



AI-DRIVE EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT: TRANSFORMING GREEN HR INITIATIVES INTO SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS PRACTICES

Engajamento de funcionários orientado por IA: transformando iniciativas de RH verde em práticas comerciais sustentáveis

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ABSTRACT

The research explores how Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be used to transform Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) practices to increase employee engagement and create sustainable business outcomes. With the adoption of AI-powered tools in HR functions, organizations can implement strategies for higher employee engagement, customize HR practices, and make sure their workforce behaves towards the attainment of the green goals desired by them. The study demonstrates how AI can help improve operational efficiency and create a sustainable culture. The results illustrate that there is a positive relationship between AI adoption and employee engagement, showing that technology can be a viable asset to an organization's sustainability initiatives. However, ethical issues, including data privacy concerns, the risk of algorithmic bias, and obstacles that come from organizational employee resistance to technological change are discussed as well. Problems indicated why necessary to create a comprehensive ethical framework to comprehensively manage the utilization of AI in HRM. The paper extends the current literature by exploring how AI will reshape GHRM and suggests future research directions such as developing AI-driven sustainability metrics and establishing ethical guidelines for AI usage. Above all, the study concludes that, if ethical concerns are addressed, AI can have a very big impact on GHRM practices driving both business success and environmental stewardship.

Keywords: Green Human Resource Management, Employee engagement, Sustainability, Ethical Artificial Intelligence, Sustainable business practices

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ENGAJAMENTO DOS FUNCIONÁRIOS COM BASE NA IA: TRANSFORMANDO INICIATIVAS CONDUZIDAS PELO VERDE EM PRÁTICAS DE NEGÓCIOS SUSTENTÁVEIS

AI-driven employee engagement: transforming green HR initiatives into sustainable business practices

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RESUMO

A pesquisa explora como a Inteligência Artificial (IA) pode ser usada para transformar práticas de Gestão de Recursos Humanos Verdes (GHRM) para aumentar o engajamento dos funcionários e criar resultados comerciais sustentáveis. Com a adoção de ferramentas alimentadas por IA em funções de RH, as organizações podem implementar estratégias para maior engajamento dos funcionários, personalizar práticas de RH e garantir que sua força de trabalho se comporte em direção à obtenção das metas verdes desejadas por eles. O estudo demonstra como a IA pode ajudar a melhorar a eficiência operacional e criar uma cultura sustentável. Os resultados ilustram que há uma relação positiva entre a adoção de IA e o engajamento dos funcionários, mostrando que a tecnologia pode ser um ativo viável para as iniciativas de sustentabilidade de uma organização. No entanto, questões éticas, incluindo preocupações com privacidade de dados, o risco de viés algorítmico e obstáculos que vêm da resistência dos funcionários organizacionais à mudança tecnológica também são discutidos. Os problemas indicaram por que é necessário criar uma estrutura ética abrangente para gerenciar de forma abrangente a utilização de IA em HRM. O artigo estende a literatura atual explorando como a IA remodelará o GHRM e sugere futuras direções de pesquisa, como o desenvolvimento de métricas de sustentabilidade orientadas por IA e o estabelecimento de diretrizes éticas para o uso de IA. Acima de tudo, o estudo conclui que, se as preocupações éticas forem abordadas, a IA pode ter um impacto muito grande nas práticas de GHRM, impulsionando tanto o sucesso empresarial quanto a administração ambiental.

Palavras-chave: Gestão de Recursos Humanos Verdes, Engajamento de funcionários, Sustentabilidade, Inteligência Artificial Ética, Práticas empresariais sustentáveis

INTRODUCTION

Over the past few years, sustainability has become a key focus for organizations around the world, in response to increasing environmental concerns and the global drive to achieve the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Human Resource Management (HRM) is one of the organizational functions that have an insignificant role in developing the environmental responsibility of firms through the initiatives of Green Human Resource Management (GHRM). HRM practices aligned to environmental goals to produce a workforce that is an active participant in sustainable business practices is referred to as GHRM (Tahir et al., 2024). Fostering environmentally conscious recruitment, training, and performance evaluation are some of these practices which contribute to environmental performance (Al-Ghalabi et al., 2024). However, traditional GHRM practices have not been able to sustain employee engagement, which is essential for the success of long term organizational sustainability. Traditional models, which rely on broad, standardized approaches, tend to neglect employee motivations, and consequently, there is a gap between policy implementation and workforce participation. The engagement gap is a major obstacle to the success of green initiatives, especially when organizations are required to meet more and more stringent sustainability requirements (Zhou & Zheng, 2024). Organizations are looking to advanced technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI), to close the gap and craft dynamic and custom engagement strategies (Ngonyama-Ndou, 2024). AI has the potential to transform many industries, automating traditional processes, using predictive analytics, and making data-driven decisions. The adoption of AI in HRM to the extent of utilizing it for reducing cost-escalations; enhancing employees' engagement, minimizing recruitment compromise, and scrutinizing the performance evaluation of employees has been widely observed (Bahuguna et al., 2024). With the capability of facilitating tailored communication, real-time feedback, and predictive analyses, AI can greatly improve the performance of GHRM initiatives (Agriyanto, 2024). The opportunity to integrate AI-driven tools into GHRM practices as organizations adopt AI-driven tools has the potential to transform green initiatives into sustainable business strategies.

Although GHRM has been gaining recognition in recent years, consistent employee engagement remains a recurring challenge. GHRM initiatives are contingent on being successful with employee engagement, something that will propel employee behaviors to align with organizational sustainability goals. Yet, conventional engagement tactics are frequently insufficient, based on fixed and generic methods that do not consider the unique variations in motivation and conduct (Brown & Heitner, 2025). Lack of personalized engagement strategies leads to low participation rates and may, consequently, fail green initiatives (Dira et al., 2024). The challenges of dynamic and data-driven engagement strategies, however, present a promising solution in the form of AI-driven tools that allow HR departments to implement such strategies. Thanks to predictive analytics, AI can learn employee behavior patterns and HR managers can take action before disengagement occurs and employees align with the organizational objectives (Ghoneim, 2024). Furthermore, AI-based platforms feedback and recognize individual efforts, and it has been indicated that these are likely to increase employee motivation and participation in green initiatives (Ngonyama Deep Mountain, 2024). Nonetheless, although there may be these potential benefits, the integration of AI into GHRM practices is underexplored and how AI might impact employee engagement and sustainability outcomes is also not explored.

The integration of AI tools into the HRM sector is a paradigm shift in HRM considered in employee engagement and sustainability. Not only do AI-driven tools help HR processes become more efficient, but they also help HR understand employee behavior and motivations more deeply. A critical aspect of GHRM is the fostering of employee participation in environmental initiatives and capability is particularly relevant to achieving GHRM organizational sustainability goals (Tahir et al., 2024). In fact, according to research, AI can impact decision-making within HRM very positively, deriving employee engagement trends, pointing out areas of improvement, and forecasting future behavior (Bahuguna et al., 2024). These provide organizations with the ability to use targeted interventions matching the needs of individual employees and objectives of the organization (Brown & Heitner, 2025). Besides, AI-driven tools make real-time feedback and recognition both possible, which have proven to enhance employee engagement and performance (Dira et al., 2024). The ability of AI to revolutionize GHRM is such that it entails not just employee engagement, but also further implications for organizational sustainability. AI-driven tools boost green initiatives' effectiveness in the pursuit of SDGs and other global

sustainability targets (Bankhwal et al., 2024). In addition, incorporating AI into GHRM practices fits with the general tendency for business digitalization (Agriyanto, 2024).

The study aims to investigate the role of AI in solving engagement problems in GHRM practices. In particular, it investigates how AI-driven tools can increase employee participation in green initiatives and turn them into sustainable business practices. The research focuses on the practical implications of integrating AI, which can help fill engagement gaps and enhance organizational sustainability metrics (Ngonyama-Ndou, 2024). Furthermore, the use of AI in HRM is studied concerning the ethical concerns and challenges. Data privacy, algorithmic bias, and the ethical use of AI in decision-making are becoming increasing concerns in organizations relying more on AI-driven tools (Alexiadou, 2024). To guarantee wise, carefully considered incorporation of AI into HRM practices, we need to address these worries (Schuett, 2024).

Objectives

The objectives of the study are threefold:

1. To evaluate the effectiveness of AI tools in enhancing employee engagement in GHRM initiatives.
2. To analyze the impact of AI-driven engagement strategies on organizational sustainability metrics.
3. To identify the challenges and ethical considerations associated with integrating AI into GHRM practices.

1 METHODOLOGY

The study is designed as an explanatory sequential design, with the collection of quantitative data first to identify broad trends and patterns. The qualitative phase then follows, to offer greater insights into and contextualize the findings. The approach is chosen to enable the quantitative data to feed into the qualitative phase, and thereby strengthen the robustness of the whole study. The research triangulates both data types to understand the impact of AI-driven tools on employee engagement in Green HRM practices.

Data Collection Methods

Quantitative Phase

Survey: The primary data collection tool for the quantitative phase was a structured survey. A survey was conducted on 300 HR professionals and employees of industries that are actively using GHRM practices, e.g. manufacturing, banking, and IT. A large sample size was chosen to obtain diverse perspectives and to enable the generalization of results across different sectors. Key variables of employee engagement, AI adoption, and sustainability outcomes were measured through the survey.

Instruments: The survey used a validated instrument with five-point Likert scales to gauge various aspects of the research, including:

- **Employee Engagement Index (EEI):** The emotional and cognitive investment that employees have in their work is at the heart of the engagement effect of AI tools, and the index measures that.
- **Effectiveness of AI Tools in HR Practices:** Respondents ranked the effects of AI-driven tools (including AI-based HR Analytics, personalized learning platforms, and AI-aided employee feedback mechanisms) in upgrading the HR process and engagement.
- **Perceived Sustainability Outcomes:** This included the dimension that measured the extent to which employees and HR professionals believed that AI would contribute to organizational sustainability goals (e.g., reducing carbon footprint, improving energy efficiency, culture of sustainability).

Sampling: Random sampling stratified by industry and company size type was used to allow the sample to be representative of the target population across industries, company sizes, and roles. The method reduced the biases and made it possible to analyze patterns across different organizational contexts, making the generalizability of the findings possible.

Qualitative Phase Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 HR managers and sustainability officers to gather deeper insights into the impact of AI-driven GHRM practices. The study targets these professionals because they were directly involved with the implementation of AI and GHRM initiatives in their respective organizations. The interviews were semi-structured to allow flexibility in exploring topics that emerged in the conversations and to ensure that specific themes around AI, employee engagement, and sustainability were explored.

Focus Groups

To understand collective perceptions about AI-driven GHRM practices, two focus group discussions were conducted with 6-8 participants each. A group of HR professionals, sustainability officers, and individuals from other sectors created focus groups to gather perspectives that differ from each other. The discussions revolved around how AI can improve employee engagement, ethical issues surrounding AI integration, and the challenges organizations experience in embedding AI tools into GHRM practices.

Topics Explored

During the qualitative phase, the interviews and focus group discussions explored several key areas, including:

- The role of AI in improving employee engagement and retention.
- Ethical concerns such as data privacy, algorithmic bias, and transparency in AI decision-making.
- Perceived barriers and challenges in integrating AI with existing GHRM frameworks, including resistance from employees and organizational readiness.

Data Analysis Methods

Quantitative Analysis

Descriptive Statistics: The key features of the survey data were summarized using descriptive statistics. The mean, standard deviation, and frequency distributions of responses were used to provide an overview of how respondents rated the effectiveness of AI tools, employee engagement, and sustainability outcomes. It allowed us to detect trends and patterns in data to further work on analysis.

Inferential Statistics: Regression analysis was used to assess the relationship between AI adoption and employee engagement. Able to use the statistical technique to explore the strength and direction of the association between AAI-drivenHR practices and employee engagement and to offer evidence of how AI may affect employee attitudes and behaviors. Moreover, a chi-square test was conducted to examine whether AI integration is associated with perceived sustainability outcomes and to assess whether the use of AI tools affects environmental performance or organizational sustainability practices.

Qualitative Analysis

Thematic Analysis: The interviews and focus groups were analyzed in terms of NVivo software for recurrent themes and patterns. The researchers used thematic analysis to discover key insights about how employees and HR professionals perceived the use of AI-driven tools, especially in terms of their effect on employee engagement and sustainability. Employee attitudes toward AI, challenges related to AI adoption, and ethical questions that were raised, were coded and organized for deeper analysis. The analysis provided a richer understanding of the barriers and enablers of AI-driven GHRM practices and provided deeper insights into the complexities of AI implementation in HR.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was obtained and research ethics adhered to. What the study was about, how it was to be conducted, and what the possible outcome might be were told to the participants. All participants gave informed consent to take part and confidentiality was maintained during the research process. Individual identities and organizational information were anonymized.

2 RESULTS

Quantitative Findings

Descriptive Statistics: The demographic profile of the survey participants is summarized in Table 1. The sample includes individuals from three major industries: The sectors represented in Green HRM practices are manufacturing (30%), banking (33.3%), and IT (36.7%). The sample was divided by role, with 60% (180) of the respondents being HR professionals and 40% (120) being employees. The participants were divided by company size: 16.7% (50) were from small organizations with less than 100 employees, 50% (150) were from medium-sized companies (100–500 employees) and 33.3% (100) were from large organizations with more than 500 employees. The distribution of the data provides a broad perspective across different organizational types and increases the generalizability of the findings.

Table 1 - Demographic Profile of Participants

Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<i>Industry</i>		
Manufacturing	90	30
Banking	100	33.3
IT	110	36.7
<i>Role</i>		
HR Professionals	180	60
Employees	120	40
<i>Company Size</i>		
Small (<100 employees)	50	16.7
Medium (100–500)	150	50
Large (>500 employees)	100	33.3

Regression Analysis

The adoption of AI in HR practices does however have a positive and significant relationship with employee engagement, as shown in Table 2. The coefficient for AI adoption is 0.72 (0.08 standard error) and it has a strong positive effect on employee engagement. The relationship is statistically significant ($p < 0.01$). The constant term (baseline level of employee engagement when AI adoption is zero) is 1.15 (standard error = 0.32, $p = 0.002$), which is also statistically significant. The results of the analysis support the hypothesis that the adoption of AI in HR practices helps to increase employee engagement.

Table 2 - Regression Analysis Results

Variable	Coefficient (β)	Standard Error	p-value
AI Adoption (independent variable)	0.72	0.08	<0.01
Constant	1.15	0.32	0.002

The chi-square test results show a significant relationship between AI integration in HR practices and perceived sustainability outcomes. The relationship is statistically significant (chi-square = 18.43, $p < .01$) with the adoption of AI tools in HR practices and sustainability outcomes such as performance and profitability. The finding shows the possibility of AI not only improving employee engagement but also helping to achieve organizational sustainability goals.

Figure 1 - Employee Engagement Index (EEI) by AI Adoption Level

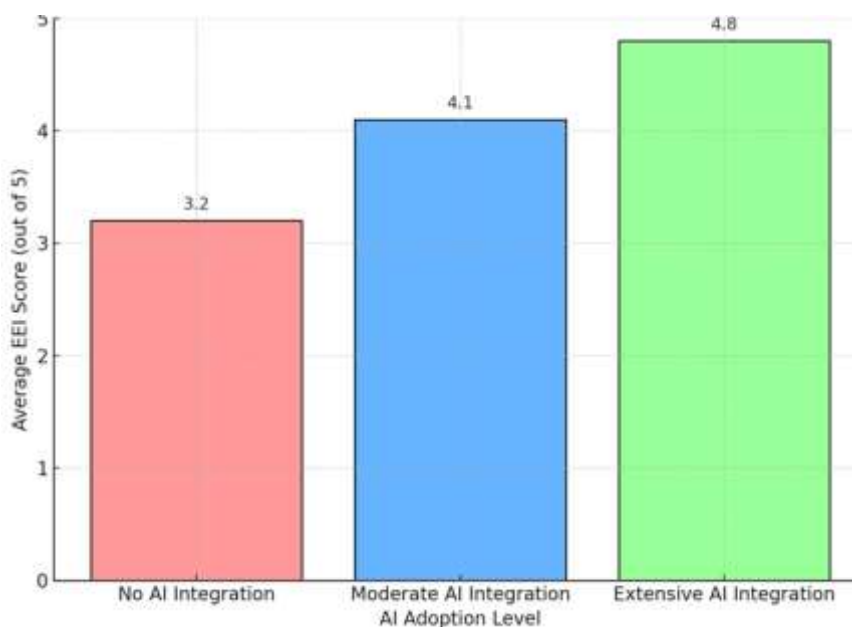


Figure 1 shows the relationship between the level of AI adoption and the Employee Engagement Index (EEI). On average, organizations with no AI integration scored an EEI of 3.2, which is moderate engagement. Integration of AI at a moderate level exhibited a large jump making the average EEI score 4.1, indicating higher employee involvement and satisfaction. The highest average EEI score (4.8) was achieved with the use of extensive AI integration which illustrated a strong positive effect of AI and engagement levels. As AI adoption increased, the figure clearly showed a rising trend in employee engagement. The finding here indicated that tapping into AI for

organizational workflows supported workplace efficiency, facilitated personalized experience, and helped an engaged workforce as a whole.

Qualitative Insights

The qualitative insights revealed three main themes regarding the use of AI in organizational settings: efficiency gains, and ethical concerns, but more importantly, its search functionality leads to more personalized engagement. Participants stressed the great improvement that AI brought to personalized feedback and recognition, helping encourage and engage employees. AI also made HR more efficient by automating routine tasks to free managers to focus on broader priorities, they said. However, the talk continued to highlight ethical concerns — most often around data privacy and the biases embedded within AI algorithms. Best quotes centered on how AI can transform employee relationships, how to ensure ethical implementation of the technological phenomenon, and conquer skepticism of the phenomenon. Insights from these highlighted the fact that AI was a double-edged sword — beneficial but also marred by shortcomings, and requisite ethical implications.

Table 3 - Summary of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

Aspect	Quantitative Findings	Qualitative Insights
Employee Engagement	Higher EEI scores with AI integration	Personalized feedback boosts engagement.
Sustainability Outcomes	Strong positive association with AI use	AI enables proactive sustainability efforts.
Challenges and Concerns	Not assessed quantitatively	Ethical issues and data privacy concerns.

Figure 2 - Thematic Map of Qualitative Insights

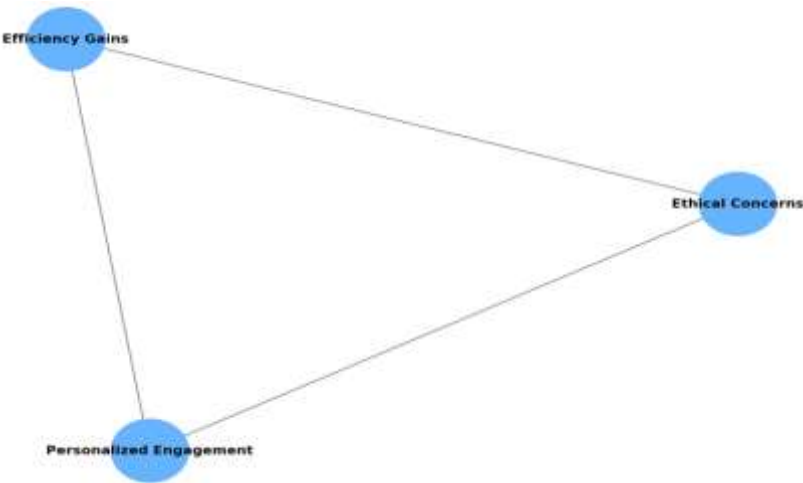


Figure 2 illustrates a conceptual framework highlighting the interplay among three key dimensions: The thesis covers efficiency gains, ethical concerns, and personalized engagement in AI implementation. Streamlined

processes and increased organizational productivity were linked to efficiency gains, signaling possible better use of resources. Personalized engagement with the help of AI highlighted the ability of AI to customize experiences to the needs of individuals and to improve employee satisfaction and involvement. My thesis focused on ethical concerns regarding the implications of AI deployment such as fairness, data privacy, and transparency in decision-making. The triangular structure showed the interrelationship of these dimensions, meaning that progress in one area might affect or conflict with the others. The framework highlighted the need to find a balance between these factors to obtain the best results in AI-driven organizational strategies.

3 DISCUSSION

The results show that the integration of AI-driven tools in GHRM practices significantly improves employee engagement and sustainability outcomes. Regresja doprowadziła do ustalenia dobrej, pozytywnej relacji między przyjęciem AI i zaangażowaniem pracownika ($R^2 = 0.72$, $p < 0.01$), zgodnie z wcześniejszymi badaniami, wskazującymi, że nowe technologie przekształcają HRM (Zhou i Zheng, 2024; Bahuguna i in. 2024). The findings indicate that AI tools, further such as personalized feedback systems and employee analytics, give organizations the ability to craft customized engagement strategies and drive inclusion and motivation in their employees. The qualitative insights showed how AI is used to deliver personalized recognition, a key driver of engagement. Participants shared that AI-powered platforms enable HR professionals to dedicate their time to strategic initiatives while operational efficiency is aligned with employee well-being. The observations are in line with the work of Dira et al. (2024) that GHRM-driven performance is contingent on employee commitment, which AI can foster through continuous monitoring and feedback mechanisms. Several participants raised ethical concerns, such as data privacy. In agreement with Ngonyama N'Dou (2024), this fits with evidence that the ethical consideration of AI practices in HRM cultivates trust while reducing skepticism. At its heart, these are the kinds of concerns that double down on the twin challenge of doing with AI as well as we can while also holding ourselves to ethical norms.

The findings of the study support and further the prior research on the intersection of AI, employee engagement, and sustainability. The role of socially responsible HRM in encouraging green behaviors at work was pointed out by Zhou and Zheng (2024). The perspective is corroborated by our study, which demonstrates how AI tools can operationalize these goals by providing real-time feedback and targeted interventions. Accordingly, Al-Ghalabi et al. (2024) studied the correlation between digital HR technology and environmental performance in Jordanian banks, finding that digital tools enhance the pros of proactive sustainability. The conclusion is supported by our findings, which show that AI allows organizations to adopt GHRM practices that combine environmental sustainability with employee-centric approaches. The results differ from some previous studies in the perceived challenges. Our findings suggest that resistance can be mitigated through transparency and education and that previous research, such as Reid (2024), which focused on cultural resistance to AI adoption, is not the only source of resistance. To illustrate, participants in the study pointed out the need to train employees to use AI tools well, to lessen the fear of becoming technologically obsolete. The study also extends the arguments of Brown and Heitner (2025) that disruptive innovations in HRM are essential enablers of sustainable development. AI integration with GHRM allows an organization to find the balance between operational efficiency and ecological stewardship. In industries such as manufacturing and IT where sustainability is a regulatory requirement or an opportunity to provide a competitive advantage, the integration means a lot.

The findings of the study have important implications for theory, practice, and policy. Theoretically, the research expands the understanding of sustainable HRM by showing how AI-driven tools mediate the relationship between employee engagement and green HR practices. Integrating technology into engagement strategies can help organizations align employee behavior with environmental sustainability goals, a concept of sustainable human resource management (SHRM). Practically speaking how would organizations use AI tools to personalize engagement efforts, automate routine HR tasks, and track sustainability performance in real time? The use of these tools allows HR professionals to spend more time on strategic initiatives, create a mindful culture of innovation, and be stewards of our planet. The study shows policymakers how ethical frameworks can help them make responsible use of AI in HRM. The rules mandating data privacy, algorithm transparency, and fairness will be established to allow AI adoption to build employee trust and support equitable workplace practice.

Some limitations of the study exist. The question of the generalizability of the findings to the wider contexts is compounded by the sample's geographic and industry-specific nature. Further research in a variety of industries and regions is needed to validate these results. Additionally, cross-sectional research design is not able to draw any causal conclusion, since the data is based on a time-specific point in time. Longitudinal studies could better capture the engagement and sustainability impact of AI-driven GHRM practices. The second limitation is on the ethical side, privacy considerations, etc. were touched on only briefly in the study. Future investigation into these matters should be done to ensure that the adoption of the technology is done ethically and inclusively.

Several avenues for future exploration are highlighted by the research. Next, future studies can explore the use of other AI techniques namely, machine learning algorithms and Predictive analytics in backing up GHRM performance. Further, exploring what these tools bring to sustainability metrics and employee engagement can deepen the understanding. Second, more research is needed to understand employee perceptions of AI and the factors that are driving resistance or acceptance of it, to design more inclusive and user-friendly systems. A comparative review of studies conducted across industries and countries provides a nuanced picture of how cultural, regulatory, and organizational factors affect the use of AI in HR. Moreover, collaborative research about the practitioners and policymakers can assist in developing an all-encompassing ethical framework for AI in HRM regarding issues regarding bias, transparency, and data privacy. Finally, future research should be devoted to developing AI-driven metrics to measure the environmental and social impacts of GHRM practices, so that organizations can use them as tangible measures to track their progress toward sustainability goals.

CONCLUSION

The study shows that AI plays a very important role in improving employee engagement and advancing GHRM practices to create sustainable business operations. Given that, organizations will be able to streamline processes, personalize employee engagement strategies, and align workforce behaviors to help achieve environmental sustainability goals by integrating AAI-driven tools across HR functions. The research highlights that AI's potential goes beyond efficiency gains to support a more holistic way of thinking that favors employee well-being and sustainability. The results of the study further validate the existing literature on AI's transformative impact on HRM (Zhou & Zheng, 2024; Bahuguna et al., 2024), demonstrating how AI can help close the gap between operational goals and ecological commitments. Nonetheless, performance results in system integration draw attention to fundamental issues, such as ethical issues relating to data privacy, algorithmic bias, and resistance of employees to technological adoption. Moreover, the research provides avenues for future research including the development of ethical frameworks for AI use, employee perceptions of AI, and the development of AI-driven sustainability metrics. Future studies to further exploit the power of AI in GHRM should examine the long-run effect, industry-specific differences, and cross-cultural factors of the adoption of AI in HR practice. With such an approach, future research can offer a more comprehensive understanding of how AI could be used to promote more sustainable organizational practices with fairness and transparency.

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