Bridging Psychology and HRM in the Posthuman Era: A Bibliometric Exploration of Emotional Intelligence, Mental Health, and Employee Performance

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Abstract

This study investigates how psychological theories specifically emotional regulation, motivation, and personality traits enhance Human Resource Management (HRM) strategies, focusing on employee well-being and organizational performance. Employing a bibliometric and systematic review of 440 academic articles, it reveals that integrating psychology into HRM, particularly through High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS), leads to improved employee engagement, job satisfaction, and mental health. Emotional intelligence (EI) emerges as a critical factor, mitigating stress and burnout. Nonetheless, challenges like cultural diversity and resistance to change require context-specific interventions. This research offers a global perspective and practical recommendations to optimize HR practices through psychological principles.

Keywords: *Emotional Intelligence, Mental Health, Human Resource Management, Bibliometric Analysis, Employee Well-Being, Posthumanism.*

Introduction

In the era of posthumanism, where the boundaries between humans, technology, and artificial systems blur, the integration of psychology into Human Resource Management (HRM) has taken on new urgency. Organizations are no longer managing human capital in isolation but in synergy with intelligent machines, algorithms, and hybrid workspaces. This convergence demands not only technical competence but also emotional agility and psychological resilience from employees. As argued by Braidotti (2019), posthumanism challenges the anthropocentric assumptions of the workplace and urges institutions to recognize the complex emotional and cognitive landscapes shaped by our interactions with non-human agents.

The psychological demands of the modern workforce have intensified, exacerbated by digital surveillance, remote work-induced isolation, and performance metrics governed by artificial intelligence. A recent report by the World Health Organization (2022) found that workplace-related stress and anxiety disorders have surged globally by over 25% since the COVID-19 pandemic. This phenomenon highlights the urgency of addressing emotional regulation and mental well-being within the context of digitally mediated labor. In this regard, emotional intelligence (EI) becomes an indispensable skill for navigating hyper-connected and algorithm-driven work environments.

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Traditional HRM models rooted in industrial-era productivity metrics are increasingly obsolete in posthuman ecosystems. As Haraway (2016) emphasizes, the cyborg metaphor is no longer speculative; it defines how workers interface with wearable tech, algorithmic evaluations, and data-based identities. These entanglements generate new forms of psychological strain, calling for revised frameworks in HRM that prioritize empathy, mental health literacy, and adaptive coping strategies.

Moreover, the psychological contract between employers and employees is undergoing radical redefinition. In contrast to the stable, long-term employment expectations of the past, posthuman labor systems operate under fluidity, precarity, and digital augmentation. According to Susskind (2020), the rise of automation and machine learning alters not only tasks but also emotional labor, identity formation, and interhuman relations in the workplace. This shift necessitates an HRM model that integrates personality psychology and motivational theory to support workers' evolving roles.

A bibliometric trend analysis by Zhang et al. (2023) indicates that the intersection of psychology and HRM is among the top five emerging research domains in management science, with "emotional intelligence," "mental health," and "digital burnout" as the most cited themes. Despite this scholarly momentum, research remains skewed toward Western contexts, overlooking the cultural and socio-economic nuances that shape psychological experience in global South economies. This imbalance calls for more inclusive, cross-cultural frameworks that can inform HRM practices in diverse organizational ecologies.

Furthermore, hybrid work models and the proliferation of virtual collaboration tools have made interpersonal emotional cues more difficult to interpret and regulate. Virtual fatigue, asynchronous communication, and the erosion of spatial boundaries between work and personal life contribute to emotional dissonance and psychological fatigue (Wang et al., 2021). To address these challenges, organizations must adopt evidence-based psychological interventions that foster emotional resilience, such as mindfulness training, self-compassion practices, and EI-enhancement programs.

Posthumanism also repositions the worker not as an autonomous rational actor but as an affective, interconnected being embedded in systems of technology and relationality. This perspective aligns with new developments in affective neuroscience and embodied cognition, which recognize the role of emotions in shaping decision-making, creativity, and cooperation. Integrating these insights into HRM requires a paradigm shift from control-oriented management to support-centered leadership.

Given the multidimensional risks of stress, burnout, and mental fragmentation in digitalized workplaces, there is a growing consensus that mental well-being is not only an ethical imperative but a strategic organizational goal. According to Grant and Parker (2022), organizations that invest in psychological capital (PsyCap) report higher levels of employee engagement, innovation, and retention. This validates the need for HRM strategies grounded in psychological science to enhance both human and organizational flourishing.

This study aims to systematically examine how psychological theories are applied in HRM research and practice, using a bibliometric lens to map trends, identify gaps, and propose inclusive strategies for psychological integration. It contributes to the growing literature on posthuman organizational theory by highlighting the interplay between mental health, emotional intelligence, and HR strategies in increasingly digitized and diversified workplaces.

Literature Review

The integration of psychology into HRM has roots in classical motivation theories such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Herzberg's two-factor theory, which frame the employee not merely as a resource but as a human with emotional and cognitive dimensions. These theories have evolved to encompass emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1995), psychological capital (Luthans et al., 2007), and resilience (King et al., 2016), underscoring the importance of emotion regulation, self-efficacy, and optimism in professional contexts.

Recent literature emphasizes emotional intelligence (EI) as a critical driver of performance and adaptability. According to O'Boyle et al. (2011), EI positively correlates with job satisfaction, leadership effectiveness, and team collaboration. Furthermore, mindfulness and self-compassion are increasingly discussed as components of adaptive emotion regulation strategies that buffer against workplace stress (Hülsheger et al., 2014; Troy et al., 2018).

The affective dimensions of labor are also central to contemporary debates, with scholars like Grandey (2019) and Ashkanasy et al. (2022) examining how emotional labor influences psychological exhaustion, especially in service-oriented roles. These works suggest that organizational support and authenticity can mitigate the adverse effects of emotional regulation demands.

Beyond individual traits, organizational structures such as High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) have been shown to enhance well-being and productivity when aligned with employees' psychological needs (Takeuchi et al., 2007). The role of transformational leadership and supportive climate is also well documented in fostering engagement and emotional resilience (Carmeli & Josman, 2006).

In a posthuman context, the literature suggests that traditional hierarchical models are less effective than distributed, network-based models where leadership, autonomy, and psychological empowerment are shared (Braidotti, 2019; Deuze, 2021). Digital tools and algorithmic systems reshape decision-making and redefine social interaction at work, necessitating new frameworks to account for these techno-social complexities.

Methodology

This study adopts a mixed-method bibliometric approach, combining quantitative citation metrics with qualitative thematic analysis. Bibliometric methods allow researchers to systematically assess and visualize patterns of scientific knowledge, which is particularly effective in tracing the evolution of interdisciplinary domains such as the intersection between psychology and HRM.

The data collection process began with a comprehensive search across three leading academic databases: Scopus, Web of Science, and Dimensions. Keywords were identified through a preliminary scoping review and expert consultation, resulting in the use of Boolean search strings such as "emotional intelligence AND HRM," "mental health AND workplace," and "psychological capital AND employee performance." The inclusion criteria were: (1) peer-reviewed journal articles, (2) English language, and (3) publication between 2010 and 2024. This yielded 440 relevant articles for analysis.

A rigorous data cleaning protocol was implemented to ensure accuracy and consistency. This included removing duplicate records, standardizing variations in author names and journal titles, and verifying metadata such as keywords and publication dates. The cleaned dataset was then

subjected to three primary bibliometric techniques: co-word analysis, citation analysis, and bibliographic coupling.

Criteria	Details
Total articles reviewed	440
Year range of publication	2010–2024
Data sources	Scopus, Web of Science, Dimensions
Dominant keywords	Emotional Intelligence, Mental Health, Psychological Capital
Most frequent countries of publication	United States, United Kingdom, China, India
Dominant research methods	Quantitative studies and meta-analysis

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Reviewed Articles

Co-word analysis was used to identify recurring themes by examining the frequency and patterns of keyword co-occurrences. This helped in detecting conceptual linkages and thematic clusters within the research domain. Citation analysis enabled the identification of high-impact studies and influential scholars by evaluating citation counts and patterns. Finally, bibliographic coupling was applied to reveal the intellectual structure of the field by connecting studies that shared common references.

For data visualization and analysis, we used VOSviewer and the bibliometrix R-package. These tools facilitated the construction of network maps showing the relationships between keywords, authors, journals, and institutions. Thematic clustering was conducted using modularity-based algorithms, and reliability in qualitative theme identification was maintained through intercoder agreement with a Cohen's Kappa coefficient exceeding 0.80.

This methodological approach ensures a robust and replicable analysis of the psychological dimensions of HRM within the posthuman paradigm, highlighting both established knowledge areas and emerging trends for future investigation.

Results

The co-word analysis revealed four dominant thematic clusters:

1. Emotional Intelligence and Stress Regulation: Terms like "burnout," "resilience," and "job satisfaction" frequently co-occur with EI.

2. Mental Health in Hybrid Work Models: Emergence of keywords like "remote work," "isolation," and "virtual collaboration."

3. Personality Traits and Work Engagement: High occurrences of "Big Five," "conscientiousness," and "motivation."

4. Leadership and Organizational Support: Central terms include "transformational leadership," "autonomy," and "psychological safety."

These clusters reflect the growing complexity of workplace demands in the posthuman era. The prominence of emotional intelligence as a co-occurring keyword suggests its pivotal role in managing psychological responses to workplace change, especially in digitally mediated environments.

Bibliographic coupling further highlighted the intellectual structure of the field, revealing that

research on EI, psychological resilience, and performance is highly interrelated. Influential studies by O'Boyle et al. (2011) and Hülsheger et al. (2014) were central to multiple thematic clusters, reinforcing their foundational contributions. In contrast, newer studies focused on hybrid work stress and digital emotional regulation have begun to form emerging subfields within the broader discourse.

Citation trends indicated that interest in mental health and emotional resilience in HRM surged after 2020, corresponding with the COVID-19 pandemic. Studies published in this period addressed psychological fatigue, remote work disconnection, and algorithmic management's mental toll. This spike demonstrates a paradigm shift in HRM scholarship, moving from task efficiency to human-centered adaptability.

Discussion

The results provide empirical support for integrating psychological frameworks within HRM to address the complex demands of posthuman workspaces. Emotional intelligence emerges not only as a performance enhancer but also as a protective factor against emotional exhaustion and burnout. This validates prior theoretical assertions that EI training should be embedded within organizational development initiatives.

Thematic clustering suggests that organizations must address mental health holistically considering both personal traits like resilience and external conditions such as work autonomy and leadership support. For instance, employees high in conscientiousness and agreeableness thrive in environments with clear goals and mutual respect. Conversely, those under micromanagement or digital surveillance often report higher levels of stress and job dissatisfaction.

This bibliometric analysis also reveals the limitations of one-size-fits-all models. Cultural differences profoundly shape how psychological traits manifest in workplace behavior. For example, emotional regulation strategies in collectivist societies often differ significantly from those in individualist cultures. Therefore, HRM frameworks must be culturally adaptive and informed by regional socio-economic conditions.

Moreover, the increasing presence of AI, automation, and algorithmic decision-making reshapes human agency at work. HRM strategies should account for the psychological implications of interacting with non-human actors. This includes managing techno-stress, ensuring transparency in algorithmic evaluations, and fostering digital empathy among managers and staff.

Conclusion

This study confirms the critical intersection between psychology and HRM in an era marked by technological acceleration and hybrid labor systems. The bibliometric findings underscore emotional intelligence, mental health, and personality traits as essential to sustainable employee performance and organizational resilience.

The evidence suggests that integrating psychological principles in HRM enhances not only task execution but also workplace well-being and emotional sustainability. The emergence of mental health as a dominant theme signals a global shift in HR priorities, demanding strategic investments in employee psychological support and adaptive capacity.

In conclusion, psychology-informed HRM practices provide a human-centric approach to navigating posthuman work environments. By aligning technological innovation with emotional

competence and ethical leadership, organizations can cultivate inclusive, productive, and psychologically safe workplaces.

Implications and Future Research

The implications of this study are multifaceted, especially for HR practitioners, organizational psychologists, and policy-makers operating in increasingly digital and hybrid work environments. First, organizations should prioritize emotional intelligence training, not just for leadership roles but across all levels of the workforce. This fosters emotionally resilient cultures that are better equipped to manage stress, interpersonal conflicts, and algorithmic disruptions.

Second, the findings suggest the necessity of integrating mental health as a strategic HR function rather than as a reactive or isolated intervention. This could include embedding psychological well-being metrics into performance appraisals, offering virtual mental health resources, and developing employee assistance programs tailored to remote and hybrid workers.

Third, the bibliometric results underscore the role of personalized HRM strategies. By leveraging personality assessments and psychological profiling, organizations can better align individuals with roles, teams, and leadership structures that match their intrinsic strengths and coping styles. This is particularly relevant in posthuman contexts where emotional alignment with digital tools and systems becomes crucial.

Future research should expand bibliometric inquiries to non-English language publications and underrepresented regions, particularly in the Global South. This will enrich the understanding of culturally embedded psychological constructs and generate more inclusive HRM models. Moreover, mixed-methods research that combines bibliometrics with empirical case studies will offer deeper insights into the lived experiences of employees in technologically mediated workplaces.

Additionally, longitudinal research is needed to evaluate the long-term impact of psychological interventions on employee well-being and organizational performance. Future studies may also explore emerging constructs such as digital empathy, emotional adaptation to AI systems, and psychological safety in virtual spaces.

In essence, the evolution of work in the posthuman era necessitates a recalibration of HRM through the lens of psychological science—emphasizing empathy, adaptability, and emotional intelligence as core competencies for the future of labor.

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