

The Nexus Employee Satisfaction-Sustainability-Artificial Intelligence: A Bibliometric Analysis

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Abstract. *Nowadays, in the context of growing environmental and social challenges, under the constraints of making profit, the integration of artificial intelligence has become a strategic tool for companies aiming to improve employee satisfaction, implement sustainable practices, and achieve their corporate social responsibility commitments. The purpose of this study is to investigate the nexus between employee satisfaction, sustainability, and the implementation of artificial intelligence within companies. In this sense, a bibliometric analysis was carried out which highlighted that the main themes addressed in the literature: the impact of artificial intelligence in career sustainability and the challenges in human resources management; the issue of artificial intelligence in the context of sustainable development requirements, with an awareness of how effective employer branding practices create more equal workplaces by fostering employee well-being and job satisfaction; the role of artificial intelligence in fostering employee happiness by increasing process efficiency, sustainability and environmental awareness; aspects related to cognitive science and consciousness in the context of artificial intelligence adoption; and the issue of stress and mindfulness for the employee in correlation with artificial intelligence integration. By analyzing these interconnected factors, the research intends to provide insights into how artificial intelligence can be leveraged not only to improve operational efficiency but also to foster a positive workplace setting and contribute to broader societal and environmental objectives.*

Keywords: employee satisfaction, sustainability, artificial intelligence, performance, well-being.

Introduction

Employee satisfaction is measured by certain levels of happiness and well-being that employees feel at their workplace. This is closely related to productivity, which in turn affects the performance of companies. The development of artificial intelligence has several significant stages, and these stages directly impact how people perceive AI. When AI reaches the level of being an assistant to humans, it becomes integrated into people's daily lives (Rajagopal et al., 2025).

AI is integrated into the core activities of businesses as assistants to people or by replacing them. The evolution of AI and its integration into companies is divided into several options, depending on the needs and field of each business (Alsarayreh & Alhajjahjeh, 2025). The main

stages of AI integration are: generative assistants, decision support systems, and fully integrated systems. Generative assistants are resources provided by AI to help employees synthesize, correct, and analyze large amounts of information (Al-Emran et al., 2025). The decision support system relies heavily on the correlations that AI makes by analyzing all the information available in its database. The fully integrated system gathers necessary information, analyzes it, and acts based on what it considers the right decision; employees only see the final result of the decisions made and actions taken (Azari et al., 2025).

Employees whose companies have integrated these technological solutions have a perception of the new way of working; this perception significantly influences employee satisfaction and their views on these aspects (Bîzoi & Bîzoi, 2024). A clear understanding in the literature shows that the ability to use AI has become a future skill necessary for career sustainability for any employee. Upskilling in AI is not only effective for company performance but also contributes to well-being at work.

The main objective is to analyze the impact of integrating AI on employee satisfaction within the context of sustainability values in organizational policies. This study will highlight the connections between responsible AI use, organizational performance and employee well-being in line with the sustainable development goals.

Literature review

The literature observes the behavior of stakeholders, not just employees. There is evidence that digital sustainability positively affects stakeholder satisfaction. Digital transformation through the integration of AI into companies shows that it enhances the sustainability benefits of businesses (Hwang, 2025). Digitalization, as a whole, increases ESG scores. The growth in ESG scores reflects improved company performance in resource monitoring, transparency, and data management. It also results from stronger stakeholder-focused processes, including better working conditions for employees and enhanced interactions with current and potential customer (Shimamura et al., 2025).

Digitalization and the use of AI can be seen as the biggest contribution to ESG because it allows for the analysis of large volumes of data by optimizing and reducing resource waste to achieve the best results (Rozkrut et al, 2024). When AI is used correctly, depending on the field in which the company operates, results appear quickly. The proper parameters for use are characterized by two main pillars: ethics and oversight, as well as applying professional reasoning (Moghayedi et al., 2024). AI contributes to higher ESG performance primarily in companies with a well-established ethical framework. This framework must be consistently communicated across the organization, ensuring all employees understand and follow these standards. In addition, companies must carefully control the data used and monitor the outcomes of AI-driven analyses (Martusewicz et., 2024). All elements of sustainability specific to ESG environmental, social, and governance are fulfilled.

Studies show that AI can positively influence environmental standards by quickly analyzing large amounts of data to provide outputs that help make favorable decisions to reduce or eliminate any environmental risks. However, these studies also highlight the downside of excessive AI use without the maturity to add value to the resources consumed (Heger et al., 2025). Thus, using AI can simply lead to resource consumption without any expected results, which is a negative aspect in potential reports and criteria for identifying ESG scores (Alias, et al., 2025).

Non-transparent algorithms can lead to inappropriate decisions in solving problems, which may discourage or disadvantage certain employees (Hayes & Fitzpatrick, 2025). Social

discrimination and disadvantage within companies can have material repercussions on company performance. If decisions are made solely based on AI outputs, it can reduce employee trust and lower job satisfaction. Satisfaction can dramatically decrease at work due to a lack of belonging to a group (Dahabiyeh et al., 2026).

When moral discernment disappears, and AI focuses only on an employee's professional performance, it can lead to constant demotivation and reduced employee satisfaction, which may cause them to leave the organization if they feel they can no longer grow there (Sioumalas-Christodoulou & Tympas, 2025). Corporate governance is one of the key pillars of transparency and consistency in a company. It is a necessary characteristic for evaluating a company's ESG score.

If the procedures used by the company are unclear or use unclear systems, making them difficult to audit, trust in reporting transparency decreases (Aljarah et al., 2025). Uncontrolled use of AI, without verifying the decisions made by it, can lead to a decrease in reputation (Molavi & Zhang, 2025). These corporate governance risks directly affect employees and their satisfaction. Any identified risk that could harm the institution leads employees to question whether it is sustainable to stay, due to the long-term predictability of their situation within the organization.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) plays a crucial role in how employees perceive the implementation of systems within companies (Hahn et al., 2024). If there is a transparent and ethical approach, it can increase employee satisfaction (Kim & Lee, 2025). CSR is influenced by several factors during its implementation in companies: transparency and ethics, organizational culture, impact on the workplace and career growth, training and development within the company, and social responsibility. All these factors are the foundation of employee satisfaction at work and their desire to build a career within the institution and company they are part of (Pai, 2021).

Companies that invest in training and developing employees to use and maximize the potential of AI increase employee satisfaction (Hao et al., 2025). The ability to understand and interpret AI outputs will be an important condition in the job market (Ozturkcan & Bozdağ, 2025). However, companies also face new challenges through CSR strategies; AI will automate or take over some employee tasks.

Thus, companies and HR departments will face the challenge of reorienting and providing training and opportunities for people to be integrated into other positions within the company (Li et al., 2021). An organizational culture that encourages technology adoption can attract and enhance employee satisfaction, making them feel valued by the organization they belong to.

It is observed that there is a plethora of research on the relationship between AI, sustainability, and employee satisfaction. There is limited evidence on how governance, ethics, and organizational readiness mediate the relationship between AI, ESG performance and employee satisfaction, which this study aims to address.

The main gap in the literature is the lack of an integrated analysis of how AI-driven digitalization simultaneously influences ESG performance and employee satisfaction.

This study highlights several key theoretical contributions to the literature by integrating AI, ESG, sustainability, and employee satisfaction into a unified and interdisciplinary framework.

Methodology

The study of the relationship between employee satisfaction, sustainability and AI was carried out based on a bibliometric analysis. Using the terms “employee satisfaction” and “sustainability” and “AI or artificial intelligence”, 34 articles were selected from the Web of Science platform, of which 25 were relevant to the proposed investigation. The relatively limited number of articles

incorporated into the bibliometric analysis is indicative of the fact that the research topic is emerging. In this context, the robustness of the research is ensured through a systematic selection and filtering process. Furthermore, methodological transparency provides credibility even in the case of a small number of articles. The filtering process is an essential step in bibliometric analysis, which reduces the volume of articles to a set relevant to the study. A two-stage selection was carried out. Initial screening involved a selection by title and abstract, eliminating articles that were too general, which only mentioned topics. Thus, the selection of articles took into account the relevance to the topic, since not all articles containing in the title and abstract key search expressions deal with the subject directly. Full-text analysis ensures that those that bring value are retained in the study, significantly contributing to the development of the field. Some works present tangential results or do not explain the concepts of interest in the proposed research, and are eliminated. Thus, research that develops ideas and brings arguments is maintained. The degree of coverage of the subject is an essential criterion in the selection process, with those articles that approach the analyzed areas in detail being retained.

The collected data were processed using VOSviewer, a software tool for constructing and visualizing bibliometric networks, allowing for the identification of research trends and influential publications, identifying key patterns, clusters, and relationships among the publications.

The occurrence of keywords in the dataset was analyzed to identify the most frequently discussed topics. 2 was selected as the minimum number of occurrences of keyword. Of the 269 keywords, 34 meet the threshold, selecting 22 relevant ones.

Additionally, an occurrence of terms analysis was carried out to map thematic clusters and highlight frequently addressed topics in the literature. In this case, 5 was the minimum number of occurrences of a term in the title and abstract. Of the 1428 terms, 54 meet the threshold. For each of these terms, it was calculated the relevance score. To select the most relevant terms, the default choice percentage was 60%. Out of the 32 terms, 21 were maintained as being relevant for the studied topic.

Results and discussions

The analysis of temporal evolution reveals the emergence of this interdisciplinary field of research (Figure 1).

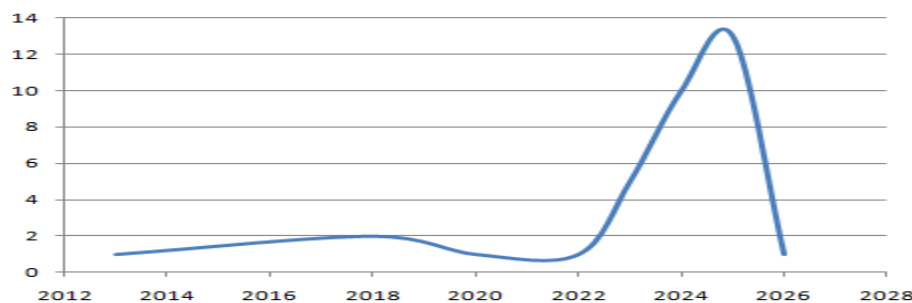


Figure 1. The temporal evolution of the research in the field

The issue of employee satisfaction in the context of the integration of sustainability values in company policies and artificial intelligence is recently debated in the literature. The main research areas in which the articles approaching the employee satisfaction-sustainability-AI theme fall are: Business Economics (n=11), Computer Science (n=5), Engineering (n=5), Environmental

Sciences Ecology (n=4), Science Technology Other Topics (n=4), Psychology (n=3), Automation Control Systems (n=2), Philosophy (n=2).

The topic studied primarily corresponds to the SDG 3 “Good health and well being”, SDG8 “Decent work and Economic Growth”, SDG9 “Industry Innovation and Infrastructure”, and SDG17 “Partnership For the Goals”.

The first 10 nodes with the highest total link strength in the relationship employee satisfaction-sustainability-AI are (Figure 2): AI (30), performance (30), sustainability (24), satisfaction (24), management (18), work (17), cognition (14), career sustainability (13), innovation (11) and consciousness (10).

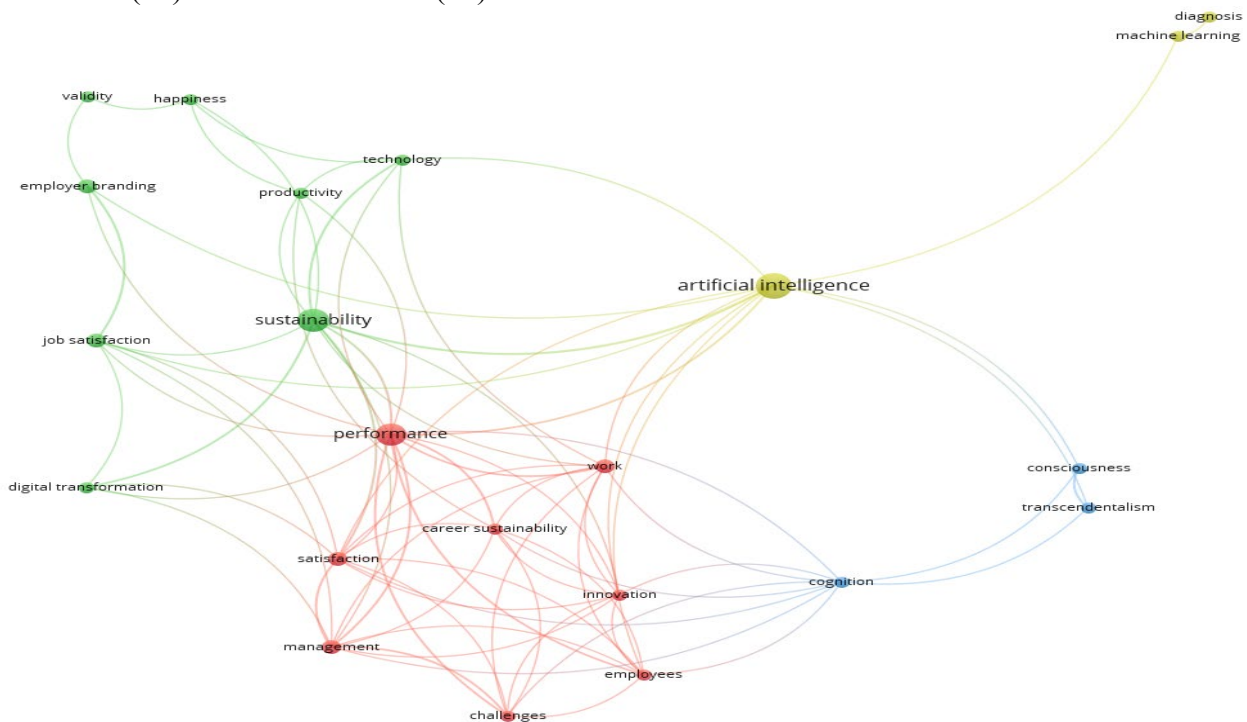


Figure 2. Keyword co-occurrence network

The implementation of AI within company plays a significant role in enhancing performance, by improving the quality of decisions, optimizing processes, and increasing operational efficiency. Moreover, AI is a key driving in promoting company sustainability, by optimizing the use of resources and reducing environmental impact. At the same time, the responsible and ethical integration of AI technologies is essential to assure social sustainability, as it influences the conditions of work, employee skills and the balance between technological progress and human well-being. Supporting employees in work processes, through the automation of repetitive activities and the innovation it is ensured the increase in productivity and employee satisfaction. The link between artificial intelligence and employee satisfaction reflects the impact of AI technologies on employee perceptions of work, organizational environment, and quality of work life. The importance of promoting a management of companies that takes into account both the challenges related to the implementation of AI and the general sustainable development, as well as the provision of an environment and working conditions that ensure the satisfaction of employees is noted. Additionally, employee satisfaction has a significant role in the sustainability of company, as it influences performance, personal retention and commitment to the company's

long-term goals. A high level of satisfaction generates the decrease of staff turnover, the increase of productivity, ensuring the appropriate climate to continuous innovation and adaptation. From the perspective of sustainable development, employee satisfaction is a significant aspect of the social dimensions of sustainability, facilitating the balance between economic efficiency and workforce well-being responsibility.

Moreover, on the one hand, the development of employees' digital knowledge and skills allows adaptation to the transformations induced by AI and becomes a condition for providing career sustainability. An organizational culture that promotes employees continuous learning and process innovation ensures performance growth and sustainability. On the other hand, the awareness of the ethical and responsible use of AI is a condition for ensuring the balance between the economic dimension (through operational efficiency) and the social dimension (through the well-being of employees), of sustainable development.

The analysis of the occurrence of the relevant terms allows the identification of 5 clusters:

Cluster 1: AI - career sustainability – human resources management theme

By enabling automated resume screening, candidate selection, and predictive analytics for talent acquisition, ML integration in human resources management transformed hiring procedures. It also made it possible to identify high-potential employees and create individualized training and development plans (Rajagopal et al., 2025).

Technology can be leveraged for environmental responsible management and employee engagement. The Avatar-led Green Training could enhance organizational citizenship behavior for the environment and green creativity among employees (Hao et al., 2025). Also, the use of humanoid robots involves high implementation costs, technical limitations and the need to retrain employees to work alongside robots. Displacing low-skilled workers requires retraining programs that allow employees to move into roles such as robot supervision and maintenance. Regarding sustainability, the use of humanoid robots can optimize resource use and improve operational efficiency, potentially reducing waste (Skubis et al., 2024).

Given that an increasing number of senior experts leave the workforce, AI can be used effectively to ensure intergenerational tacit knowledge transfer. Offering strong complementary services in this process by fostering the identified success factors such as clarity of roles, complementary skill sets, matching personalities, and trust, AI ensures the increase of employee productivity, satisfaction, and loyalty and overall organizational competitiveness, the effectiveness and sustainability (Falckenthal et al., 2025).

Managers should promote a culture of ongoing learning and cooperation and acknowledge the importance of investing in their staff members' expertise. They have to investigate the strategies to incorporate machine learning and other technology innovations into their training programs. Investing into employee education and training is a viable way for businesses to boost productivity (Kocjancic & Gricar, 2023). The employee–AI collaboration moderates the indirect effect of AI trust on career sustainability (Kong et al., 2023).

Moreover, behavioral intention and habit demonstrate a significant favorable impact on AI usage behavior. Employee education and training programs should be designed to both impart technical expertise and remove any potential misconceptions, being important to communicate the benefits of adopting AI in improving operational efficiency and ensuring sustainability (Gajić et al., 2024).

The use of AI in HR management enables the potential to combine real-time sentiment data with predictive analytics to support proactive strategies. In line with the Sustainable Development

Goals in human capital management, long-term employee satisfaction, talent retention and organizational resilience are believed to be ensured through early intervention, data-driven workforce planning and continuous performance monitoring (Ramasamy et al., 2025).

A multifaceted strategy that takes into account performance indicators, cost-effectiveness, worker satisfaction, environmental impact, and creativity is necessary to evaluate the success of integrating AI into the middle-skilled workforce. Workers with AI capabilities can advance to high-skilled roles and become more competitive in the workforce. Middle-skilled individuals can improve their career sustainability and prepare for future higher-skilled work by implementing a proactive strategic career development plan with AI integration. By releasing middle-skilled workers' potential for future AI-generated jobs and maintaining economic competitiveness, the economic downturn brought on by technology-induced unemployment may be mitigated (Chuang, et al., 2024).

AI significantly boosts satisfaction with work, particularly in settings with robust supervisor assistance. One important element that reinforces employees' positive perceptions and emotional reactions to AI is supervisor support. Building sustainable workplaces requires more than just technological optimization. In order to ensure sustainability and well-being in digitally evolving firms, effective leadership and human-centered practices are still crucial for fostering trust, contentment, and long-term engagement (Atoyebi & Sopuru, 2025). Moreover, optimizing workforce management also takes into account staff scheduling, which influences productivity, job satisfaction and employee well-being (Özder, 2025).

Green talent management enhances job satisfaction by bolstering firm identity among employees. AI can support human capital development, through sustainability-oriented talent practices (Zhou et al., 2025).

In conclusion, the interrelationship between AI, career sustainability and human resource management highlights an emerging dynamic in the literature. The bibliometric analysis indicates that AI acts as a catalytic factor in the transformation of human resource management practices, directly influencing the way in which career sustainability is conceptualized and supported. In this context, human resource management integrates AI-based technologies to optimize processes such as recruitment, performance evaluation and professional development, thus contributing to the creation of more flexible and adaptable career paths. At the same time, career sustainability is redefined through the prism of digitalization, with an emphasis on continuous learning, adaptability and professional resilience. From a bibliometric perspective, these concepts form an interconnected thematic core, which suggests a trend of strengthening research at the intersection of technologies and human capital management.

Cluster 2: AI – sustainability – employer branding theme

Effective talent management-employer branding systems can assist industrial growth and improve worker stability by lowering financial losses from turnover, transparent recruitment aligning roles with career growth expectations, continuous upskilling through Industry 4.0 certifications and AI-driven learning, competency-based performance systems with clear promotion pathways. Organizations support workforce upskilling, which is essential for Industry 4.0 transitions, by placing a high priority on career development and ongoing learning. Effective employer branding practices create more equal workplaces by fostering employee well-being and job satisfaction. In order to create sustainable, innovation-driven economies, they support business investment in human capital development as both an organizational necessity and a societal duty (Alias, et al., 2025).

Moreover, company excellence involves the synergy between sustainability, technology and human resource strategies. Internal marketing promotes employer branding and job satisfaction, fostering organizational alignment and employee engagement. Within this relationship, AI amplified the positive impact of job satisfaction on employer branding (Azari et al. 2025).

The AI – sustainability – employer branding theme highlights an emerging direction in the literature, located at the intersection of technology and responsible organizational strategies. AI contributes to the optimization of employer branding practices, while sustainability becomes a central element of the employer image. From a bibliometric perspective, the co-occurrence of these concepts indicates a trend of integrating intelligent technologies with sustainable initiatives to strengthen an attractive and ethical employer brand.

Cluster 3: employee happiness – performance theme

There is a need to better align companies with contemporary challenges such as: digital transformation, employee engagement and well-being, remote work, agile performance management, diversity, equity and inclusion, sustainability, AI, and big data. In this sense, an integrated approach to performance management and transformation is required, incorporating advanced technologies such as AI and data analysis, in order to improve organizational adaptability, innovation and flexibility, and also financial, operational and strategic results. Greater congruence with SDG results in long-term value and social responsibility, increasing satisfaction (Martusewicz et., 2024). AI fosters employee happiness by increasing process efficiency, sustainability and environmental awareness. Moreover, environmentally driven performance significantly increases happiness, ensuring competitiveness and accountability (Robina-Ramírez et al., 2025). Also, AI boosts the beneficial effect of digital sustainability on stakeholder satisfaction. (Alsarayreh & Alhajajeh, 2025). Modern tools and technologies strengthen performance and market competitiveness. A significant positive impact of AI on business transformation, particularly in terms of optimizing business processes, improving operational efficiency, and enhancing business sustainability is perceived by employees (Gajić et al., 2025).

Employees have perceived job security, job autonomy and professional status, which belong to the job satisfaction social well-being category, as representing the areas which experienced the greatest impact from AI adoption (Moghayedi et al., 2024). Workers perceive digital transformation as an indication of organizational sustainability and are growing to appreciate non-financial, human-centered initiatives (Duarte, 2025).

The employee happiness – performance theme highlights the direct relationship between the level of satisfaction and well-being of employees and organizational performance. The literature indicates that happy employees demonstrate a higher level of productivity, involvement and loyalty. From a bibliometric perspective, the co-occurrence of these concepts reflects the increased interest in integrating well-being factors into organizational strategies, in order to improve overall performance.

Cluster 4: cognitive science – consciousness theme

Transcendentalism structures work experience, consciousness and values, leading to a certain level of job satisfaction, with an impact on sustainability. On the one hand, more satisfied employees are more engaged and have pro-social behavior, and on the other hand, organizations that provide meaningful work ensure sustainable performance through staff loyalty and retention.

AI cannot replace human consciousness, but it extends cognitive capacity (Shiyan, 2024; Shiyan, 2023).

According with the Cognition–Affect–Conation framework, it is necessary to comprehend how cognitive, emotional, and behavioral mechanisms co-shape employees' responses to ethical AI practices. This promotes AI emotional response, dynamic capability, and knowledge management processes. Consequently, dynamic capability, and the application and sharing of knowledge exert significant positive effects on employee. Employee creativity, emotional engagement, and adaptability by promoting knowledge sharing, supportive policies, and transparent AI practices ensured well-being and innovation performance. Learning-oriented framework, continuous AI ethics training, and participatory mechanisms that allow employees to engage with AI fairly and autonomously boost well-being, innovation, and long-term career sustainability (Tran Le Tuyet & Nguyen, 2026).

The cognitive science – consciousness theme explores the interaction between cognitive study and the understanding of consciousness, being a central area of interdisciplinary research. The co-occurrence of these concepts indicates a trend of consolidation of studies that link cognitive theories to conscious phenomena, highlighting connections between psychology, neuroscience and philosophy of mind.

Cluster 5: Stress – AI - mindfulness theme

Continuous adaptation to AI tools creates additional learning demands increasing employee stress levels, indirectly affecting job satisfaction. While AI increases productivity, maintaining environmental sustainability and employee well-being fosters a diverse and inclusive workplace. With an emphasis on data protection, transparency, and energy efficiency, policymakers must develop ethical AI norms. Prioritizing phased deployments, keeping a focus on staff wellbeing, preventing stress, and coordinating AI implementation with sustainability objectives are all important for companies (Bîzoi & Bîzoi, 2024).

The mindfulness is a component of psychological well-being because it enhances self-awareness, emotional regulation, focus, stress management, and self-regulation. Additionally, it lowers stress and anxiety, which increases employee satisfaction and well-being (Attrey et al., 2025).

The Stress – AI – mindfulness theme explores the intersection of smart technologies, stress management and mindfulness practices. The literature indicates that AI-based tools are increasingly being used to monitor, assess and reduce stress, integrating mindfulness techniques to support the psychological well-being of individuals. From a bibliometric perspective, the co-occurrence of these concepts reflects an emerging trend in research: the use of AI for personalized interventions in the field of mental health and the promotion of emotional balance.

The study results highlight that the adoption of AI in organizations is not limited to optimizing operational processes, but has a significant impact on employee satisfaction, by increasing work efficiency, personalizing feedback and supporting professional development. In parallel, the integration of AI into a sustainable organizational framework contributes to the promotion of responsible practices, which support both employee well-being and the social and environmental responsibility objectives of companies. Thus, the interaction between technology, sustainability and employee satisfaction indicates a complex and synergistic relationship, suggesting that AI can be used strategically to create a more balanced, motivating and sustainable work environment.

Conclusion

In the current context, where companies face increasing pressure to adopt sustainable practices and respond to social and environmental challenges, the adoption of artificial intelligence has gained increasing attention as a key enabler. This study explores the relationship between employee satisfaction, sustainability, and AI adoption, highlighting how AI-driven solutions can optimize operational efficiency while promoting environmentally responsible practices and enhancing social value. The bibliometric analysis identified the main themes addressed in the literature: the impact of artificial intelligence in career sustainability and the challenges in human resources management; the issue of artificial intelligence in the context of sustainable development requirements, with an awareness of how effective employer branding practices create more equal workplaces by fostering employee well-being and job satisfaction; the role of artificial intelligence in fostering employee happiness by increasing process efficiency, sustainability and environmental awareness; aspects related to cognitive science and consciousness in the context of artificial intelligence adoption; and the issue of stress and mindfulness for the employee in correlation with artificial intelligence integration.

The research on the nexus employee satisfaction-sustainability-artificial intelligence brings several theoretical contributions to the field of organizational management. The study integrates AI, organizational sustainability and employee satisfaction into a unified conceptual framework, that facilitates understanding of how technology and sustainable initiatives interact to influence the employee experience. Thus, the study extends human resource management theories by including the digital and sustainable dimensions. Moreover, from a theoretical perspective, an interdisciplinary integration is achieved, corresponding to addressing the complexity of current challenges.

The results of this study are important both at the managerial level of companies, in human resource management, and the introduction of technological innovation, as well as at the level of political decision-makers in providing the necessary framework for an ethical approach to problems.

Despite its usefulness, bibliometric analysis is subject to limitations. These are related to data source selection, with only articles on the WOS platform being taken into account. Moreover, the selection is made based on words which appear in the title and abstract. The analysis also emphasizes quantity and not quality of research results. Another limitation is represented by the choice of words according to which scientific works are selected and the establishment of thresholds.

The study provides a foundation for future research, identifying new links and variables that can be further investigated, such as the impact of AI on motivation, retention and professional development in a sustainable environment. The research also creates a starting point for predictive models and empirical analyses regarding the interaction between technology, satisfaction and organizational responsibility. Furthermore, future research directions aim to expand the research area by delving deeper into the elements that determine job satisfaction. Also, the three dimensions of ESG performance will be considered separately in assessing the assumption of sustainable development values. Regarding AI adoption, it is necessary to study employee perceptions of the ethics of using AI, as well as deepen the discussion on the controversial role in employee satisfaction vs. employee insecurity.

This paper was co-financed by The Bucharest University of Economic Studies during the PhD program.

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