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RECLAIMING WORKERS' VOICE IN ALGORITHMIC WORKPLACES: HUMAN-CENTERED HRM BEYOND EFFICIENCY LOGIC

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This study aims to synthesize and integrate literature on workers' voice in the context of algorithmic workplaces by placing it in the perspective of human-centered Human Resource Management (HRM), as well as explaining how and under what conditions voice can be maintained or reclaimed beyond the logic of algorithmic efficiency.

Research Design & Methods: This study uses a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach following the PRISMA protocol. Articles were selected from reputable Q1 journals indexed in Scopus and Web of Science, covering the themes of algorithmic management, workers' voice, and digital HRM. The synthesis process was conducted through thematic and conceptual analysis to identify patterns, mechanisms, and institutional configurations that influence voice in algorithm-mediated work

Findings: The SLR results show that workers' voice in algorithmic workplaces is not inherently reduced by technology, but rather shaped by algorithmic system design and HRM practice configurations. This study identifies variations in voice—ranging from reduced, distorted, to human-centered mediated voice—and highlights the role of HRM in determining the legitimacy, access, and effectiveness of voice.

Implications & Recommendations: Theoretically, these findings expand the HRM literature by positioning voice as an institutional construct. Practically, organizations are advised to integrate human-centered HRM principles into algorithmic governance to balance efficiency, fairness, and work well-being.

Contribution & Value Added: This article offers an integrative conceptual framework explaining how HRM can play a strategic role in reclaiming workers' voice in the era of algorithm-based work.

Keywords: algorithmic management, human-centered HRM, digital work, organizational governance.

JEL codes: M14, O33, J53.

Article type: research paper

INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology over the past two decades has fundamentally transformed the way work is organized, managed, and evaluated, particularly through the use of algorithmic systems in employment decision-making. This phenomenon is characterized by the increasing adoption of algorithmic management in work scheduling, performance evaluation, behavior monitoring, and the distribution of incentives and sanctions, both in the digital platform sector and in conventional organizations. Recent studies show that algorithms no longer function as decision-support tools, but have become managerial actors that actively shape work relationships and employees' daily experiences (Bader & Kaiser, 2019; Kellogg et al., 2020; Meijerink & Bondarouk, 2023). In this context, the logic of efficiency, standardization, and data optimization has become the dominant principle guiding HRM practices, often displacing social, relational, and

ethical considerations in human resource management (Marler & Fisher, 2013; Zuboff, 2023). The phenomenon of algorithmic workplaces also reveals a significant shift in power, where work control becomes increasingly invisible, automated, and difficult for workers to question, thereby weakening traditional dialogue mechanisms between management and labor (Christin & Petre, 2020; Veen et al., 2020). In this situation, workers often face limited access to information, low transparency in decision-making, and a lack of deliberative space to voice their interests and work experiences (Katzenbach & Ulbricht, 2019). This transformation marks a structural change in modern working relationships that demands serious attention from a human resource management perspective, particularly in relation to how human values can be maintained amid increasingly dominant algorithmic rationality (Bondarouk & Brewster, 2016; Faraj et al., 2018).

Amid the intensification of algorithm-based work management, the concept of workers' voice has become increasingly crucial yet simultaneously threatened. Classically, workers' voice is understood as the ability and opportunity for workers to express their views, concerns, and aspirations regarding working conditions and organizational decisions (Kochan et al., 2019). HRM and employment relations literature emphasizes that voice is not merely an instrumental mechanism for improving performance, but rather a normative foundation for fair, participatory, and dignified working relationships. However, in algorithm-mediated work environments, traditional forms of voice, whether direct or representative, tend to be reduced or co-opted by digital systems that prioritize compliance and speed of execution. Research shows that algorithms can create a silencing effect through automatic assessment mechanisms and continuous monitoring, which encourages workers to withhold criticism and adjust their behavior to avoid systemic penalties (Parker & Grote, 2022). Furthermore, power imbalances reinforced by technology complicate workers' efforts to challenge managerial decisions, as the source of authority is no longer personified but embedded in code and data. This condition indicates an erosion of the role of voice as a means of workplace democratization, while raising fundamental questions about the legitimacy of HRM practices that ignore the relational and ethical dimensions of working relationships (Brandl, 2022; Nechanska et al., 2020).

Although literature on algorithmic management and digital work is growing rapidly, most research is still dominated by technocratic and utilitarian perspectives that emphasize efficiency, accuracy, and organizational competitive advantage. This approach often positions workers as objects of data and resources to be optimized, rather than as dignified subjects with a voice and moral agency (Moore, 2024; Thompson, 2011). In the context of HRM, this tendency is reflected in the narratives of e-HRM and people analytics, which highlight the strategic benefits of technology without adequately examining its ethical and social implications (Roul et al., 2025). Criticism of this approach has been raised by critical HRM and sustainable HRM scholars who emphasize the importance of balancing economic goals and human well-being (Aust et al., 2020; Ehnert et al., 2016). The human-centered HRM perspective views organizations as social systems that have a moral responsibility towards their workers, including ensuring space for participation, procedural justice, and recognition of human dignity (Buren, 2022). However, the integration between the discourse of human-centered HRM and the reality of algorithmic workplaces is still limited and fragmented, with few systematic efforts to synthesize how workers' voices can be reconceptualized in an increasingly digitized work environment (Guest, 2017). This gap highlights the need for a conceptual framework that can bridge technological developments with humanistic principles in human resource management (Boon et al., 2025; Joas et al., 2024).

Based on this phenomenon, there is an urgent need to critically review how workers' voice is understood, practiced, and protected in algorithmic workplaces from a human-centered HRM perspective. To date, the literature tends to discuss voice and algorithms as separate domains, thus failing to capture the power dynamics and ethical dilemmas that arise when work decisions are mediated by automated systems (Gal et al., 2020; Marabelli et al., 2021). Furthermore, most studies are fragmented empirically or focus on specific contexts such as the gig economy, without integrative efforts to develop a broader conceptual and normative understanding (Gandini, 2019; Wood et al., 2019). Therefore, a systematic literature review is crucial to synthesize cross-disciplinary findings, identify thematic patterns, and uncover the dominant assumptions that frame the relationship between algorithms, HRM, and voice. The main contribution of this study lies in its

attempt to reclaim workers' voice as moral infrastructure in modern organizations, transcending the logic of efficiency alone and reaffirming the role of HRM as the guardian of human values in the workplace (Aust et al., 2020). By integrating literature on algorithmic management, employment relations, and human-centered HRM, this study offers a future research agenda that places human dignity, participation, and justice as central principles in technology-based work management, thereby providing significant theoretical and practical added value for the development of responsible and sustainable HRM.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Workers' voice in HRM and employment relations literature is conceptually understood as a participatory expression that allows workers to convey their views, interests, and criticisms of organizational practices that affect their working lives (Nechanska et al., 2020). Unlike the instrumental approach, which positions voice as a means of improving performance, the normative perspective asserts voice as a fundamental right rooted in the principles of justice, industrial democracy, and human dignity (Bitar & Stirling, 2025). Within this framework, voice is understood as a social relationship tied to the distribution of power, the legitimacy of authority, and the institutional structure of the workplace (Brandl, 2022; Nechanska et al., 2020). The literature also distinguishes between direct and representative forms of voice, as well as formal and informal forms, each of which has different implications for the quality of working relationships and organizational trust. However, a number of studies show that the structural existence of voice mechanisms does not always guarantee the effectiveness of participation, especially when organizations adopt managerial approaches that emphasize control and compliance (Nechanska et al., 2020). Additionally, research on silence reveals that fear of sanctions, stigma, and career uncertainty often prevents workers from using their voice openly (Parker & Grote, 2022). Therefore, workers' voice cannot be separated from the relational and institutional contexts that determine whether workers' voices are truly heard, considered, and have an impact (Dasgupta et al., 2025; Wilkinson et al., 2018). This perspective positions HRM not only as the designer of participation systems, but also as a moral actor responsible for creating conditions that enable voice to function substantively and meaningfully (Joas et al., 2024).

The emergence of algorithmic management has triggered a fundamental reconfiguration of the mechanisms of control, coordination, and evaluation of work, with significant implications for workers' voice practices. The literature shows that algorithms function as control systems that combine continuous surveillance, behavior standardization, and automated decision-making, thereby reducing human discretion in work relationships (Kellogg et al., 2020; Veen et al., 2020). In this context, managerial power becomes increasingly distributed through opaque and unquestionable digital artifacts, which in turn weakens workers' capacity to challenge organizational decisions (Barati & Ansari, 2022; Christin & Petre, 2020). Several studies highlight that algorithms can create an illusion of objectivity, even though the decisions produced still reflect normative assumptions and organizational interests (Bader & Kaiser, 2019; Meijerink & Bondarouk, 2023). This situation has a direct impact on voice, as workers often do not know how, when, and to whom objections can be raised in an automated system (Gal et al., 2020; Katzenbach & Ulbricht, 2019). Literature on platform work shows that digital feedback mechanisms are often one-way and serve as a disciplinary tool rather than a participatory dialogue (Gandini, 2019; Wood et al., 2019). Although some studies suggest the potential of technology to expand participation, empirical evidence shows that without human-centered institutional design, algorithms tend to reinforce power asymmetries and silence workers' voices (Marabelli et al., 2021). Thus, algorithmic management challenges traditional assumptions about voice and demands a rethinking of how HRM can protect worker agency in the context of technology-mediated work (Faraj et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2025).

Human-centered HRM offers a relevant normative framework for reinterpreting workers' voice amid the dominance of efficiency logic and work digitalization. Rooted in the Harvard Model and critical HRM tradition, this approach views workers as key stakeholders with needs, values, and rights that must be accommodated in organizational practices (Moore, 2024). The literature on sustainable and responsible HRM emphasizes that organizational sustainability cannot be achieved

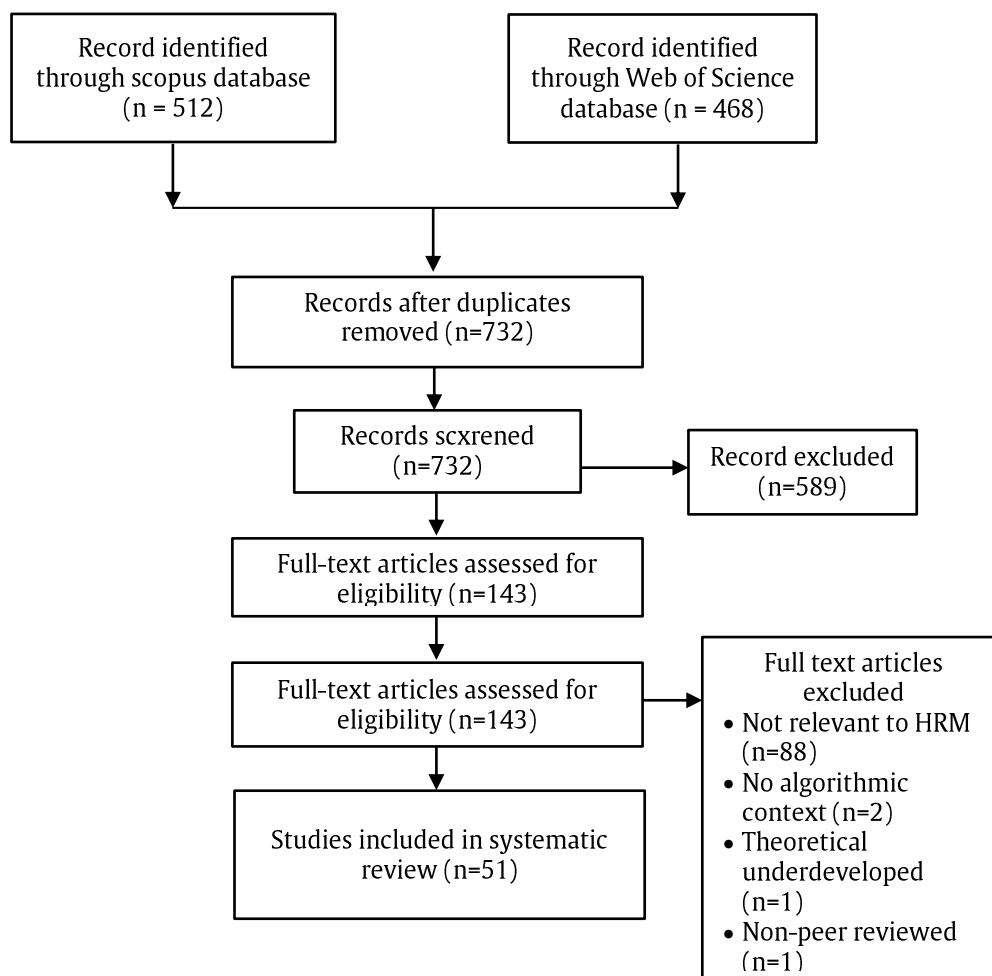
at the expense of worker welfare and participation, but rather through a balance between economic and social goals (Ehnert et al., 2016; Nogueira et al., 2025). Voice is positioned as a moral infrastructure that supports procedural justice, trust, and organizational legitimacy (Buren, 2022; Guest, 2017). However, most HRM and technology studies still focus on system optimization and data-driven decision-making, with limited engagement with the ethical and relational implications of these practices (Marler & Fisher, 2013; Roul et al., 2025). Aust et al. (2020) emphasize the need for an HRM approach that explicitly integrates human values into the design of work systems, including the use of digital technology. From this perspective, HRM has a strategic role in ensuring that algorithms do not replace dialogue, but rather support deliberative processes that enable workers to participate meaningfully (Bondarouk & Brewster, 2016; Boon et al., 2025). Thus, the development of a human-centered HRM framework in algorithmic workplaces requires a conceptual synthesis across literature to reclaim workers' voice as a central element of fair and dignified employment relationships.

METHODS

This study uses a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to comprehensively and critically synthesize the literature on workers' voice in the context of algorithmic workplaces from a human-centered human resource management perspective. The SLR approach was chosen for its ability to systematically and transparently identify conceptual patterns, theoretical tensions, and research gaps, particularly in rapidly developing multidisciplinary fields such as HRM, employment relations, and technology-based organizational studies. In the context of the increasing use of algorithmic systems in workforce management, SLR enables the cross-disciplinary integration necessary to understand the managerial, social, and normative implications of contemporary HRM practices (Cameron et al., 2024). To ensure methodological rigor, scientific accountability, and replicability of the literature selection process, this study follows the principles of Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA), which are widely recognized as the international standard for reporting systematic reviews, including in HRM research and organizational studies.

The literature search was conducted systematically through two major academic databases, Scopus and Web of Science (WoS), which were selected for their reputation as sources of high-quality publications and their dominance in the fields of HRM and social sciences. The search strategy was developed iteratively based on the research objectives and initial literature exploration, combining key words such as workers' voice, employee voice, algorithmic management, digital work, human-centered HRM, and employment relations. Boolean operators were used to ensure a balance between breadth and precision of the search, for example with the formulation ("employee voice" OR "workers' voice") AND ("algorithmic management" OR "digital control" OR "platform work"), thereby capturing various theoretical and empirical approaches related to digital work relations and algorithmic control mechanisms (Kellogg et al., 2020; Wilkinson et al., 2018). The publication time frame is limited to the period 2000–2024 to reflect the evolution of the concept of voice from the classical participatory approach to its transformation in the context of algorithm-based work and digital platforms (Christin & Petre, 2020; Parker & Grote, 2022).

Inclusion criteria were established to ensure the substantive relevance and scientific quality of the reviewed literature. Included articles must be published in reputable international journals indexed by Scopus or WoS, explicitly discuss workers' voice, employee participation, or employment relations, relate the work context to digital technology or algorithmic systems, and provide conceptual, theoretical, or empirical contributions relevant to HRM and labor relations studies. Conversely, non-peer-reviewed articles, popular publications, practitioner reports, and studies that focus solely on the technical aspects of algorithms without implications for HRM or labor relations are excluded from the analysis (Meijerink & Bondarouk, 2023; Roul et al., 2025). The screening process was conducted in stages through the evaluation of titles, abstracts, and full texts to minimize selection bias and improve consistency in the assessment of studies.

Figure 1 Research sample selection strategy

The literature selection process is summarized visually using a PRISMA flow diagram, as shown in Figure 1, which systematically describes the stages of identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and final inclusion of articles analyzed in this study. The diagram shows the number of articles identified from the database, the number of articles remaining after duplication removal, the number of studies eliminated at the title and abstract screening stage, and the number of articles evaluated through full text before being designated as the final sample. The use of the PRISMA diagram not only increases methodological transparency but also strengthens the scientific credibility of the research by showing that the selection process was carried out systematically, documented, and replicable, as required by Q1 journal standards (Nezameslami et al., 2025).

Articles that met the inclusion criteria were then analyzed using a thematic synthesis approach, which allowed for the identification of conceptual themes across studies and the relationships between key concepts without losing the theoretical context of each study. The coding process was carried out iteratively by grouping findings based on analytical focus, such as forms of workers' voice, algorithmic control mechanisms, ethical and relational implications of algorithm-based management, and the role of HRM in mediating tensions between organizational efficiency and human dignity (Aust et al., 2020; Guest, 2017; Veen et al., 2020). This approach is in line with the critical and human-centered HRM tradition, which emphasizes the importance of reflective interpretation of normative assumptions and power relations underlying contemporary organizational practices (Moore, 2024; Thompson, 2011). The synthesis of results is not intended to produce statistical generalizations, but rather to build an integrated conceptual understanding of how workers' voice can be reclaimed as a central element in algorithmic workplaces through the lens of human-centered HRM (Buren, 2022; Ehnert et al., 2016).

Based on this conceptual synthesis, this study produces an integrative conceptual framework that positions algorithmic management as the main structural context that shapes the dynamics of workers' voice in the digital work environment. The literature shows that algorithm-based management practices—such as automated monitoring, data-driven evaluation, and opaque decision-making—promote the dominance of efficiency logic, which tends to strengthen control and standardization of work, while narrowing the space for workers' expression, agency, and representation. Under these conditions, workers' voice is often reduced to passive data-based feedback, rather than a meaningful dialogical process in working relationships. However, the synthesis also reveals that the impact of algorithmic control on workers' voice is not deterministic. This conceptual framework emphasizes the role of human-centered HRM as a key mediation mechanism capable of negotiating the tension between organizational efficiency and human dignity. An HRM orientation that emphasizes procedural justice, participation, and the sustainability of working relationships—through practices such as participatory system design, ethical governance of algorithms, and the strengthening of collective voice mechanisms—emerges as a factor that moderates how algorithmic technology is implemented and experienced by workers.

Within this framework, workers' voice is understood simultaneously as a process and as an outcome. As a process, voice reflects ongoing practices involving dialogue, recognition, and negotiation between workers, management, and technological systems. As an outcome, voice is reflected in perceptions of fairness, workers' capacity for influence, and the legitimacy of working relationships. Overall, this framework highlights the ongoing tension between efficiency logic and human-centered logic as a negotiable spectrum, and provides an analytical foundation for presenting findings and further discussion on efforts to reclaim workers' voice in algorithmic workplaces.

RESULT

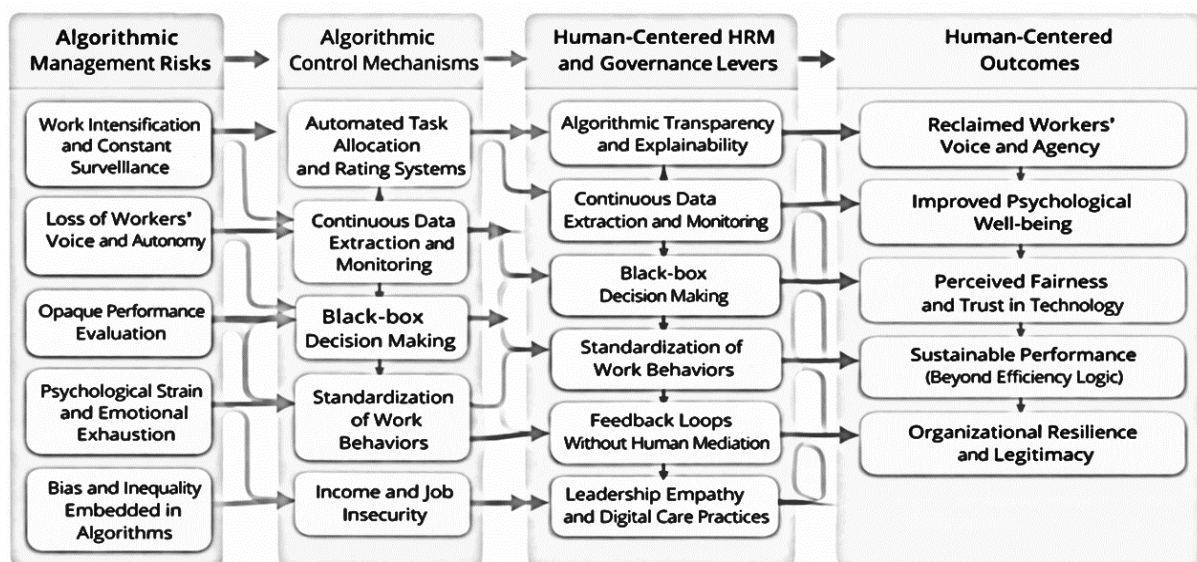
This section presents the main results of a systematic literature review (SLR) that aims to critically synthesize how workers' voices are constructed, mediated, restricted, and potentially reclaimed in the context of algorithmic workplaces through the perspective of human-centered human resource management (HRM). Referring to the thematic synthesis approach, the research results are not presented as a summary of individual studies, but as a conceptual mapping across Q1 literature that identifies thematic patterns, structural mechanisms, and normative dynamics that consistently emerge in previous studies (Guest, 2017). This approach allows for the integration of empirical and theoretical findings without reducing the conceptual complexity of each study, while highlighting the structural implications of digitalization on work relations and HRM practices (Aust et al., 2020; Kellogg et al., 2020). The SLR results show that algorithmic management has become the dominant structural context in contemporary organizations, particularly through the use of automated systems in monitoring, performance evaluation, task allocation, and managerial decision-making. The literature consistently asserts that algorithmic systems do not function as neutral technical instruments, but rather carry an efficiency logic that reshapes the distribution of power, work autonomy, and the meaning of workers' voice in organizations (Bitar & Stirling, 2025; Meijerink & Bondarouk, 2023; Wilkinson et al., 2018). In many contexts, voice is reduced to data, metrics, or quantitative feedback mediated by technology, thereby losing its dialogical and participatory character (Möhlmann et al., 2021; Rocheleau & Parker, 2022).

The results of thematic synthesis show that these conditions contribute to the structural erosion of workers' voice. Continuous digital surveillance mechanisms, algorithm-based evaluations, and automated decision-making collectively limit workers' discretion, expression of dissent, and negotiation (Stark & Broeck, 2024; Wood et al., 2019). Algorithmic opacity reinforces this condition, as workers often lack access to or understanding of the logic behind the system's evaluations and sanctions, severely limiting their ability to challenge organizational decisions (Jarrahi et al., 2021). The literature describes this condition as asymmetrical visibility, where workers become highly transparent to the organization, while the decision-making system remains opaque and difficult to account for (Barati & Ansari, 2022; Busuioc, 2021). In addition to limiting voice, SLR results also link algorithmic management to increased psychological pressure, emotional exhaustion, and job insecurity, especially in the context of platform work and jobs with high

dependence on rating systems and automatic access termination (Hajiheydari & Delgosha, 2024; Veen et al., 2020). A number of studies highlight that algorithms have the potential to reproduce structural biases and social inequalities, further marginalizing certain groups of workers and limiting their access to meaningful voice (Gal et al., 2020; Rani & Furrer, 2021). These findings confirm that the erosion of workers' voice is not a side effect, but rather a systemic consequence of efficiency-based technology design and governance.

However, the SLR results also show that the impact of algorithmic management on workers' voice is not deterministic. The literature consistently affirms the mediating role of human-centered HRM in shaping how algorithmic technology is implemented and experienced by workers (Buren, 2022; Ehnert et al., 2016). This orientation emphasizes normative values such as human dignity, procedural justice, sustainability of working relationships, and organizational legitimacy, which serve as a counterbalance to the efficiency logic inherent in algorithmic systems (Moore, 2024; Thompson, 2011). To integrate and visualize the results of this synthesis, the main findings of this SLR are summarized in a conceptual framework presented in Figure 2. This figure is not intended as a linear causal model, but rather as a conceptual representation of the layered relationships between algorithmic risk management, digital control mechanisms, governance levers, and human-centered HRM practices, as well as the resulting outcomes for workers and organizations (Buren, 2022; Ehnert et al., 2016). Thus, Figure 2 serves as an analytical tool to clarify the SLR findings, not as a standalone source of findings.

Figure 2 Conceptual Synthesis of Workers' Voice in Algorithmic Workplaces



As represented in Figure 2, the SLR results identify that key risks—such as work intensification, constant surveillance, loss of workers' voice, non-transparent evaluation, psychological pressure, and reproduction of bias—are generated through institutionalized algorithmic control mechanisms, including automated task allocation, continuous data monitoring, black box decision-making systems, and the standardization of work behavior based on performance metrics (Kellogg et al., 2020; Möhlmann et al., 2021). These mechanisms fundamentally shift the locus of control from human actors to technological systems, thereby limiting the legitimacy and effectiveness of workers' voice (Barati & Ansari, 2022; Jarrahi et al., 2021).

At the same time, the SLR results visualized in Figure 2 show that human-centered HRM practices serve as a crucial mediating mechanism. Algorithmic transparency and explainability, human actor involvement in critical decisions (human-in-the-loop), worker participation in system design and evaluation, and the strengthening of formal and collective voice mechanisms consistently emerge as strategies for reclaiming worker agency and legitimacy (Gal et al., 2020; Kellogg et al., 2020; Meijerink & Bondarouk, 2023). These practices enable renegotiation between

organizational efficiency and human dignity in the context of digital work (Guest et al., 2022). The outcome column in Figure 2 represents the synthesis results showing that reclaiming workers' voice not only has an impact on increasing participation or job satisfaction, but also contributes to psychological well-being, perceptions of fairness and trust in technology, as well as sustainable organizational performance beyond the logic of short-term efficiency (Katzenbach & Ulbricht, 2019; Morrison, 2023). The literature confirms that when workers' voice is positioned as a continuous relational process, it becomes a source of managerial legitimacy and organizational resilience in facing the uncertainty of the digital environment (Buren, 2022; Ehnert et al., 2016).

Differentiation of Workers' Voice in Algorithmic Workplaces

Beyond the general identification of the erosion of workers' voice, the thematic synthesis results show that Q1 literature implicitly and explicitly distinguishes the variations in voice forms that arise in the context of algorithmic workplaces. These findings confirm that workers' voice does not experience uniform weakening, but rather manifests in different configurations depending on the design of the algorithmic system, the resulting power relations, and the underlying normative orientation of HRM (Bitar & Stirling, 2025; Wilkinson et al., 2018).

First, the most dominant form in the literature is reduced voice. In this configuration, voice is redefined as operational data input—such as customer ratings, productivity metrics, or automated surveys—that is collected unilaterally by algorithmic systems (Kellogg et al., 2020; Möhlmann et al., 2021). The SLR results show that under these conditions, voice loses its dialogical and deliberative character, as it is not accompanied by mechanisms for response, clarification, or negotiation between workers and organizations (Morrison, 2023). Thus, voice functions more as a source of managerial control than as a means of representing workers' interests. Second, the literature also identifies distorted voice, a condition in which voice channels are formally available but substantively ineffective. A number of studies report that workers strategically limit expressions of disagreement or criticism for fear of algorithmic consequences, such as rating downgrades, task allocation reductions, or automatic termination of work access (Barati & Ansari, 2022; Veen et al., 2020). In this context, voice is present symbolically, but fails to function as a corrective mechanism against procedural injustice or systemic bias (Guest et al., 2022). Third, although relatively less common, SLR results also reveal the existence of human-centered mediated voice. This form emerges primarily in organizations that consciously integrate the principles of ethics, transparency, and worker participation in algorithmic governance (Buren, 2022; Ehnert et al., 2016). In this configuration, voice is understood as a continuous relational process involving interactions between workers, HRM, and technology, enabling dialogue, clarification of decisions, and correction of the negative impacts of algorithmic systems (Rocheleau & Parker, 2022).

Key Mechanisms Linking Algorithmic Control and Workers' Voice

A cross-study synthesis shows that the relationship between algorithmic management and workers' voice is not direct, but rather mediated by a number of structural mechanisms that recur in Q1 literature. Identifying these mechanisms is one of the main contributions of SLR, as it shifts the focus from merely the impact of technology to the institutional processes that shape workers' experiences. The first mechanism is the level of algorithmic transparency and explainability. Studies consistently show that the opacity of algorithmic logic undermines perceptions of procedural justice and hinders workers' ability to raise an informational and critical voice (Busuioc, 2021; Jarrahi et al., 2021). Conversely, when organizations provide explanations about how data is collected, processed, and used, workers' voices tend to be more reflective and substantive (Wieringa, 2020).

The second mechanism is the presence of humans-in-the-loop in critical decision-making. The literature shows that the involvement of human actors in performance evaluations, sanctions, and termination of employment serves as a normative buffer against depersonalization and excessive automation (Kellogg et al., 2020; Meijerink & Bondarouk, 2023). This mechanism expands the scope for discretion and opens up opportunities for dialogue that were previously closed off by automated systems. The third mechanism is the strengthening of collective voice and worker representation. SLR results show that collective voice—through labor unions, social dialogue forums,

or consultative mechanisms—is more effective in challenging algorithmic power asymmetries than individual voice (Guest et al., 2022; Rani & Furrer, 2021). In the context of algorithmic workplaces, collective mechanisms play an important role in questioning the assumptions of algorithmic objectivity and promoting organizational accountability (Morrison, 2023).

The Role of HRM as a Normative Governance Actor

The SLR results consistently place HRM as a key institutional actor that determines whether algorithmic management will narrow or expand workers' voice. Q1 literature affirms that human-centered HRM does not merely manage labor as a productive resource, but as dignified subjects with the right to be heard and recognized (Aust et al., 2020; Moore, 2024). In this context, HRM functions as a normative mediator that bridges the tension between demands for efficiency and the need for fairness, welfare, and sustainability of working relationships (Ehnert et al., 2016). Practices such as algorithmic auditing, ethical data policies, the integration of well-being indicators into performance evaluations, and the institutionalization of formal voice mechanisms have emerged as important instruments for repositioning workers' voice as a strategic element, rather than a residue of the digital system (Buren, 2022; Katzenbach & Ulbricht, 2019).

Table 1 Analytical Synthesis of Workers' Voice in Algorithmic Workplaces

Tema Sintesis	Main Focus of Literature	Dominant Mechanisms	Configuration of Workers' Voice	Reference
Pengendalian Algoritmik	Digital surveillance and automated evaluation	Continuous monitoring, performance metrics	Voice reduced to data input	Kellogg et al. (2020); Wood et al. (2019)
Visibilitas Asimetris	Information and power inequality	Black-box decision making	Voice distorted and symbolic in nature	Barati & Ansari (2022); Jarrahi et al. (2021)
Risiko Psikologis dan Relasional	Stress, fatigue, job insecurity	Rating systems, automated sanctions	Voice limited by fear	Veen et al. (2020); Hajiheydari & Delgosha (2024)
Manajemen Sumber Daya Manusia Berorientasi Manusia	Ethics, justice, participation	Explainability, human-in-the-loop	Voice mediated dialogically	(Ehnert et al. (2016); Meijerink & Bondarouk (2023)
Suara Kolektif dan Tata Kelola	Representation and social dialogue	Unions, algorithmic audits	Voice as a corrective mechanism	Guest et al. (2022); Morrison (2023)

Source: Authors' synthesis based on systematic literature review

This paragraph shows that workers' voice in algorithmic workplaces does not appear as a homogeneous phenomenon, but rather as different institutional configurations shaped by the interaction between algorithmic technology, HRM practices, and organizational governance mechanisms. Table 1 shows that the differences in the forms of voice identified in the Q1 literature reflect qualitative differences in the distribution of authority, decision legitimacy, and opportunities for participation, rather than simply variations in the intensity or level of employee involvement. Thus, this table serves as a conceptual synthesis that integrates previously separate and contextual cross-study findings, thereby clarifying the relational patterns underlying the dynamics of voice in algorithm-mediated work (Morrison, 2023; Wilkinson et al., 2018). The synthesis results show that the erosion of workers' voice cannot be treated as a deterministic consequence of the adoption of algorithmic technology. Instead, cross-study findings indicate that the weakening or strengthening of voice is highly dependent on how algorithmic systems are designed, implemented, and embedded in HRM architecture and organizational governance. In contexts where algorithms operate opaquely and independently of human accountability mechanisms, voice tends to be reduced or substituted by the logic of efficiency. Conversely, when human-centered HRM principles are integrated through transparency, deliberative spaces, and collective representation, algorithmic technology functions as a new medium for articulating voice, rather than as a substitute for social relations at work (Buren, 2022; Ehnert et al., 2016).

Conceptually, these findings shift the position of workers' voice from merely an individual outcome to an institutional construct embedded in the power structures and decision-making systems of organizations. By systematically linking forms of voice, algorithmic mechanisms, and the role of HRM, the results of this SLR provide a theoretical foundation for expanding the algorithmic management research agenda. Rather than focusing on whether algorithms weaken voice, these findings encourage attention to the conditions of organizational governance in which voice can be maintained, mediated, or reclaimed in algorithm-based work contexts (Katzenbach & Ulbricht, 2019; Kellogg et al., 2020).

Overall, the results of this systematic literature review reveal conceptual patterns that were not apparent in previous studies, which were generally fragmented in terms of context, methodology, and discipline. Rather than viewing workers' voice in algorithmic workplaces as an individual response to technology or as a side effect of digital surveillance practices, this synthesis shows that voice is an institutional construct shaped through specific configurations between algorithmic mechanisms, HRM practices, and organizational governance regimes. By systematically mapping the layered relationships between algorithmic efficiency logic, digital control mechanisms, and human-centered HRM interventions, this SLR reveals that the erosion or restoration of workers' voice is not a universal phenomenon, but rather depends on governance conditions that can be identified and compared across contexts. These findings go beyond the contributions of individual studies by providing an integrative conceptual framework that explains how, when, and through what mechanisms workers' voice is limited or reclaimed in algorithm-mediated work. Thus, the results of this study not only synthesize the existing literature but also open up new conceptual space for understanding algorithmic management as an arena of institutional contestation between technological efficiency and relational legitimacy in contemporary HRM practices.

DISCUSSION

These SLR findings expand the understanding of HRM by showing that workers' voice in algorithmic workplaces can no longer be understood as an individual attribute or a stand-alone communication mechanism, but rather as the result of increasingly digitized and automated HR system configurations (Aust et al., 2020; Guest, 2017). In mainstream HRM literature, voice is traditionally positioned as an HR practice that aims to increase employee engagement, commitment, and performance through participation and two-way communication (Wilkinson et al., 2018). However, this synthesis shows that when HR functions—such as performance appraisal, supervision, and work allocation—are integrated into algorithmic systems, the basic logic of HRM shifts from relational to calculative (Meijerink & Bondarouk, 2023). This shift challenges the normative assumption in HRM theory that HR systems are inherently capable of balancing the interests of organizations and workers (Moore, 2024). These findings indicate that algorithms are not merely HR support tools, but have become part of the HR architecture itself, actively shaping the space for voice (Kellogg et al., 2020). In this context, workers' voice is no longer primarily determined by the willingness or ability of individuals to speak up, but rather by how HRM designs channels, incentives, and consequences in data-driven systems (Varma & Dutta, 2023). Thus, this discussion shifts the focus of HRM from the classic question of “do employees have a voice” to the more fundamental question of “how do digital HR systems construct what counts as voice” (Möhlmann et al., 2021). This perspective enriches HRM theory by asserting that voice is an institutional outcome of HR systems design, not merely a separate micro-practice (Guest, 2017). Furthermore, these findings suggest that the adoption of algorithmic management implicitly reformulates the psychological contract of HRM by replacing human dialogue and discretion with automated standards and metrics (Wood et al., 2019). Within the HRM framework, this condition marks a shift from mutual gains logic toward efficiency-driven HR architectures that have the potential to weaken the relational legitimacy of organizations (Thompson, 2011). Therefore, this SLR contributes to HRM literature by showing that HR digitalization is not normatively neutral but has direct implications for the meaning, function, and quality of workers' voice (Ehnert et al., 2016).

In addition to revising the understanding of voice as an outcome of HR systems, these findings also enrich HRM theory by highlighting the mediating role of HRM in managing tensions between algorithmic efficiency and human-centered management principles (Buren, 2022). HRM

literature has long recognized the role of HR as the architect of practices that influence employee behavior and attitudes, but has not systematically integrated algorithms as actors in that architecture (Aust et al., 2020). This SLR shows that when HRM takes a passive role and delegates HR decisions to automated systems, voice tends to be reduced to data signals without corrective capacity (Meijerink & Bondarouk, 2023). Conversely, when HRM actively mediates algorithm implementation through principles of transparency, accountability, and human involvement, voice continues to function as a meaningful HR mechanism (Ehnert et al., 2016). These findings expand HRM theory by emphasizing that the effectiveness of voice does not only depend on the existence of formal channels, but on how HRM regulates the relationship between humans and technology in the decision-making process (Barry & Wilkinson, 2022). In this context, HRM acts as the guardian of normative legitimacy that determines whether technology reinforces or undermines the fundamental HRM values of dignity and fairness in the workplace (Moore, 2024). This synthesis also challenges the instrumental approach in HRM that views technology solely as a means of improving performance, by showing that digital HR design has significant relational and psychological consequences (Guest, 2017; Parker & Grote, 2022; Sposato et al., 2025). By positioning human-centered HRM as the primary mediation mechanism, this discussion emphasizes that voice should be understood as an organizational capability generated through HR design choices, rather than as an individual response to working conditions (Wilkinson et al., 2018). This perspective shifts the theoretical agenda of HRM from a focus on practice adoption toward a critical evaluation of the normative implications of algorithm-based HR systems (Buren, 2022). Thus, the main contribution of this stage of the discussion is to extend HRM theory to the realm of algorithmic workplaces by showing that the future of workers' voice depends heavily on how HRM redefines its role as the architect of human-oriented digital work systems (Ehnert et al., 2016).

The findings of this SLR also encourage a conceptual repositioning of workers' voice in HRM theory from merely a participatory practice to a core element in the design of digital work systems. Classical HRM literature tends to treat voice as a complementary mechanism activated through communication policies, engagement surveys, or formal participation forums (Wilkinson et al., 2018). This synthesis shows that in the context of algorithmic workplaces, the effectiveness of voice is determined long before the practice is operationalized, namely at the stage of designing the digital HR system itself (Meijerink & Bondarouk, 2023). In other words, voice is no longer merely the result of social interaction, but a structural consequence of how HRM configures the relationship between data, technology, and managerial decisions (Barry & Wilkinson, 2022; Guest, 2017). This perspective expands HRM theory by shifting the focus of analysis from employee behavior to the architecture of HR systems that systematically produce opportunities or limitations for voice (Aust et al., 2020). In this context, algorithmic management functions as an institutional mechanism that encodes HRM assumptions about worker performance, compliance, and value into relatively stable and difficult-to-debate technical rules (Kellogg et al., 2020). These findings challenge the implicit assumption in HRM theory that managerial rationality can always be moderated through soft HR practices such as communication or participatory leadership (Moore, 2024). Instead, this SLR shows that as HR systems become increasingly algorithm-based, the space for HRM deliberation shifts from interpersonal interactions to design decisions that are often beyond the reach of workers (Möhlmann et al., 2021). Thus, workers' voice should be understood as a systemic property of HR architecture, not merely an outcome of individual attitudes or courage (Nechanska et al., 2020). This theoretical contribution enriches HRM by offering a structural lens for understanding why voice can weaken even in organizations that normatively claim to support employee participation (Guest, 2017; Nyfoudi et al., 2024). Furthermore, this perspective opens space for HRM theory to integrate the study of technology and system design as central variables in the analysis of work relations, rather than as a neutral external context (Burke & Morley, 2023; Ehnert et al., 2016). By directly linking voice to digital HR design choices, this discussion emphasizes that the future of voice in organizations is not only determined by culture or leadership, but by how HRM frames technology as a tool of control or as relational infrastructure that supports meaningful participation (Buren, 2022).

The findings discussed in this article encourage a conceptual repositioning of workers' voice as a core element in the architecture of digital HRM, rather than as a peripheral variable threatened by automation. By synthesizing Q1 literature across contexts and disciplines, this study shows that

algorithmic management not only challenges existing HRM practices but also tests the basic assumptions of HRM theory regarding how control, participation, and well-being are managed in modern organizations (Guest, 2017; Kinowska & Sienkiewicz, 2023). This discussion expands HRM theory by asserting that the effectiveness and legitimacy of HR practices in the algorithmic era cannot be understood solely through the adoption of technology or formal policies, but rather through institutional configurations that determine whether workers have the real capacity to be heard, understood, and influence decisions that impact their work (Aust et al., 2020). Thus, workers' voice emerges as a mechanism connecting digital HR systems and normative HRM goals, such as fairness, sustainability of work relationships, and employee well-being (Nyfoudi et al., 2024; Oyetunde et al., 2024). The theoretical implication is that HRM needs to be understood as a social design function that actively shapes how technology is translated into work experiences, rather than as an administrative function that reactively adapts to algorithmic innovations (Moore, 2024). This perspective opens up space for an HRM research agenda that focuses more on institutional design, including how human-centered HRM principles can be operationalized in algorithmic systems without losing organizational efficiency (Ehnert et al., 2016). By articulating workers' voice as an institutional capacity that can be designed, mediated, and maintained through HRM practices, this article provides a relevant conceptual contribution to the development of contemporary HRM theory and provides an analytical foundation for future research on work, technology, and sustainable working relationships (Buren, 2022).

CONCLUSION

This systematic literature review enriches human resource management (HRM) studies by reconceptualizing employee voice as a central and designable element in algorithm-mediated workplace HRM systems, rather than as a residual outcome threatened by digital control. By synthesizing fragmented Q1 literature in the fields of platform work, algorithmic management, and employee voice, this study shows that the erosion or restoration of voice is not a technologically determined outcome, but rather a consequence of how algorithmic systems are integrated into HRM architecture and governance. Thus, this review repositions HRM as an active institutional actor that shapes how efficiency-oriented technology is translated into real working relationships, rather than as a passive recipient of digital innovation.

This review contributes to Human Resource Management (HRM) research in three important ways. First, it expands the theory of voice in HRM by showing that worker voice in an algorithmic context should be understood as a configurational construct, shaped by the interaction between algorithmic control mechanisms, HRM practices, and institutionalized governance processes, rather than as individual behavior or the result of attitudes. Second, these findings develop human-oriented HRM theory by identifying HRM-mediated mechanisms—such as algorithmic transparency, human-involved decision-making, and collective voice infrastructure—that determine whether algorithmic systems suppress or facilitate meaningful employee participation. This shifts HRM theory from a binary debate about whether algorithms are inherently harmful toward a more nuanced understanding of when and under what HRM conditions voice can be maintained. Third, by integrating algorithmic management into the core analytical domain of HRM, this review challenges the common assumption that digital control operates outside the concerns of traditional HRM, thereby expanding the theoretical scope of HRM to include technology design as a dimension of labor governance.

This study also clarifies the implications for the future development of HRM research. The findings suggest that research on digital HRM should go beyond instrumental questions about efficiency or adoption, and instead explore how HRM systems shape legitimacy, discretion, and participation in data-driven workplaces. The voice of workers, in this case, serves not only as an outcome variable but as a diagnostic lens for evaluating the normative orientation of HRM systems. By framing voice as a relational and institutional process, HRM researchers can assess whether emerging forms of digital management are consistent with HRM's fundamental commitments to fairness, dignity, and sustainable working relationships.

This review identifies important boundary conditions and future directions for HRM research. The conceptual synthesis highlights the need for empirical studies that explore how different HRM configurations mediate algorithmic control across organizational contexts, job statuses, and regulatory frameworks. Future research should also explore how HRM professionals negotiate their roles as designers, interpreters, and guardians of algorithmic systems, particularly under conflicting pressures between efficiency and ethical responsibility. By placing workers' voices at the intersection of HRM, technology, and governance, this review provides a foundation for a more integrated and theory-grounded HRM research agenda capable of addressing the challenges of algorithmic work.

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