experience has not yet been examined from a bibliometric perspective. This study addresses these gaps by systematically analyzing research on algorithmic governance and employee experience, identifying dominant conceptual, intellectual, and social structures, and outlining future research directions to advance understanding of human-centered and responsible algorithmic management.

This relationship can be conceptualized as a process in which algorithmic governance mechanisms (e.g. transparency, accountability, human oversight) shape employee perceptions (e.g. fairness, autonomy, trust), which in turn influence key outcomes such as well-being, engagement, and turnover intentions.

Methodology

Bibliometric analysis is a well-established methodological approach for systematically mapping the structure and evolution of a research field, identifying influential contributions, and uncovering dominant and emerging research themes (Donthu et al., 2021; Moral-Muñoz et al., 2020). By analyzing large bodies of scientific publications using quantitative techniques, bibliometric methods provide an objective overview of research performance, intellectual structures, and thematic developments. Nevertheless, bibliometric analysis also presents certain limitations. In particular, reliance on a single database may exclude relevant studies not indexed in that source, whereas citation-based indicators may favor well-established authors and journals over more recent contributions (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017; Donthu et al., 2021). Despite these limitations, bibliometric analysis is particularly well-suited to synthesizing fragmented and rapidly expanding research domains, such as studies on algorithmic governance and employee experience. Accordingly, this study adopts a bibliometric approach to provide a structured overview of research at the intersection of algorithmic governance and employee experience within the management and human resource management literature. Following established methodological guidelines, the analysis was conducted through a multi-step procedure encompassing data collection and retrieval, keyword search strategy, application of inclusion and exclusion criteria, execution of bibliometric analyses, and identification of dominant research themes and future research directions (Rowley & Slack, 2004).

Data collection and retrieval

Data for this study were collected exclusively from the Scopus database, widely recognized as a comprehensive and reliable source for bibliometric research in business and management. Scopus indexes a broad range of high-quality peer-reviewed journals and is frequently used as a primary data source in bibliometric studies due to its extensive coverage and standardized citation information (Donthu et al., 2021). The decision to rely solely on Scopus was motivated by the need to ensure consistency in indexing criteria, disciplinary classification, and citation metadata. Scopus provides strong coverage of journals that publish research on algorithmic management, AI governance, and employee-related outcomes in organizational contexts. Applying the predefined search strategy and selection criteria yielded a final dataset of 295 peer-reviewed journal articles, which served as the corpus for the subsequent bibliometric analysis. Additionally, data were collected on December 26, 2025. Some articles indexed as 2026 publications were already available in Scopus at that time due to early online publication practices. As 2026 constitutes an incomplete publication year, these records are retained for exploratory purposes but interpreted with caution.

The literature search was conducted using the Scopus search function ALL, which captures terms appearing in titles, abstracts, and author keywords. This approach is commonly adopted in bibliometric research to ensure comprehensive retrieval of relevant publications (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017). The search string was designed to identify studies addressing both algorithmic governance and employee experience by combining keywords related to algorithmic governance ("algorithmic governance," "AI governance," "algorithmic management") with keywords related to employee experience ("employee experience," "employee wellbeing," "job satisfaction," "workplace experience"), using Boolean operators. To ensure disciplinary relevance and data quality, the search was restricted to publications classified under the Business subject area, to peer-reviewed journal articles, and to English-language publications. This restriction was applied to maintain conceptual coherence with the study's focus on management and HRM, while acknowledging that algorithmic governance is inherently interdisciplinary.

It is also important to note that the selection of keywords was informed by prior literature on algorithmic governance, algorithmic management, and employee experience, ensuring alignment with established terminology in management and HRM research. The search string was iteratively refined to balance comprehensiveness and relevance.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

To ensure the dataset's relevance and rigor, explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied. First, only articles published in peer-reviewed academic journals were included, thereby excluding conference papers, book chapters, editorials, and other non-peer-reviewed documents. Second, the search was limited to English-language publications to ensure consistency in analysis and interpretation.

Third, the subject area was restricted to Business and Management to maintain a clear disciplinary focus and exclude studies primarily situated in computer science, engineering, or legal research. Finally, no a priori temporal restriction was imposed, allowing the analysis to capture the evolution of research on algorithmic governance and employee experience, as indexed in Scopus, up to the date of data extraction.

Table 1 summarizes the search strategy and filtering steps applied in the Scopus database, including keyword selection, database restrictions, and manual screening, leading to the final dataset used for analysis.

Execution of the bibliometric analysis

The bibliometric analysis was conducted using Biblioshiny, the web-based graphical interface of the R package Bibliometrix, developed by Aria and Cuccurullo (2017). Biblioshiny enables comprehensive bibliometric and scientific mapping analyses, including descriptive performance analysis, co-authorship networks, co-citation analysis, and keyword co-occurrence mapping. The tool was selected for its robustness, transparency, and widespread adoption in bibliometric research, as well as its ability to support a systematic and reproducible analytical process (Moral-Muñoz et al., 2020).

In addition, VOSviewer was employed to complement the analysis by generating network visualizations of co-authorship, co-citation, and keyword co-occurrence structures. VOSviewer is a widely used bibliometric visualization tool that constructs and visualizes large-scale bibliometric networks, enabling the identification of relational patterns among authors, sources, and concepts (van Eck & Waltman, 2010, 2014). The combined use of Biblioshiny and VOSviewer enabled cross-validation of results. It enhanced the clarity and interpretability of visualizations of the intellectual and conceptual structures of research on algorithmic governance and employee experience.

These methodological steps follow established bibliometric guidelines (Donthu et al., 2021), ensuring transparency, reproducibility, and analytical rigor.

Identification of research themes and future research directions

To identify dominant research themes and emerging trends, keyword co-occurrence analysis and thematic mapping techniques were applied to the dataset. These methods enabled the identification of core conceptual clusters and the examination of how research themes related to algorithmic governance and employee experience have evolved.

By mapping the intellectual, conceptual, and social structures of the literature, this bibliometric analysis provides a foundation for identifying underexplored areas and outlining future research directions. In doing so, the study offers a structured overview of existing knowledge. It contributes to a more integrated understanding of algorithmic governance and employee experience in contemporary organizational contexts.

Table 1. Search strategy and dataset construction process.

Stage	Criteria	Scopus filters	Documents returned
Stage 1	Keyword search	ALL (("algorithmic governance" OR "AI governance" OR "algorithmic management") AND ("employee experience" OR "employee wellbeing" OR "job satisfaction" OR "workplace experience"))	933
Stage 1	Restriction year	No temporal restriction applied	933
Stage 2	Subject area	LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "BUSI")	541
Stage 3	Language	LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE, "English")	339
Stage 3	Document type	LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE, "ar")	339
Stage 4	Manual screening	Title, abstract, and full-text screening to ensure relevance to algorithmic governance and employee experience	295

Results

Descriptive performance analysis

Annual scientific production

Figure 1 illustrates the annual scientific production on algorithmic governance and employee experience within the business and management literature over the period 2016–2026. Overall, the results reveal a clear and accelerating growth trajectory, indicating a rapidly expanding research interest in this domain. The early period of the analysis (2016–2019) is characterized by minimal scholarly output, with no publications recorded between 2017 and 2019 and only one article published in 2016. From 2020 onward, the literature gains momentum, with six publications in 2020 and nine in 2021, marking the initial consolidation of research at the intersection of algorithmic governance and employee-related outcomes. A sharp increase in publication activity is observed from 2022, with 29 articles published, followed by continued growth in 2023 (34 articles) and a substantial rise in 2024 (59 articles). The most pronounced peak occurs in 2025, with 148 publications, reflecting an unprecedented surge in academic attention. This rapid expansion suggests that issues related to algorithmic governance, AI-driven management, and employee experience have become central concerns in contemporary management research. Publications indexed under 2026 were already available in Scopus at the time of data collection (December 26, 2025), reflecting early online publication and indexing practices. However, as 2026 constitutes an incomplete publication year, these results should be interpreted with caution.

Three-field plots

Figure 2 presents a three-field plot illustrating the relationships between countries, keywords, and journal sources in the literature on algorithmic governance and employee experience. The visualization is based on a Sankey diagram, in which the size of each block reflects the frequency of occurrence, and the flows indicate the strength of connections between the three metadata fields (Riehmann et al., 2005). This representation provides an integrated overview of the geographical distribution of research, the dominant conceptual themes, and the main publication outlets in the field.

The left field highlights the most productive countries contributing to this research stream. The results show that the United States, China, and the United Kingdom emerge as the most prominent contributors, followed by India and Australia. European countries such as France, Germany, Finland, and the

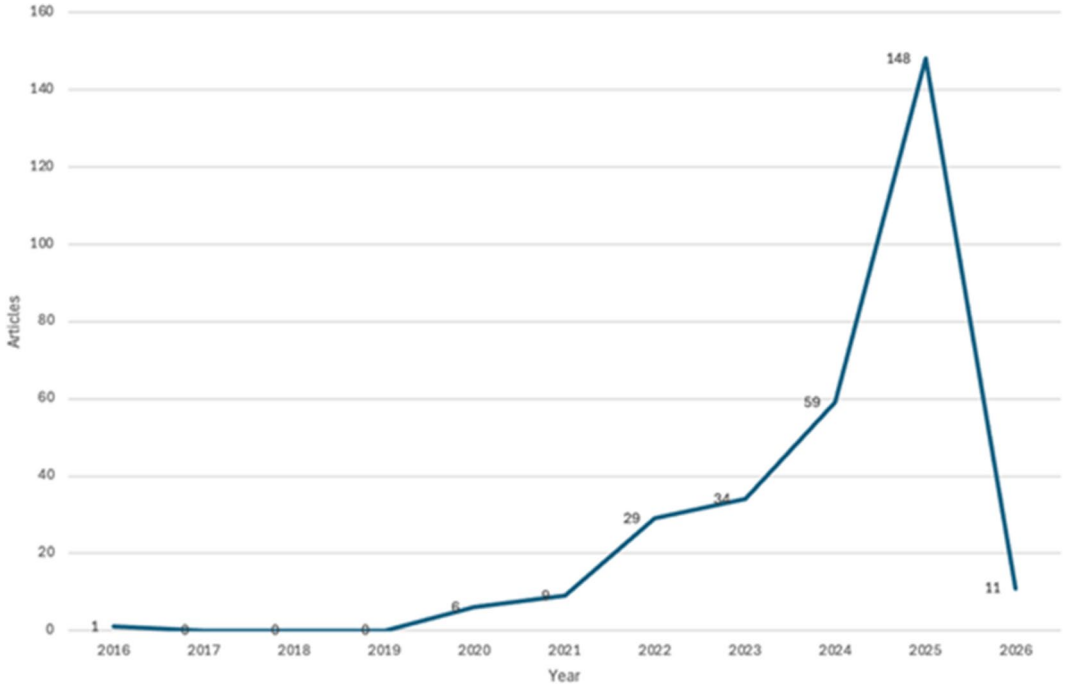


Figure 1. Annual scientific production from 2016 to 2026.

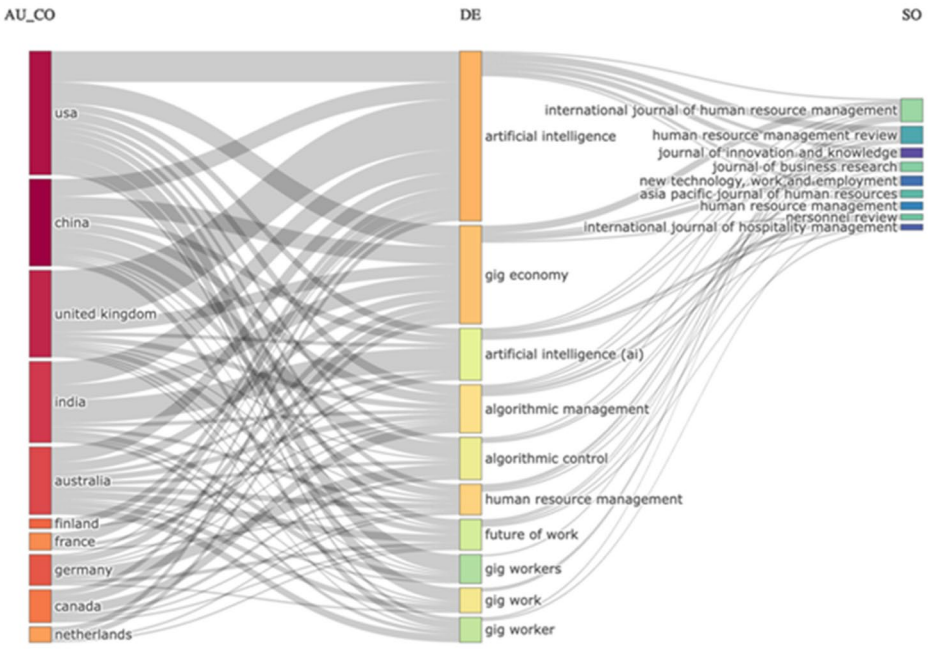


Figure 2. Three-field plot.

Netherlands also appear, although with comparatively lower publication volumes. This distribution suggests that research on algorithmic governance and employee experience is primarily driven by researchers based in North America, Asia, and the United Kingdom, with growing but still limited contributions from continental Europe.

The middle field displays the most frequently used author keywords, revealing the core thematic focus of the literature. Keywords such as "artificial intelligence," "algorithmic management," and "algorithmic control" occupy central positions, reflecting strong interest in AI-driven managerial systems and governance mechanisms. In addition, terms related to new forms of work organization, such as "gig economy," "gig work," and "gig workers," are strongly represented, indicating that a substantial portion of the literature examines algorithmic governance in platform-based and non-standard employment contexts. Keywords such as "human resource management" and "future of work" further suggest that research increasingly situates algorithmic governance within broader debates on HRM transformation and evolving work arrangements.

The right field identifies the most relevant journals that publish research at the intersection of algorithmic governance and employee experience. Journals such as the International Journal of Human Resource Management, Human Resource Management Review, Journal of Business Research, and New Technology, Work and Employment appear prominently, highlighting the central role of HRM and management-oriented outlets in shaping the field. The presence of journals such as the Journal of Innovation and Knowledge and the Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources further reflects the interdisciplinary and international character of this research domain.

The three-field plot reveals a strong alignment between geographical research hubs, dominant conceptual themes, and leading publication outlets. It illustrates how scholarship on algorithmic governance and employee experience is concentrated around AI-driven management, algorithmic control, and gig work, and primarily disseminated through HRM and management journals. This visualization underscores the field's emerging coherence of the field while also highlighting its reliance on a limited number of countries and core thematic areas.

Word performance analysis

Most frequently used words

Figure 3 presents the most frequently used author keywords in the business and management literature on algorithmic governance and employee experience. The results indicate that the most dominant

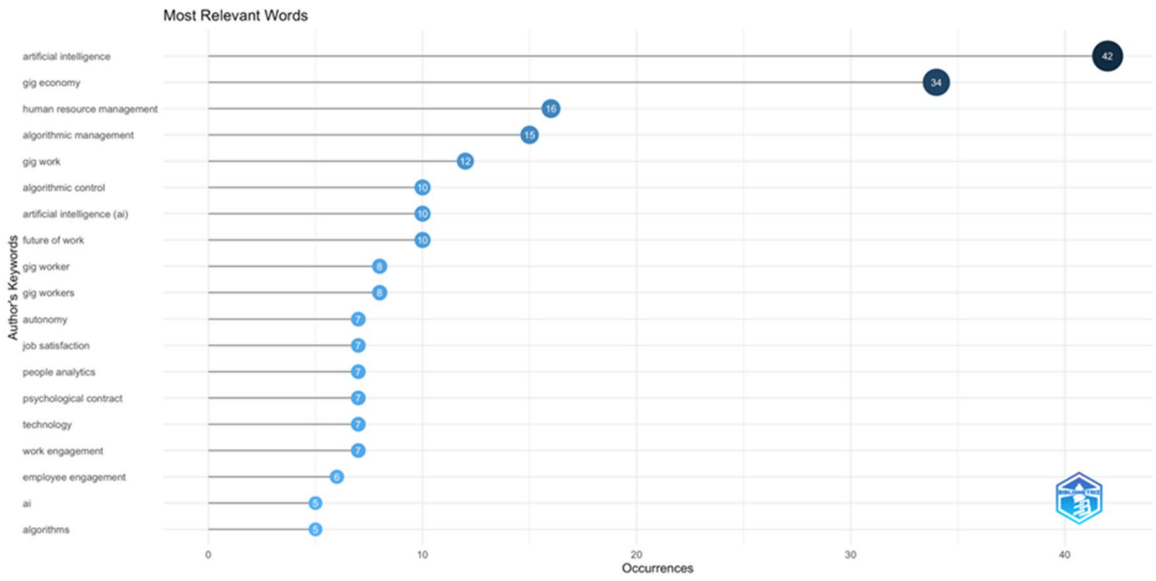


Figure 3. Most frequently used words.

keywords are "artificial intelligence" (42 occurrences) and "gig economy" (34 occurrences), highlighting the central role of AI-driven systems and platform-based work arrangements in shaping contemporary research on algorithmic governance. Other highly frequent terms include "human resource management" (16 occurrences) and "algorithmic management" (15 occurrences), underscoring the firm anchoring of this research stream within HRM and managerial control debates.

In addition, keywords such as "gig work," "algorithmic control," and "artificial intelligence (AI)" further reflect a strong focus on algorithmic forms of work organization, particularly in non-standard and digitally mediated employment contexts. The prominence of terms related to the future of work suggests that studies increasingly frame algorithmic governance within broader discussions on workforce transformation and evolving employment relationships. Conversely, employee-centered constructs directly associated with lived experience, such as "autonomy," "job satisfaction," "work engagement," "employee engagement," and "psychological contract," appear less frequently in the dataset. While these concepts are present, their comparatively lower frequency indicates that research has primarily focused on technological systems, governance mechanisms, and work structures rather than on employees' subjective and relational experiences of algorithmic management.

Overall, the distribution of keywords suggests that the literature has predominantly emphasized the structural and technological dimensions of algorithmic governance, particularly in the context of AI adoption and gig work. At the same time, the more limited presence of experiential and relational concepts indicates a relative underrepresentation of employee-experience perspectives. This imbalance highlights the need for further research that more explicitly integrates employee-centered constructs into studies of algorithmic governance, thereby advancing a more human-centered understanding of AI-driven management in contemporary organizations.

Word tree map

In the present study, the tree map displays author keywords related to algorithmic governance and employee experience, with distinct thematic groupings indicated by different colors. Figure 4 confirms the dominance of core themes identified in the keyword frequency analysis, particularly "artificial intelligence," "gig economy," "human resource management," and "algorithmic management," highlighting the central role of AI-driven governance in contemporary work contexts. The visualization also reveals clusters related to governance and control (e.g. algorithmic control, decision making, monitoring), alongside less prominent employee-centered constructs such as job satisfaction, autonomy, and well-being. All in all, the tree map reinforces the technological and governance-oriented focus of the field, while indicating a comparatively more limited emphasis on employee experience.

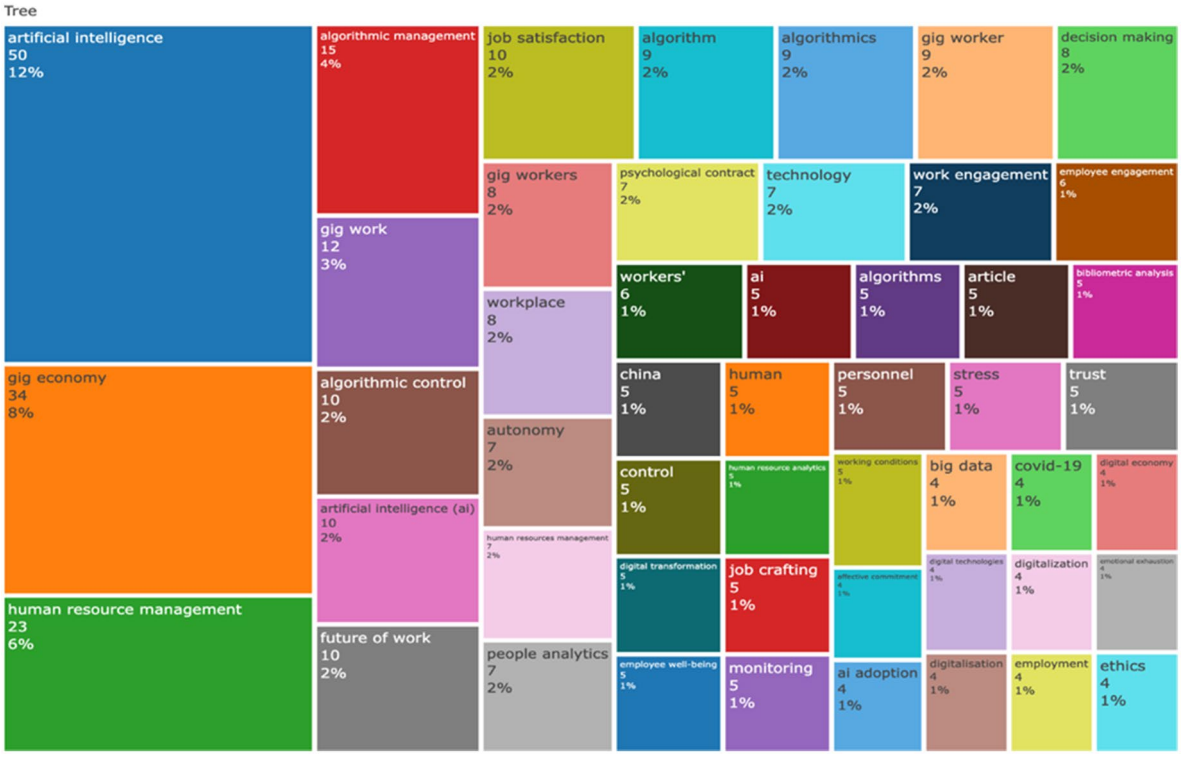


Figure 4. Word tree map of words.

Trend topics

Table 2 presents the most prominent and trending topics identified through the frequency and temporal distribution of author keywords related to algorithmic governance and employee experience. Only keywords that occurred at least five times during the study period were retained to capture the most structurally significant and emerging research themes. The results indicate that "artificial intelligence" and "gig economy" are the most dominant and rapidly expanding topics in the literature. Both keywords display recent median years (2024) and upper quartiles extending into 2025, suggesting sustained and growing scholarly attention. These findings highlight the centrality of AI-driven systems and platform-based work arrangements in contemporary discussions of algorithmic governance. Other prominent topics, such as "human resource management," "algorithmic management," "algorithmic control," and "artificial intelligence (AI)," exhibit median publication years clustered around 2024–2025, indicating that governance-related perspectives within HRM have gained momentum only in the most recent phase of the literature. This pattern reflects a shift from earlier conceptual discussions of technology toward more explicit examinations of algorithmic governance mechanisms in organizational settings. Keywords related to gig work, including "gig work," "gig worker," and "gig workers," also emerge as salient trend topics, with median years predominantly in 2024–2025. This temporal concentration suggests that research increasingly situates algorithmic governance within non-standard employment contexts, where algorithmic systems play a central role in coordinating, monitoring, and evaluating work.

In contrast, employee experience-related constructs such as "autonomy," "work engagement," and "control" display earlier median years (2022–2023), indicating that these themes appeared earlier in the literature but have not expanded at the same pace as governance- and technology-oriented topics. Similarly, terms such as "job satisfaction" show more recent quartiles, suggesting renewed interest in traditional employee experience outcomes in the context of algorithmic management.

Finally, emerging topics such as "digitalization" and "algorithms," although less frequent, point to the gradual integration of broader digital transformation debates into research on algorithmic governance and employee experience. Overall, the trend topics analysis reveals a clear temporal shift toward AI-centered governance issues and gig work contexts, while employee experience constructs remain

Table 2. Trending topic based on the author's keyword.

No.	Keywords	Freq	Year (Q1)	Year (median)	Year (Q3)
1	Artificial intelligence	42	2023	2024	2025
2	Gig economy	34	2023	2024	2025
3	Human resource management	16	2024	2025	2025
4	Algorithmic management	15	2024	2025	2025
5	Gig work	12	2022	2024	2025
6	Algorithmic control	10	2024	2024	2025
7	Artificial intelligence (AI)	10	2024	2024	2025
8	Gig worker	8	2024	2025	2025
9	Gig workers	8	2024	2025	2025
10	Autonomy	7	2022	2023	2024
11	Work engagement	7	2022	2023	2024
12	Job satisfaction	7	2024	2025	2025
13	Algorithms	5	2022	2022	2023
14	Control	5	2022	2023	2024
15	Digitalisation	4	2022	2023	2023

present but comparatively less dominant. This evolution underscores the need for future research to more explicitly integrate experiential dimensions into studies of algorithmic governance in contemporary organizations.

Sources performance analysis

Most relevant sources

Table 3 presents the most relevant journals that publish research on algorithmic governance and employee experience in the business and management literature. The results indicate a clear concentration of publications in a limited number of high-impact, well-established outlets, particularly in human resource management, work and employment, and technology-oriented management research. The International Journal of Human Resource Management is the most prominent source, accounting for 13 articles (4.4%), followed by the Journal of Business Research with 9 articles (3.1%) and Personnel Review with 8 articles (2.7%). Other influential outlets include the Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources, Human Resource Management Review, and Humanities and Social Sciences Communications, each of which contributed seven articles (2.4%). Journals such as Human Resource Management and New Technology, Work and Employment also play a significant role, reflecting the firm anchoring of this research stream within HRM and work-related scholarship. This growing presence of HRM journals may reflect not only the increasing relevance of algorithmic governance within mainstream management research, but also raises the question of whether this trend signals genuine theoretical advancement or rather the normalization of AI-related concerns within established research agendas.

In addition, technology and innovation-oriented journals, including the Journal of Innovation and Knowledge, Technological Forecasting and Social Change, and Management Decision, appear among the most relevant sources, indicating the interdisciplinary nature of research on algorithmic governance and employee experience. The presence of journals such as the British Journal of Management, the European Journal of Information Systems, and the European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology further highlights the convergence of management, information systems, and organizational behavior perspectives. These journals, therefore, constitute key reference points for researchers seeking to advance research on algorithmic governance and employee experience in contemporary organizational contexts.

Source's impact

In bibliometric research, source impact reflects the influence and prominence of publication outlets, such as academic journals, within a given research domain. In the present study, source impact was assessed using the H-index, which captures both a journal's productivity and citation impact. The H-index indicates the number of articles (h) published by a source that have each received at least h citations. To complement this measure, the g-index and m-index were also examined. The h-index, proposed by Egghe (2006), measures the overall citation performance of a set of publications. In contrast, the m-index

Table 3. Most relevant journal sources.

No.	Sources	Articles	Contribution in %
1	International Journal of Human Resource Management	13	4.4
2	Journal of Business Research	9	3.1
3	Personnel Review	8	2.7
4	Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources	7	2.4
5	Human Resource Management Review	7	2.4
6	Humanities And Social Sciences Communications	7	2.4
7	Human Resource Management	6	2.0
8	New Technology, Work and Employment	6	2.0
9	International Journal of Hospitality Management	5	1.7
10	Journal of Innovation and Knowledge	5	1.7
11	Management Decision	5	1.7
12	Technological Forecasting and Social Change	5	1.7
13	British Journal of Management	4	1.4
14	European Journal of Information Systems	4	1.4
15	European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology	4	1.4

adjusts the H-index by accounting for the number of years since the first publication, thereby providing a normalized indicator of sustained impact over time.

Table 4 reports the most influential journals that publish research on algorithmic governance and employee experience in business and management literature. The International Journal of Human Resource Management is the most impactful source, with an H-index of 8, a g-index of 13, and 403 citations across 13 publications since 2021. This finding underscores the central role of HRM-oriented journals in shaping scholarly debates on algorithmic governance and employee-related outcomes. The Human Resource Management Review also demonstrates substantial impact, with an H-index of 5 and the highest total citation count (791) among the listed sources, despite a relatively recent publication window beginning in 2022. This reflects the journal's role in disseminating influential conceptual and review-based contributions. Other prominent outlets, including Journal of Business Research, Personnel Review, New Technology, Work and Employment, and Technological Forecasting and Social Change, exhibit H-indices of 4, indicating consistent productivity and growing citation influence in this research area. In addition, journals such as Humanities and Social Sciences Communications, Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources, and British Journal of Management display moderate but increasing impact, reflecting the interdisciplinary diffusion of research on algorithmic governance and employee experience across management, HRM, and broader social science outlets. Finally, the presence of high-impact, review-oriented journals such as the Academy of Management Annals, despite fewer publications, underscores the importance of integrative, theory-driven contributions in consolidating this emerging field. Overall, the source impact analysis reveals that research on algorithmic governance and employee experience is primarily anchored in leading HRM and management journals, with growing contributions from technology- and innovation-oriented outlets. This distribution illustrates both the consolidation of a core set of influential journals and the field's expanding interdisciplinary reach.

Documents performance analysis

Most globally cited documents

In bibliometric analysis, most globally cited documents are those that have received the highest number of citations across the entire academic literature indexed in databases such as Scopus. Global citations reflect the broader scholarly influence and visibility of articles beyond the specific dataset under analysis, indicating their relevance and impact across disciplines and research communities. Table 6 presents the most-cited documents in the literature on algorithmic governance and employee experience. The results show that the most influential publication is "Algorithms at Work: The New Contested Terrain of Control" (Kellogg et al., 2020), published in Academy of Management Annals, with 1,329 global citations. This article constitutes a foundational reference in the field, shaping contemporary debates on algorithmic control, power, and governance in organizational contexts. Other highly cited contributions include "Expanding the Locus of Resistance: Understanding the Co-Constitution of Control and Resistance in the Gig Economy" (Cameron & Rahman, 2022), published in Organization Science, which has 178 global citations, and "Elevating Talents' Experience through Innovative Artificial Intelligence-Mediated Knowledge

Table 4. Source impact based filtered on h-index.

Source/Journals	h_index	g_index	m_index	TC	NP	PY_start
International Journal of Human Resource Management	8	13	1.6	403	13	2021
Human Resource Management Review	5	7	1.25	791	7	2022
Humanities And Social Sciences Communications	4	6	1.333	40	7	2023
Journal Of Business Research	4	6	2	46	9	2024
New Technology, Work And Employment	4	6	1	44	6	2022
Personnel Review	4	7	2	58	8	2024
Technological Forecasting And Social Change	4	5	1	522	5	2022
Academy Of Management Annals	3	3	0.5	1362	3	2020
Asia Pacific Journal Of Human Resources	3	7	0.75	86	7	2022
British Journal Of Management	3	4	0.6	171	4	2021

Table 5. Global and local cited articles.

Article title	Paper document	DOI	Y	LC	GC
Artificial Intelligence-HRM Interactions and Outcomes: A Systematic Review and Causal Configurational Explanation	Basu et al., 2023, Human Resource Management Review	10.1016/j.hrmr.2022.100893	2023	5	99
Expanding the Locus of Resistance: Understanding the Co-Constitution of Control and Resistance in the Gig Economy	Cameron & Rahman, 2022, Organization Science	10.1287/ORSC.2021.1557	2022	4	178
Examining the Role of Virtue Ethics and Big Data in Enhancing Viable, Sustainable, and Digital Supply Chain Performance	Bag et al., 2023, Technological Forecasting and Social Change	10.1016/j.techfore.2022.122154	2023	2	90
Living One's Calling Independently: The Role of Online Labor Platforms for Different Dynamics of Calling Enactment	Affolter et al., 2024, Career Development International	10.1108/CDI-09-2023-0305	2024	1	4
The Level of Conscientiousness Trait and Technostress: A Moderated Mediation Model	Ariño-Mateo et al., 2024, Humanities and Social Sciences Communications	10.1057/s41599-024-02766-3	2024	1	4
Unravelling Psychological Contracts in a Digital Age of Work: A Systematic Literature Review	Ballas et al., 2024 European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology	10.1080/1359432X.2024.2341821	2024	1	7
Fired by an Algorithm? Exploration of Conformism with Biased Intelligent Decision Support Systems in the Context Of workplace Discipline	Bartosiak & Modlinski, 2022 Career Development International	10.1108/CDI-06-2022-0170	2022	1	22
Workers' Affective Commitment in the Gig Economy: The Role of Is Quality, Organizational Support, and Fairness	Chiu et al., 2022 Pacific Asia Journal of the Association for Information Systems	10.17705/1pais.14303	2022	1	11
Elevating Talents' Experience through Innovative Artificial Intelligence-Mediated Knowledge Sharing: Evidence from an It-Multinational Enterprise	Malik et al., 2021, Journal of International Management	10.1016/j.intman.2021.100871	2021	1	133
Algorithms at Work: The New Contested Terrain of Control	Kellogg et al., 2020, Academy of Management Annals	10.5465/annals.2018.0174	2020	1	1329

Note: Y: year; LC: Local citations; GC: Global citations.

Sharing" (Malik et al., 2021), with 133 global citations. These studies highlight the importance of resistance, employee experience, and AI-mediated practices in digitally managed work environments. In addition, the systematic review "Artificial Intelligence-HRM Interactions and Outcomes" (Basu et al., 2023), published in Human Resource Management Review, has accumulated 99 global citations, reflecting growing interest in integrative and configurational approaches to AI and HRM. These globally cited documents demonstrate that research at the intersection of algorithmic governance and employee experience draws heavily on foundational conceptual work and emerging empirical studies addressing gig work, resistance, and AI-mediated organizational practices.

Most locally cited documents

Within Biblioshiny, most locally cited documents reference articles that are most frequently cited in the analyzed dataset, reflecting their influence and centrality within the literature on algorithmic governance and employee experience. Local citations thus capture the field's internal intellectual structure and identify works most frequently cited by researchers in this research stream. As shown

Table 6. Authors' local impact indicators in algorithmic governance and employee experience research.

Author	h_index	g_index	m_index	TC	NP	PY_start
Malik A	7	8	1.4	504	8	2021
Budhwar P	4	6	0.8	333	6	2021
Klumpp M	3	3	0.75	40	3	2022
Lin Pmc	3	3	0.5	114	3	2020
Peng K-L	3	3	0.5	114	3	2020
Rahman Ha	3	3	0.6	236	3	2021
Wang J	3	4	1	45	4	2023
Baird M	2	2	1	9	2	2024
Baum T	2	2	0.667	43	2	2023
Benlian A	2	3	0.500	298	2	2022

in Table 5, the article by Basu et al. (2023) emerges as the most locally cited document, with five local citations, indicating its role as a key integrative reference within the dataset. This is followed by Cameron and Rahman (2022) study on resistance and control in the gig economy, which received four local citations, underscoring its relevance for understanding power dynamics and governance mechanisms in algorithmically managed work. Other locally cited contributions include studies addressing ethical, experiential, and psychological dimensions of algorithmic management, such as Malik et al. (2021) on AI-mediated knowledge sharing, Bartosiak and Modlinski (2022) on algorithmic discipline, and Ballas et al. (2024) on psychological contracts in the digital age. Although these articles exhibit lower global citation counts than foundational works, their presence among the most locally cited documents highlights their importance in shaping current discussions within this body of literature. The analysis of local citations reveals a field that is still consolidating around a limited number of core references, while progressively integrating newer empirical and review-based studies focused on employee experience, ethics, and resistance under algorithmic governance. This pattern reflects both the relative novelty of the research domain and the increasing diversification of perspectives contributing to its development.

Authors' local impact and intellectual leadership

The analysis of authors' local impact identifies the researchers who have most strongly structured research on algorithmic governance and employee experience within the business and management literature. Unlike global citation indicators, local impact metrics capture influence within the analyzed corpus, thereby reflecting intellectual leadership specific to this research domain.

The results, as shown in Table 6, indicate that A. Malik emerges as the most influential author in the field, with the highest local h-index (7), total citations (504), and number of publications (8) since 2021. Malik's contributions are prominent in connecting artificial intelligence, human resource management, and employee experience, particularly through research on AI-mediated knowledge sharing and HRM outcomes. This positioning suggests a strong integrative influence within the corpus. P. Budhwar represents another key contributor, with a local h-index of 4 and 333 citations. His work reflects the importance of strategic and international HRM perspectives in shaping debates on algorithmic governance and workforce management. Together, Malik and Budhwar constitute a central reference group linking algorithmic governance research to broader HRM and organizational frameworks.

A second group of influential authors includes H. A. Rahman, M. Klumpp, P. M. C. Lin, and K.-L. Peng, whose contributions primarily address algorithmic control, platform work, resistance, and governance dynamics in digitally mediated labor contexts. These authors have been instrumental in grounding the field in empirical studies of the gig economy and algorithmically managed work, thereby shaping early conceptual and empirical foundations.

Finally, the presence of authors with relatively high m-index values, such as J. Wang, indicates the emergence of newer contributors who are rapidly gaining influence in recent debates. This pattern suggests that while the field is currently structured around a limited number of highly influential researchers, it also exhibits signs of ongoing intellectual renewal. The analysis of authors' local impact reveals a research field organized around a small but influential group of scholars, combining established perspectives from HRM and organization studies with emerging research on algorithmic governance and employee experience in the modern workplace.

Conceptual structure

Co-occurrence network

A co-occurrence network illustrates the frequency with which pairs of keywords co-occur in a given dataset and is widely used in bibliometric research to explore conceptual relationships and identify dominant research themes. In this study, the co-occurrence network of author keywords was generated using VOSviewer, a visualization tool commonly employed to analyze and map large-scale bibliometric networks based on association strength (van Eck & Waltman, 2010, 2014). Co-occurrences were normalized using the association strength method, which allows for the identification of meaningful relationships between keywords while accounting for differences in their overall frequencies. To ensure analytical robustness and visual clarity, a minimum threshold of four occurrences per keyword was applied. Out of 1,116 distinct author keywords, 48 keywords met this threshold and were retained for the analysis. In the resulting network, larger nodes represent keywords with higher frequencies, while thicker links indicate stronger co-occurrence relationships between keywords. Distinct colors denote thematic clusters identified through VOS viewer's clustering algorithm, thereby revealing the underlying conceptual structure of the literature.

Figure 5 presents the co-occurrence network related to algorithmic governance and employee experience. The network highlights artificial intelligence as the most central and strongly connected keyword, confirming its foundational role across the literature. Artificial intelligence exhibits strong co-occurrence relationships with human resource management, algorithmic management, gig economy, and digital transformation, indicating that research in this domain is primarily anchored in AI-enabled organizational and HRM contexts. By contrast, employee experience-related constructs such as job satisfaction, employee engagement, and autonomy display more moderate connectivity, suggesting that they are most often examined in relation to algorithmic and technological governance mechanisms rather than as standalone topics. Several distinct but interconnected thematic clusters emerge from the network. One prominent cluster centers on AI and HRM transformation, grouping keywords such as artificial intelligence, human resource management, digital technologies, AI adoption, and digital transformation. This cluster reflects research focusing on the organizational integration of AI and its implications for HRM practices,

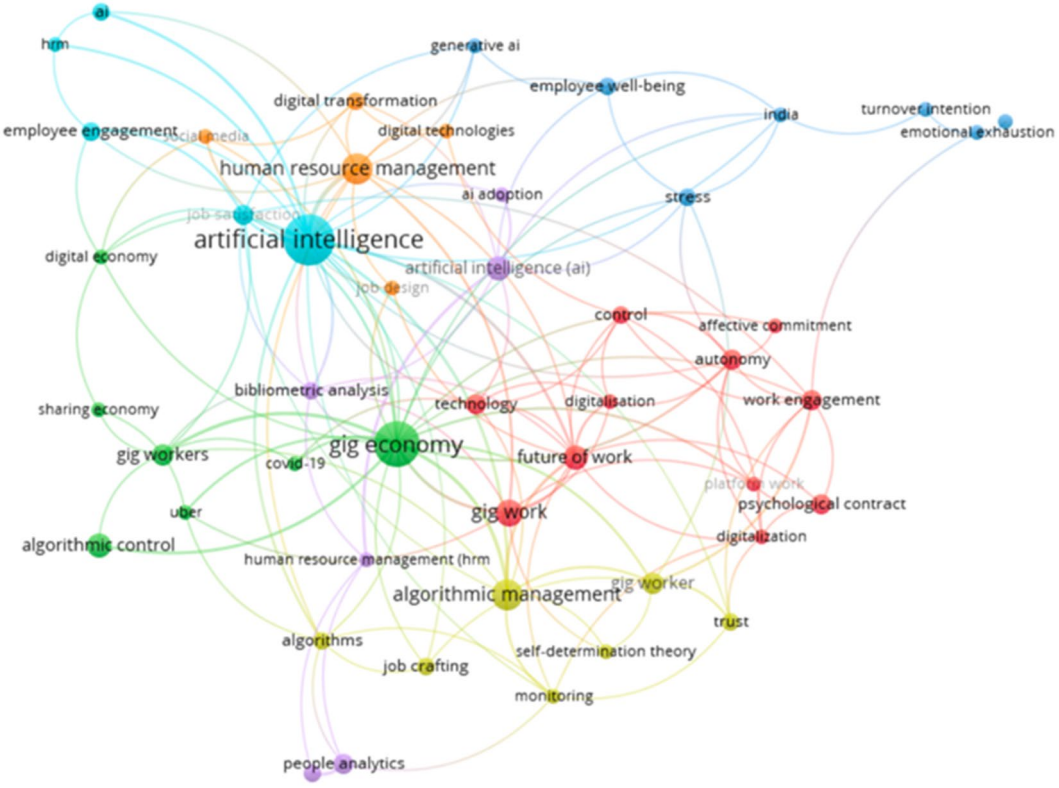


Figure 5. Co-occurrence network based on the author's keywords.

workforce analytics, and managerial decision-making. A second cluster centers on the gig economy and platform-based work, including keywords such as gig economy, gig work, gig workers, platform work, and algorithmic control. This cluster underscores the central role of algorithmic governance in coordinating, monitoring, and evaluating work in non-standard employment contexts. A third cluster emphasizes employee experience and behavioral outcomes, incorporating keywords such as job satisfaction, work engagement, autonomy, psychological contract, stress, trust, and emotional exhaustion. The positioning of this cluster indicates that employee experience outcomes are closely linked to governance mechanisms related to control, monitoring, and transparency in decision-making. Notably, keywords such as control, monitoring, and algorithmic management function as bridging concepts between governance-oriented clusters and employee experience-oriented clusters, highlighting the mediating role of algorithmic systems in shaping employees' perceptions and reactions to work.

Overall, the co-occurrence network reveals a research field structured around the interaction between algorithmic governance mechanisms and employees lived experiences of work, particularly in contexts characterized by digitalization, platformization, and AI-driven management. The strong interconnections between technological, organizational, and experiential keywords suggest that research on algorithmic governance and employee experience is inherently interdisciplinary, integrating perspectives from human resource management, organization studies, and information systems. This network thus provides a foundational overview of the field's conceptual structure and sets the stage for the thematic analyses presented in the following sections.

Thematic map

The thematic map provides a strategic overview of the conceptual structure of research on algorithmic governance and employee experience by positioning themes according to their centrality (within-field relevance) and density (degree of internal development). Centrality reflects the importance of a theme in structuring the research domain, whereas density indicates the theme's maturity and internal coherence. Following established bibliometric conventions, the thematic map distinguishes between motor themes, niche themes, basic themes, and emerging or declining themes (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017; Cobo et al., 2011). As shown in Figure 6, several well-defined thematic clusters emerge.

Motor themes, located in the upper-right quadrant, are both highly developed and central to the field. In this study, the cluster comprising artificial intelligence, human resource management, and autonomy

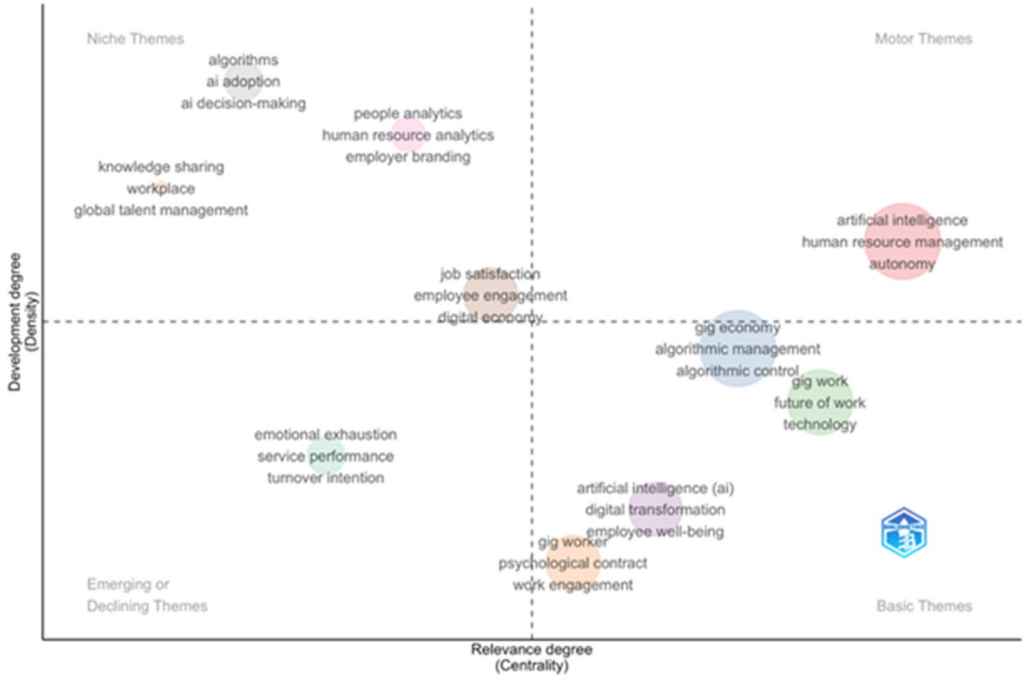


Figure 6. Thematic map.

constitutes a central theme. This cluster reflects the consolidation of research examining how AI-driven governance mechanisms are embedded within HRM practices and how they affect employees' autonomy at work. Its high density and centrality indicate that this theme constitutes a mature and influential research stream at the heart of contemporary debates on algorithmic governance.

A second set of themes appears in the basic themes' quadrant (lower-right), characterized by high centrality but lower density. This includes clusters organized around algorithmic management, algorithmic control, gig economy, gig work, future of work, and technology. These themes form the conceptual backbone of the field, as they are strongly connected to other topics but remain less theoretically consolidated. Their position suggests that, while these concepts are essential for understanding algorithmic governance and employee experience, further empirical and theoretical development remains necessary. These thematic clusters directly address RQ3 by identifying the field's conceptual structure, while their positioning and development inform RQ4 by highlighting how these themes evolve over time.

The niche themes in the upper-left quadrant include people analytics, human resource analytics, AI adoption, AI decision-making, algorithms, knowledge sharing, and global talent management. These themes exhibit high internal coherence but relatively limited connections to the broader field. This indicates that they represent specialized research streams that are well developed internally but remain peripheral to the dominant conversations on algorithmic governance and employee experience. The peripheral position of these themes may reflect their relatively recent emergence or their specialization within narrower research communities. However, their growing relevance suggests that they may evolve into more central topics as organizations increasingly adopt data-driven and analytics-based HR practices.

Finally, the emerging or declining themes, situated in the lower-left quadrant, encompass keywords such as emotional exhaustion, turnover intention, and service performance. The low density and centrality of these themes suggest that research linking algorithmic governance to more distal employee outcomes is either still in early development or has not yet been fully integrated into the core literature. These themes represent promising avenues for future research, particularly in light of growing concerns about well-being and sustainability in AI-mediated work environments.

The thematic map reveals a field structured around a strong technological and governance-oriented core, complemented by developing employee experience themes and more specialized analytical approaches. The configuration of themes indicates a gradual shift from descriptive and technology-focused research toward more nuanced examinations of how algorithmic governance shapes employees' autonomy, engagement, and well-being, thereby setting the stage for the thematic evolution analysis presented in the next section.

Thematic evolution

Thematic evolution analysis examines how research themes emerge, transform, and connect over time by visualizing the continuity and divergence of keywords across successive periods. Using all keywords and four cutting points, the thematic evolution was analyzed across five time slices: 2016–2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025–2026, reflecting the temporal development of research on algorithmic governance and employee experience.

As illustrated in Figure 7, the earliest period (2016–2021) is dominated by the gig economy as a primary research theme. During this initial phase, algorithmic governance is predominantly examined within platform-based work contexts, where algorithmic systems play a central role in task allocation, monitoring, and control. This confirms that the gig economy served as a foundational empirical setting for early investigations into algorithmic management and its implications for workers' autonomy and control. In the subsequent period (2022), research expands beyond descriptive analyses of platform work, incorporating themes such as artificial intelligence and autonomy. This phase reflects a growing interest in understanding how algorithmic systems affect employee experience dimensions, particularly autonomy, across digitally mediated work arrangements. By 2023, the thematic structure will further diversify, with the emergence of gig work, digitalisation, and autonomy, indicating a shift toward more nuanced examinations of employee experience within algorithmically governed environments. The 2024 period marks a phase of conceptual consolidation, as themes such as algorithmic management, people analytics, human resource management, and algorithmic control become more prominent. This evolution suggests

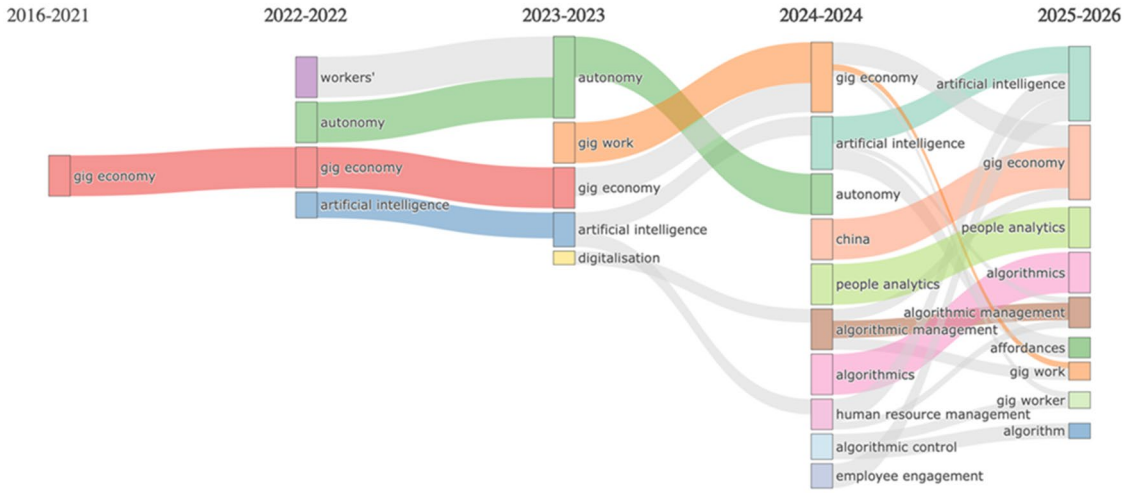


Figure 7. Thematic evolution.

a transition from platform-centric analyses toward broader organizational perspectives, in which algorithmic governance is increasingly studied as a core component of HRM systems and managerial decision-making. Finally, the most recent period (2025–2026) reveals a mature and integrated thematic structure. Research converges around artificial intelligence, algorithmic management, people analytics, and the gig economy, while also incorporating concepts such as affordances, HRM, and employee engagement. This indicates that while the gig economy remains an important reference point, contemporary research increasingly extends algorithmic governance frameworks to diverse organizational contexts within the modern workplace. The thematic evolution highlights a clear trajectory from platform-based studies of algorithmic control toward a more comprehensive, organization-wide understanding of algorithmic governance and employee experience, reflecting the field's maturation and generalization over time.

Discussion

Consolidation of research on algorithmic governance and employee experience

The findings of this bibliometric analysis reveal a recent, rapid consolidation of research at the intersection of algorithmic governance and employee experience in the business and management literature. Although the earliest publications in the corpus date back to 2016, scholarly output remained marginal until 2019. A clear inflection point emerges from 2020 onward, followed by a sharp increase in publications between 2022 and 2025. This acceleration coincides with the widespread diffusion of artificial intelligence and algorithmic systems in managerial decision-making, particularly in contexts where work is digitally mediated and continuously evaluated. This growth trajectory suggests that algorithmic governance has transitioned from a peripheral concern to a central issue in contemporary management research. Foundational contributions in the corpus conceptualize algorithms as a new and contested terrain of managerial control, reshaping how authority, evaluation, and coordination are exercised in organizations (Kellogg et al., 2020). More recent work extends this perspective by explicitly linking algorithmic governance to human resource management outcomes and employee-related consequences, highlighting how AI-HRM interactions influence work experiences and employment relationships (Basu et al., 2023). At the same time, the temporal distribution of publications indicates that the field remains in an emergent yet stabilizing phase. While this diversity enriches the field, it also contributes to conceptual dispersion. Algorithmic governance is examined through ethical, legal, organizational, and experiential lenses, but is not always theorized as a unifying construct. This coexistence of expansion and fragmentation underscores the relevance of a bibliometric perspective for clarifying dominant trajectories and consolidating cumulative knowledge on algorithmic governance and employee experience.

These findings can be further interpreted through established theoretical lenses. From a power perspective, algorithmic governance redistributes control by embedding managerial authority into technological systems, thereby reshaping asymmetries between organizations and employees. From an organizational justice perspective, issues of transparency and explainability directly influence perceptions of procedural and distributive fairness, which are central to employee experience.

The gig economy as a privileged setting for studying algorithmic governance

The findings further show that research on algorithmic governance and employee experience has been predominantly anchored in the gig economy and platform-based work. Keywords related to gig work, gig workers, and platform labor appear frequently across the corpus, underscoring the central role of digital labor platforms in shaping scholarly understandings of algorithmic governance. This concentration reflects the fact that platform organizations rely extensively on algorithmic systems to allocate tasks, monitor performance, and enforce compliance. Within the corpus, platform-based studies illustrate how algorithmic governance materializes through rating systems, automated sanctions, and real-time monitoring, directly shaping workers' experiences of autonomy, security, and fairness (Bartosiak & Modlinski, 2022; Kellogg et al., 2020; Niu et al., 2026). Empirical evidence further shows that such governance arrangements influence affective commitment and perceptions of organizational support among gig workers, reinforcing power asymmetries between platforms and workers (Cameron & Rahman, 2022; Chiu et al., 2022).

However, the dominance of gig economy contexts introduces an empirical bias, potentially narrowing algorithmic governance to its most coercive and control-oriented forms. The bibliometric patterns indicate a gradual shift toward examining algorithmic governance beyond platform labor, as evidenced in the increasing prominence of keywords related to employee experience, job satisfaction, autonomy, and well-being. This evolution suggests that while the gig economy has played a foundational role in structuring the field, it no longer fully captures the diversity of algorithmic governance arrangements shaping the modern workplace.

From algorithmic governance mechanisms to employee experience in the modern workplace

Beyond specific empirical settings, the findings reveal a conceptual shift from viewing algorithms primarily as instruments of control toward understanding algorithmic governance as a key determinant of employee experience. Recent studies in the corpus increasingly emphasize that employee experience is shaped not by the mere presence of algorithmic systems, but by the governance mechanisms through which these systems are embedded in organizational practices. Across the corpus, transparency, accountability, contestability, and human oversight emerge as recurring governance mechanisms shaping employees' responses to algorithmic management. Where governance arrangements are opaque or exclusionary, algorithmic systems tend to generate uncertainty, mistrust, and negative employee experiences (Reimann & Diewald, 2025). Conversely, governance frameworks that incorporate explainability and managerial mediation appear to mitigate adverse effects and foster greater acceptance of algorithmic decision-making. The findings also highlight tensions between algorithmic outputs and employees' professional expertise. Several studies document conflicts between algorithmic authority and human judgment, particularly when algorithmic evaluations contradict domain knowledge or professional identity (Allen & Choudhury, 2022). In such cases, employee experience is shaped not only by outcomes, but by perceptions of recognition and epistemic legitimacy. Algorithmic governance arrangements that marginalize human expertise risk undermining employees' sense of autonomy and competence, whereas decision-support configurations tend to preserve more positive work experiences.

These insights also resonate with emerging micro-level research at the intersection of HRM, leadership, and employee capabilities. Recent studies show that leadership and HR practices influence outcomes such as innovative work behavior and performance through mediating mechanisms related to employees' capabilities and perceptions. In a similar vein, our findings suggest that algorithmic governance does not affect employee outcomes directly, but through how governance mechanisms shape employee experience, including perceptions of autonomy, fairness, and competence. Integrating these

perspectives could help bridge macro-level governance structures with micro-level employee behaviors, thereby strengthening the theoretical integration of algorithmic governance within broader HRM and organizational behavior research (Alwali & Alwali, 2025).

Toward responsible and human-centered algorithmic governance in the modern workplace

Finally, the findings point toward an emerging reorientation of research on algorithmic governance toward more responsible and human-centered perspectives. While early studies emphasized efficiency and optimization, more recent contributions increasingly examine how algorithmic systems can be governed to preserve employee dignity, autonomy, and well-being. Within the corpus, responsible algorithmic governance is associated with governance arrangements that balance technological capabilities with human judgment and ethical oversight (Basu et al., 2023). Human-in-the-loop configurations emerge as a key mechanism, emphasizing the role of managers and HR professionals as interpreters and accountability holders who mediate algorithmic outputs (Reimann & Diewald, 2025). Such arrangements preserve relational and contextual dimensions of management that are critical for positive employee experience. The findings also highlight critical contextual differences between platform-based work and standard employment relationships. In the modern workplace, algorithmic systems are embedded within longer-term employment contracts, organizational cultures, and institutionalized HR practices. Employee experience is therefore shaped not only by isolated algorithmic decisions but also by broader governance ecosystems that encompass communication, training, and participation mechanisms. The results suggest that future research should integrate governance mechanisms, employee experience, and responsible AI principles into a coherent analytical framework to advance a cumulative, human-centered understanding of algorithmic governance in the modern workplace. From an HRM systems perspective, algorithmic governance can be understood as part of broader configurations of practices that signal organizational intentions and shape employee interpretations. Additionally, an institutional lens suggests that the diffusion of algorithmic governance reflects both technological pressures and the search for legitimacy in increasingly data-driven organizational environments.

Theoretical implications

This study makes three main theoretical contributions to the literature on algorithmic governance, human resource management, and contemporary work.

First, adopting a bibliometric perspective clarifies the conceptual boundaries of algorithmic governance as a distinct organizational construct rather than a mere extension of algorithmic control. While prior research has emphasized control, surveillance, and discipline in platform-based contexts (Bartosiak & Modlinski, 2022; Cameron & Rahman, 2022; Kellogg et al., 2020), our findings show that algorithmic governance encompasses broader organizational arrangements, including accountability structures, decision rights, and mechanisms of human oversight. This reframing moves the literature beyond a narrow control-centric view toward a more comprehensive understanding of how algorithmic systems are embedded in organizational governance.

Second, this study positions employee experience as a central lens for theorizing the legitimacy of algorithmic governance. Rather than focusing solely on automation and efficiency, the findings demonstrate that governance mechanisms such as transparency, contestability, and managerial mediation shape how employees perceive and experience algorithmic systems (Basu et al., 2023; Chiu et al., 2022; Reimann & Diewald, 2025). In this sense, algorithmic governance emerges as a legitimacy-sensitive construct, whose sustainability depends on employees' perceptions and lived experiences (Basu et al., 2023).

Third, the study contributes to debates on authority, expertise, and identity in algorithmically mediated organizations. By synthesizing prior work, it highlights algorithmic governance as an epistemic arrangement that redistributes decision authority between humans and algorithms, with direct implications for autonomy, competence, and professional identity (Allen & Choudhury, 2022; Affolter et al., 2024). This reconfiguration also reshapes the psychological contract, as algorithmic systems increasingly mediate evaluation, feedback, and reward processes (Ballas et al., 2024; Reimann & Diewald, 2025).

Finally, the study underscores the importance of contextual variation. While early research focused on gig and platform work, more recent studies examine algorithmic governance in traditional organizational settings (Basu et al., 2023; Malik et al., 2021), suggesting that it should be understood as a context-sensitive construct shaped by employment relations, organizational cultures, and institutional frameworks.

Managerial and policy implications

This bibliometric analysis offers actionable implications for managers, HR professionals, and policymakers.

First, the results indicate that algorithmic governance should be approached not merely as a technical or efficiency-driven initiative, but as a strategic organizational design choice with direct consequences for employee experience. Studies within the corpus consistently show that employees' reactions to algorithmic systems depend less on the presence of algorithms per se than on how these systems are governed, communicated, and embedded in managerial practices (Basu et al., 2023; Reimann & Diewald, 2025). For managers and HR leaders, this implies moving beyond fully automated decision-making models toward governance arrangements that preserve human judgment and relational management.

Second, the findings highlight the importance of human-in-the-loop governance configurations. Empirical evidence from the corpus shows that when managers retain responsibility for interpreting algorithmic outputs and explaining decisions to employees, perceptions of fairness, trust, and organizational support are significantly enhanced (Chiu et al., 2022; Malik et al., 2021). In contrast, opaque and fully automated governance structures tend to increase perceptions of arbitrariness and injustice, particularly in contexts involving performance evaluation or disciplinary actions (Bartosiak & Modlinski, 2022). Organizations should therefore design algorithmic governance systems that clearly assign accountability to human decision-makers.

Third, transparency and contestability emerge as critical managerial priorities. The findings suggest that employees' acceptance of algorithmic systems is closely tied to their ability to understand how decisions are made and to challenge or appeal algorithmic outcomes when necessary. This is especially relevant to high-stakes HR decisions that affect careers, income, or job security (Ballas et al., 2024; Basu et al., 2023). Investing in explainable and auditable governance mechanisms can help organizations mitigate resistance and build trust in algorithmic management.

Fourth, the results underscore the need to align algorithmic governance with employees' professional expertise and sense of identity. Several studies document tensions when algorithmic recommendations conflict with employees' domain knowledge or undermine professional judgment (Allen & Choudhury, 2022; Affolter et al., 2024). Positioning algorithms as decision-support tools rather than authoritative decision-makers can reduce algorithmic aversion while preserving employees' autonomy and recognition.

From a policy perspective, the findings suggest that algorithmic governance should be treated as an organizational responsibility and a matter of worker protection, rather than as a purely technological issue. Ambiguity regarding responsibility for algorithmic outcomes exacerbates employee insecurity and erodes trust (Bartosiak & Modlinski, 2022; Cameron & Rahman, 2022). Policymakers and labor institutions can play a key role by promoting standards that ensure transparency, explainability, and human accountability in algorithmic management systems.

Finally, the study highlights the strategic importance of employee experience as an evaluative criterion for algorithmic governance initiatives. While organizations often adopt AI-driven systems to improve efficiency and decision quality, neglecting employee experience may undermine these objectives by generating disengagement, technostress, or resistance (Ariño-Mateo et al., 2024; Reimann & Diewald, 2025). Integrating employee experience indicators alongside performance metrics can help organizations detect unintended consequences and adjust governance arrangements accordingly. These implications support a shift from efficiency-centered to human-centered algorithmic governance, enabling organizations to reconcile technological innovation with sustainable employee experience in the modern workplace. Furthermore, the implications of algorithmic governance may vary across institutional and cultural contexts, as perceptions of fairness, authority, and autonomy differ across regions. Future research and practice should therefore account for cross-cultural variations when designing and implementing algorithmic management systems.

Final thoughts

This bibliometric analysis provides a comprehensive synthesis of the intellectual landscape of research on algorithmic governance and employee experience within the management literature. By systematically analyzing peer-reviewed articles indexed in Scopus, the study offers an integrated overview of how this research domain has emerged, evolved, and consolidated over time in response to the growing diffusion of algorithmic systems in contemporary workplaces.

Addressing RQ1, the findings reveal that research on algorithmic governance and employee experience is both recent and rapidly expanding. While early publications appeared sporadically after 2016, research production increased markedly from 2020 onward, reflecting heightened academic attention to the managerial and human implications of algorithmic decision-making.

In response to RQ2, the analysis identifies a relatively concentrated set of authors, journals, and academic communities that have shaped this field. Influential contributions are primarily located within leading journals in human resource management, work and employment relations, and technology-oriented management studies. The dominance of these outlets highlights the interdisciplinary nature of the field, bringing together perspectives from HRM, organizational studies, and information systems. At the same time, the findings suggest that research on algorithmic governance and employee experience remains anchored in specific scholarly communities, pointing to opportunities for broader cross-disciplinary engagement.

Regarding RQ3, the thematic analysis uncovers several dominant research clusters characterizing the field. Key themes include algorithmic management and control, employee experience and well-being, autonomy and fairness, and ethical and responsible governance of AI systems. These clusters illustrate a shift from structural and control-oriented analyses toward experiential and relational perspectives. Employee experience emerges as a central integrative concept linking governance mechanisms to employee perceptions of legitimacy, trust, and organizational support in algorithmically mediated work environments.

Finally, addressing RQ4, the findings demonstrate a clear evolution in thematic emphases and research trajectories over time. Early studies focused primarily on platform-based work and the gig economy, in which algorithmic governance mechanisms are evident and consequential. More recent research extends these insights to standard employment relationships and organizational settings, reflecting the field's maturation. This evolution signals a move away from viewing algorithmic governance solely through the lens of control and surveillance toward examining how governance arrangements shape employees' experiences, acceptance, and the sustainability of algorithmic systems in the modern workplace. As algorithmic decision-making continues to reshape managerial practices, future research will benefit from further theorizing the interplay between governance mechanisms, employee experience, and organizational legitimacy across diverse work contexts.

Despite the strengths of the bibliometric methodology employed in this study, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the analysis is based exclusively on data extracted from the Scopus database. Although Scopus offers extensive coverage of high-quality journals in business and management, this reliance may introduce database bias by underrepresenting studies published in emerging regions, non-indexed journals, or grey literature. Consequently, some relevant contributions to research on algorithmic governance and employee experience may not be fully captured. Second, this study includes only peer-reviewed journal articles written in English, which may have limited the visibility of research published in other languages. Given that debates on algorithmic governance are shaped by national regulatory frameworks, labor institutions, and cultural contexts, excluding non-English publications may constrain the global representativeness of the findings. Future research could incorporate multilingual databases to provide a more comprehensive international perspective. Third, bibliometric analysis relies primarily on citation-based indicators to assess influence and intellectual structure. While these indicators are widely used and methodologically robust, they tend to privilege established authors, journals, and dominant research streams. As a result, emerging topics, novel theoretical approaches, or high-quality work by early-career researchers may be underrepresented despite their potential contribution to the field. Finally, this study focuses exclusively on the business and management domain. Although this scope ensured conceptual coherence with the research questions, it may have excluded relevant insights

from adjacent disciplines such as sociology, law, ethics, or computer science, where algorithmic governance is also actively examined. Future studies could extend the same bibliometric procedure to interdisciplinary or sector-specific domains to enrich the understanding of algorithmic governance and employee experience.

Future research directions

Future research on algorithmic governance and employee experience should extend beyond the current empirical focus on platform-based and gig-economy contexts. While prior studies have provided important insights into control and power asymmetries in digital labor platforms (Bartosiak & Modlinski, 2022; Cameron & Rahman, 2022; Kellogg et al., 2020), the bibliometric findings indicate that research within standard organizational settings remains limited. Future studies should therefore examine how algorithmic governance operates in more traditional employment contexts, where HR practices, organizational structures, and managerial hierarchies may reshape employee experience (Bag et al., 2023; Basu et al., 2023; Malik et al., 2021). In particular, greater attention should be paid to how governance mechanisms such as transparency, accountability, and human oversight influence employee perceptions of fairness, trust, and well-being across different organizational contexts.

In addition, future research should further explore the individual and relational dynamics shaping employee experience under algorithmic governance. Existing work suggests that employee responses are influenced by factors such as technostress, professional identity, and perceptions of epistemic authority (Affolter et al., 2024; Allen & Choudhury, 2022; Ariño-Mateo et al., 2024). Investigating how these factors interact with governance mechanisms represents a promising avenue for advancing both theory and practice.

From a methodological perspective, future studies would benefit from more longitudinal and mixed-method approaches. As the literature remains dominated by cross-sectional and qualitative designs, longitudinal research could provide valuable insights into how employee experience evolves as algorithmic systems become institutionalized, adapted, or contested over time (Ballas et al., 2024). Combining bibliometric analyses with interviews, surveys, and organizational case studies could also generate more nuanced understandings of these dynamics.

Finally, future research should more closely connect algorithmic governance with debates on responsible AI and sustainable work. While existing studies highlight the importance of aligning algorithmic decision-making with ethical principles (Bag et al., 2023; Basu et al., 2023), empirical evidence on how such practices translate into improved employee experience remains limited. Future studies should therefore examine how organizations can design governance systems that balance efficiency, accountability, and employee well-being. Integrating bibliometric approaches with qualitative meta-syntheses or systematic literature reviews may further support the development of deeper theoretical insights.

Author contributions

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Data availability statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author, upon reasonable request.

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