

# The Role of Leadership in Effective and Efficient Human Resource Management Decision Making

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## Abstract

This study examines the role of leadership in effective and efficient human resource management (HRM) decision-making. It analyzes leadership styles, including transformational, adaptive, ethical, and AI-driven leadership models; it explores how leadership strategies influence key HRM functions such as recruitment, talent retention, workforce planning, and performance management. Furthermore, the research addresses the integration of data-driven decision-making and AI technologies in optimizing HRM strategies while maintaining ethical and human-centered leadership principles. This study adopts a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach, synthesizing recent scholarly works from reputable sources to evaluate the effectiveness of leadership in HRM decision-making. A qualitative analysis of peer-reviewed journals, books, and empirical studies was conducted to identify patterns, challenges, and best practices in leadership-driven HRM. The study also examines the interplay between technological advancements and ethical governance in shaping leadership effectiveness within HRM frameworks. The findings reveal that leadership is crucial in shaping HRM policies, ensuring efficiency, strategic workforce planning, and organizational agility. AI-powered HR analytics and automation enhance efficiency but require ethical oversight to maintain fairness and transparency. The study also highlights challenges in leadership adaptation, including resistance to digital transformation, concerns over AI ethics, and the balance between efficiency and employee well-being. This research provides valuable insights for HR leaders, policymakers, and organizational managers, emphasizing the need for leadership development programs that integrate AI literacy, ethical governance, and strategic HR analytics. Future research should empirically validate leadership effectiveness and its contextual applications across different industries and workforce structures.

**Keywords:** *Leadership, HRM Decision-Making, Transformational Leadership, Strategic Workforce Planning.*

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## Introduction

Leadership has long been recognized as a foundational component of organizational success, influencing multiple dimensions of business operations, including strategic planning, innovation, and workforce management. In today's fast-paced and increasingly competitive global business environment, the role of leadership has become even more critical, particularly in the realm of Human Resource Management (HRM). Traditionally, HRM was perceived as an administrative function primarily concerned with personnel management, regulatory compliance, and operational efficiency (Ochieng, 2023). However, in contemporary organizations, HRM has transformed into a strategic function that plays a central role in shaping an organization's long-term sustainability and competitive

advantage. Effective leadership is essential in HRM decision-making, particularly in talent acquisition, employee engagement, workforce development, and performance management (Govender & Bussin, 2020). Leaders must align HR strategies with broader organizational objectives, ensuring that human capital is optimized to drive productivity and innovation (Fahad et al., 2024). Moreover, the rapid advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) and digital transformation has significantly altered the landscape of HRM decision-making, requiring leaders to leverage data-driven insights and adopt agile management approaches to enhance workforce efficiency. The growing complexity of workforce dynamics, coupled with the increasing reliance on AI-driven HRM processes, underscores the need for effective leadership that is both adaptable and strategically oriented. However, despite the explicit recognition of leadership's role in HRM decision-making, there remains a lack of consensus on which leadership approaches are most effective in navigating modern HR challenges and ensuring optimal decision-making outcomes.

While extensive research has explored the relationship between leadership and various workforce-related outcomes, including employee motivation, engagement, and overall performance, there remains a significant gap in understanding the direct impact of leadership on decision-making efficiency in HRM. Leadership theories such as transformational, transactional, servant, and adaptive leadership provide distinct frameworks for understanding how leaders influence HRM strategies (AlAbri et al., 2022). However, no explicit agreement exists on which leadership style produces the most effective decision-making outcomes in diverse organizational contexts. Additionally, as businesses increasingly operate in complex, fast-changing environments, leaders must address multiple workforce challenges, such as ensuring employee retention, promoting job satisfaction, and fostering a culture of continuous learning and innovation (Ahsan, 2024). While leadership effectiveness has been widely studied regarding individual employee outcomes, its role in shaping HRM decision-making processes—particularly in an era characterized by technological disruption, AI integration, and shifting workforce expectations—remains underexplored. The challenge lies in identifying leadership practices that drive employee performance and enhance strategic HRM decision-making, ensuring organizations stay agile and competitive. Organizations may struggle to implement effective leadership strategies that align with their evolving workforce needs without comprehensively understanding how different leadership styles influence HRM decision-making. Given the increasing complexity of HRM in the digital age, a systematic review of existing research is essential to bridge the gap between leadership theory and practical HRM decision-making, ultimately offering a more holistic perspective on the intricate relationship between leadership effectiveness and efficiency.

Recent studies highlight the critical role of leadership in HRM decision-making, particularly as AI-driven processes become increasingly integrated into workforce management. Leadership effectiveness significantly influences employee performance, job satisfaction, and talent retention, as effective leaders provide clear direction, motivation, and support to cultivate a positive work environment and foster career development (Prihantini et al., 2024). To maintain competitiveness and enhance organizational performance, leaders must leverage AI-based decision-making and utilize data-driven insights to optimize workforce strategies (Ramli et al., 2024). Moreover, supportive leadership and effective management practices are crucial for sustaining a competent and committed workforce (Prihantini et al., 2024). Leadership is pivotal in aligning an organization's vision and mission with HRM strategies while nurturing high-quality human capital (Syakoer, 2023). Leadership styles significantly impact decision-making outcomes, as different leadership approaches can yield varied results even with identical information (Yunita et al., 2023). Effective leaders build cohesive teams, promote fairness, and foster a shared vision (Yunita et al., 2023). Additionally, leadership bridges HRM and long-term organizational strategies, facilitating administrative processes and decision-making frameworks (Sonia, 2024). Transformational and authoritative leadership positively

affect talent management and sustainable performance (Kafetzopoulos & Gotzamani, 2022). Effective HRM is essential for achieving organizational goals and maintaining resilience (Halsa et al., 2022). Strong leadership integrates HRM, creates stakeholder value, and fosters productivity (Abdulfatai, 2021). As AI reshapes workforce strategies, leaders must adapt by integrating AI into decision-making to enhance productivity, innovation, and employee satisfaction (Ramli et al., 2024). Leadership, therefore, serves as a critical catalyst for organizational stability and success (Sonia et al., 2024).

While previous studies have extensively examined the relationship between leadership and HRM decision-making, significant gaps remain in understanding how leadership styles directly influence the efficiency and effectiveness of HRM decision-making processes. Most research has focused on leadership's impact on individual employee outcomes, such as motivation, job satisfaction, and engagement (Prihantini et al., 2024; Okolie et al., 2021), rather than its broader implications for strategic HRM decision-making. Additionally, while some studies have highlighted the role of AI in HRM (Ramli et al., 2024), research exploring how leadership integrates AI-driven decision-making into HRM strategies remains limited. The growing reliance on AI and data analytics requires leaders to adapt their leadership approaches. However, there is insufficient empirical evidence on which leadership styles best align with AI-driven HRM decision-making. Existing literature primarily focuses on transformational and authoritative leadership styles (Kafetzopoulos & Gotzamani, 2022), with limited exploration of adaptive, ethical, and AI-driven leadership models in HRM. The impact of leadership styles on HRM decision-making across different organizational settings—such as SMEs versus multinational corporations—remains underexplored. Additionally, while leadership has been acknowledged as a catalyst for HRM strategies (Sonia, 2024), there is a lack of comprehensive studies comparing the effectiveness of different leadership approaches in dynamic and rapidly evolving work environments. These gaps underscore the need for a systematic review to provide a more holistic understanding of leadership's role in optimizing HRM decision-making in a digital transformation era.

This study seeks to fill the gaps identified in previous research by conducting a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) to examine the role of leadership in effective and efficient HRM decision-making. Unlike prior studies that predominantly emphasize leadership's influence on employee motivation, job satisfaction, and engagement, this study positions leadership as a central determinant of HRM decision-making quality. The novelty of this research lies in its focus on how various leadership styles impact key HRM functions, including recruitment, talent retention, workforce planning, and performance management, particularly in the context of digital transformation and AI integration. Additionally, while transformational and authoritative leadership have been extensively studied (Kafetzopoulos & Gotzamani, 2022), this study expands the discourse by examining adaptive, ethical, and AI-driven leadership models and their implications for modern HRM practices. To systematically explore these dynamics, this study poses the following research question: How do different leadership styles influence the effectiveness and efficiency of HRM decision-making in contemporary organizations? Through a rigorous synthesis of existing literature, this research aims to identify best practices in leadership for HRM decision-making, assess the challenges associated with integrating leadership and AI-driven HRM, and propose actionable strategies for enhancing leadership effectiveness in managing workforce complexities. By providing a comprehensive and evidence-based analysis, this study contributes valuable insights to academia and practice, helping HR professionals and organizational leaders refine their leadership approaches to drive more strategic, data-driven, and sustainable HRM decision-making in an increasingly technology-oriented business environment.

#### *Transformational Leadership Theory*

Transformational leadership is a leadership approach that emphasizes positive organizational change by inspiring, motivating, and empowering employees to achieve

higher performance. Burns (1978) first introduced this concept, defining leadership as a relationship between leaders and followers that mutually enhances Motivation and morality. This perspective was further developed by Bass & Bernard (1985), who conceptualized transformational leadership as a process that not only increases productivity but also strengthens employee commitment and engagement in achieving organizational vision. Unlike transactional leadership, which focuses on rewards and punishments as a means of exchange, transformational leadership prioritizes inspiration and individual development within an organization (Alqatawenah, 2018). This distinguishes it from servant leadership, which places leaders as facilitators of employee needs, and adaptive leadership, which emphasizes flexibility in response to environmental changes (Khalili, 2018). In practice, transformational leadership is built upon four core dimensions that define a leader's effectiveness in fostering long-term impact. Idealized Influence requires leaders to act as role models, demonstrating high ethical standards and strong integrity, thereby earning the trust and loyalty of their followers (Buil et al., 2019). Inspirational Motivation establishes a compelling vision, ensuring employees feel motivated and aligned with organizational goals. Leaders achieve this through effective communication and reinforcing shared values (Ghasabeh et al., 2015). Intellectual Stimulation encourages employees to think critically and innovate, fostering a culture of experimentation without fear of failure. Lastly, Individualized Consideration ensures that leaders mentor and support employee career growth, encouraging a dynamic and engaged workforce.

In the Human Resource Management (HRM) context, transformational leadership significantly shapes workforce management strategies, particularly in talent recruitment and development. Leaders who embrace this approach create a strong employer branding strategy, making organizations more attractive to high-caliber candidates aligned with corporate vision (Al-Husseini & Elbeltagi, 2016). By fostering a continuous learning and career advancement culture, transformational leaders ensure that employees remain engaged and committed to long-term professional growth (Roache, 2024). Unlike traditional leadership models prioritizing short-term incentives, transformational leadership emphasizes mentorship, individualized development, and innovation-driven Motivation to sustain workforce productivity (Al-Mansoori & Koç, 2019). Beyond recruitment, transformational leadership has been linked to higher employee performance and organizational productivity, primarily due to its ability to enhance Motivation and encourage collaborative workplace dynamics (Rao & Kareem Abdul, 2015). Employees under transformational leadership often display greater job satisfaction and organizational loyalty, contributing to better overall performance (Malik et al., 2017). In today's technology-driven workplace, the role of transformational leaders extends to guiding AI adoption in HRM, ensuring that digital transformation aligns with ethical workforce management. Leaders must balance AI-driven efficiency with human-centric HR policies, preventing algorithmic bias in recruitment and fostering employee trust in AI-driven decision-making processes.

#### *Leadership in Human Resource Management (HRM)*

Leadership in Human Resource Management (HRM) extends beyond administrative functions, positioning itself as a strategic pillar that shapes organizational vision, workforce inspiration, and sustainable development. Unlike traditional managerial approaches emphasizing control and compliance, HR leadership focuses on Influence, empowerment, and cultural transformation (Adeniyi et al., 2024). Leaders in HRM play a crucial role in aligning workforce strategies with business objectives, ensuring that employees have opportunities for growth and professional advancement. Organizations cultivate inclusive workplace cultures through effective leadership that fosters engagement, reduces turnover rates, and enhances workforce productivity (Lee et al., 2018). These leadership practices rely heavily on transparent communication, data-driven decision-making, and



technological and business change adaptability. Different leadership styles contribute uniquely to HRM effectiveness. Transformational leadership, known for inspiring and motivating employees, fosters creativity, loyalty, and strong organizational engagement (Zhang et al., 2018). In contrast, transactional leadership emphasizes structured incentives and performance-based rewards, making it suitable for highly regulated environments. Meanwhile, servant leadership prioritizes employee well-being, strengthens long-term commitment, and enhances job satisfaction (Hoch et al., 2018). Adaptive leadership emerges as an essential approach in rapidly evolving business landscapes, allowing leaders to manage workforce transitions, technological disruptions, and dynamic market shifts. Given the varied implications of each leadership style, organizations must tailor their HRM leadership strategies to align with their industry-specific workforce demands and changing business environments.

Leadership in Human Resource Management (HRM) directly influences the effectiveness of workforce management strategies, particularly in recruitment, employee development, and productivity enhancement. Strong employer branding, shaped by effective leadership, is crucial in attracting top talent and ensuring alignment between organizational needs and workforce capabilities (Garg & Dhar, 2017). Beyond technical skills, transformational leaders emphasize long-term employee growth and adaptability, designing recruitment processes focusing on immediate needs and potential career development. Leadership effectiveness in HRM also extends to employee development, where structured mentoring, coaching, and training programs create an agile and competitive workforce (Widjaja, 2023). Besides talent acquisition and development, leadership significantly shapes organizational culture and workforce productivity. Employees who work under motivational and engaging leadership demonstrate higher job satisfaction and commitment, directly impacting organizational efficiency and operational effectiveness (Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020). Moreover, HR leaders must balance technological efficiency with human-centric decision-making as HRM transitions into a data-driven and AI-integrated framework. Ethical considerations in AI-driven HRM, including bias prevention in hiring and performance evaluations, further highlight the necessity for responsible leadership (Pereira & Fontinha, 2016). Through transparent communication and structured change management strategies, leaders must mitigate employee resistance to automation in an evolving digital landscape. Organizations that successfully integrate transformational leadership with technological innovations will create a highly adaptable, competitive workforce strategically aligned with business goals.

#### *Decision-Making Effectiveness in HRM*

Effective decision-making in Human Resource Management (HRM) is a fundamental aspect of leadership that directly influences organizational sustainability and workforce development. HR leaders must ensure that their decisions enhance employee engagement, skill development, and long-term talent retention while aligning with strategic business objectives (Pandita & Ray, 2018). By integrating data-driven approaches, HR leaders can refine recruitment strategies, implement personalized employee development programs, and foster a positive work environment that maximizes productivity. However, the effectiveness of HRM decisions is not solely determined by efficiency; leaders must also balance workforce well-being with business profitability (Boselie & van der Heijden, 2024). Beyond operational considerations, risk management plays a crucial role in HRM decision-making. Identifying risks in recruitment, workforce training, retention policies, and compensation structures allows organizations to mitigate challenges before they escalate (Becker & Smidt, 2016). Integrating HR analytics and artificial intelligence (AI) further enhances decision accuracy by providing predictive insights into workforce trends and employee performance. While AI enables HR professionals to streamline selection processes and optimize performance evaluations,

leadership intuition remains critical in ethical decision-making (Pereira & Fontinha, 2016). Additionally, maintaining transparency and fairness in HR policies strengthens employee trust, reducing resistance to change and improving overall job satisfaction. By effectively managing risks and leveraging technology without compromising ethical standards, organizations can ensure HRM decisions drive both business success and workforce stability.

Technology and artificial intelligence (AI) have become essential tools in Human Resource Management (HRM) decision-making in the digital era. HR leaders increasingly rely on analytics and big data to assess workforce trends, predict turnover risks, and optimize recruitment and talent development strategies (Marler & Boudreau, 2017). By utilizing AI-powered systems, organizations can automate candidate screening, evaluate employee performance with predictive analytics, and enhance workforce planning. These technological advancements allow HR professionals to minimize human biases, improve accuracy in decision-making, and ensure a more structured and objective implementation of HR policies (Rodgers et al., 2023). However, despite the advantages of AI-driven HRM, its limitations must be acknowledged. Decision-making in HRM requires more than data efficiency; it demands human intuition, an understanding of organizational culture, and consideration of psychological dynamics within the workforce (Okon et al., 2024). Transparency and ethical considerations in AI applications are also critical, as fairness in performance evaluations, promotions, and compensation structures determines employee trust in leadership (Bondarouk & Brewster, 2016). To balance AI-driven efficiency with ethical leadership, HR professionals must ensure that AI systems align with human-centric values, fostering an inclusive and equitable work environment. By integrating AI responsibly and maintaining leadership accountability, organizations can enhance decision-making effectiveness while upholding transparency and fairness in HRM policies.

#### *Decision-Making Efficiency in HRM*

Human Resource Management (HRM) decision-making efficiency is increasingly influenced by technological advancements, particularly artificial intelligence (AI) and HR analytics. AI-driven decision-making enables HR leaders to process large volumes of workforce data, predict employee behavior, and optimize talent acquisition strategies (Tambe et al., 2019). By integrating AI into HRM, organizations can reduce recruitment timelines, improve the accuracy of candidate selection, and automate administrative tasks. The role of AI in streamlining workforce management is also evident in performance evaluations, where predictive analytics help HR leaders identify high-potential employees and design personalized development programs (Jarrahi, 2018). Despite these advantages, AI-based HR decision-making raises ethical concerns, particularly regarding algorithmic biases and data privacy (Leicht-Deobald et al., 2022). HR professionals must ensure decision-making frameworks maintain transparency and fairness, preventing unintended discrimination in hiring or promotion processes. While AI can improve decision efficiency, it cannot replace human judgment in interpreting workplace dynamics and employee sentiment. The collaboration between AI systems and human decision-makers is essential to achieving operational efficiency and ethical HR practices (Strohmeier & Piazza, 2015). HR leaders who successfully integrate AI-powered insights with strategic human oversight can create a balanced decision-making process that enhances organizational effectiveness and employee satisfaction. By leveraging AI while upholding ethical leadership principles, organizations can ensure that HRM decisions align with business goals and workforce well-being.

Effective delegation and leadership are pivotal in enhancing Human Resource Management (HRM) decision-making efficiency (Abdulfatai, 2021). Leaders who adeptly distribute responsibilities to competent team members can expedite policy implementation without compromising decision quality. This approach prevents excessive centralization,

which often delays HRM policy execution. A flexible organizational structure supports efficient decision-making by enabling swift responses to workforce challenges without bureaucratic hindrances. Fiaz et al. (2017) indicate that decentralizing decision-making authority positively influences employees' emergent leadership behaviors, especially when supervisors exhibit empowering leadership styles. Such leadership fosters a participative environment, encouraging team involvement in decision processes and enhancing policy transparency and accountability. However, prioritizing efficiency must not overshadow employee well-being and organizational culture. Rapid, cost-effective decisions that neglect human aspects can increase stress, dissatisfaction, and higher turnover rates (LeGrand, 2023). Organizations should balance efficiency with ethical considerations, ensuring that decisions uphold employee rights and consider long-term impacts on the workforce. Implementing transparent evaluation systems allows employees to understand HRM decision-making processes, fostering fairness and objectivity. A culture emphasizing open communication and cross-departmental collaboration is more likely to achieve efficient decision-making without compromising policy quality. Lorinkova & Perry (2019) have shown that empowering leadership positively affects decision-making speed and comprehensiveness, highlighting the importance of leadership styles that promote participation and adaptability.

## **Analysis Methods**

### *Study Design*

This research employs a qualitative systematic literature review (SLR) approach to comprehensively examine decision-making efficiency in Human Resource Management (HRM). The SLR method was selected to synthesize existing scholarly literature, providing a structured analysis of theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and technological advancements related to HRM decision-making efficiency. The study aims to identify patterns, gaps, and emerging trends in HRM leadership, delegation strategies, AI integration, and ethical considerations. The systematic nature of this review ensures a rigorous, replicable, and unbiased assessment of prior research, allowing for the development of a cohesive understanding of HRM decision-making efficiency.

### *Sample Population or Subject of the Research*

The study focuses on peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and conference proceedings published from 2018 onwards in leading academic databases such as Elsevier, Emerald, Wiley, and Springer. These sources were selected to ensure the inclusion of high-quality, scholarly contributions that address HRM leadership, AI in decision-making, and ethical concerns. The literature chosen must align with the research objectives, specifically discussing efficiency in HRM decision-making, the role of leadership and delegation, and the impact of AI-driven automation.

### *Data Collection Techniques and Instrument Development*

Data collection was conducted through a structured search strategy, utilizing keyword combinations such as "HRM decision-making efficiency," "AI in HR decision-making," "delegation in HRM," and "ethical leadership in HR." Inclusion criteria were established to ensure relevance, including publication recency, empirical or theoretical contribution, and alignment with the research focus. Studies that lacked methodological rigor or did not explicitly address HRM decision-making were excluded.

### *Data Analysis Techniques*

Thematic analysis was employed to identify, categorize, and interpret key themes emerging from the literature. Relevant studies were systematically coded and classified based on their contributions to HRM decision-making efficiency, AI integration, leadership

strategies, and ethical challenges. The analysis synthesized findings, offering a structured narrative on best practices, emerging challenges, and future research directions in HRM decision-making.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Results**

Leadership styles significantly shape decision-making effectiveness in HRM, influencing how organizations manage talent acquisition, retention, workforce planning, and performance evaluations. Transformational leadership, which emphasizes motivation, vision, and employee engagement, fosters an adaptive and innovative HRM environment, enabling leaders to implement workforce strategies that enhance organizational performance (AlAbri& Alam, 2022). Leaders who employ this style focus on long-term workforce development, creating a culture where employees feel valued and motivated to contribute to strategic goals (Ahsan, 2024). Conversely, authoritative leadership ensures stability and structure, particularly in highly regulated industries where compliance, policy enforcement, and procedural consistency are critical (Adeniyi et al., 2024). While effective in maintaining control, this leadership approach can sometimes limit employee creativity and autonomy, restricting flexibility in HRM decision-making. Adaptive leadership, increasingly relevant in today's dynamic workforce, allows leaders to respond proactively to emerging HRM challenges such as remote work models, global workforce expansion, and shifting labor market demands (Fahad et al., 2024). Leaders who adopt this approach cultivate resilience and agility, ensuring that HRM decisions are aligned with changing business needs. On the other hand, ethical leadership prioritizes fairness, transparency, and corporate responsibility in HRM, addressing challenges such as bias in recruitment and moral dilemmas in employee performance assessments (Sonia et al., 2024). Lastly, AI-driven leadership transforms HRM by integrating predictive analytics, automating decision-making, and enhancing operational efficiency in workforce management. However, its success largely depends on leaders' ability to balance automation with a human-centric approach (Rodgers et al., 2023). The interplay between these leadership styles underscores the need for organizations to adopt a multifaceted leadership strategy that optimizes efficiency and employee engagement in HRM decision-making.

Integrating AI and digital technologies in HRM has revolutionized decision-making processes, allowing HR leaders to leverage data analytics for more precise and efficient workforce management. AI applications, such as predictive analytics and machine learning, provide HR professionals with insights into employee behavior, attrition risks, and talent optimization, helping organizations design proactive strategies for workforce planning (Tambe et al., 2019). AI-powered recruitment systems streamline candidate selection by analyzing resumes, assessing behavioral patterns, and predicting job performance, significantly reducing the time and cost associated with hiring (Okon, Odionu, & Bristol-Alagbariya, 2024). These advancements enable HRM leaders to make data-driven decisions that align with long-term business objectives, improving talent retention and employee development strategies. Despite its advantages, AI-driven HRM decision-making is accompanied by challenges. Ethical concerns regarding algorithmic bias in hiring processes, employee monitoring, and performance assessments have raised questions about fairness and accountability in workforce management (Leicht-Deobald et al., 2022). If left unregulated, AI systems may reinforce biases present in historical data, leading to discriminatory hiring practices and inequitable performance evaluations. Excessive reliance on AI can reduce the emphasis on human intuition, empathy, and interpersonal judgment—critical elements in HR leadership (Jarrahi, 2018). HR leaders must implement AI governance frameworks prioritizing transparency, data integrity, and ethical AI usage to mitigate these risks. Organizations should also invest in AI literacy programs for HR professionals, ensuring they can interpret AI-generated insights responsibly while maintaining a balanced approach between technological efficiency and human-centered leadership. By



integrating AI responsibly, HRM leaders can enhance decision-making effectiveness while safeguarding fairness, inclusivity, and employee trust in workforce management processes.

Despite technological advancements and evolving leadership paradigms, HRM decision-making faces significant barriers that hinder efficiency and effectiveness. One key challenge is resistance to change, particularly among employees and middle management, who struggle to adapt to digital transformation and AI-driven decision-making (Boselie & Heijden, 2024). Many employees fear job displacement due to automation or lack of trust in AI-powered HR systems, necessitating change management strategies prioritizing communication, employee involvement, and upskilling initiatives. Decentralized decision-making structures also create inefficiencies when policy implementation varies across organizational units, leading to inconsistencies in HRM practices (Becker & Smidt, 2016). While decentralization fosters autonomy, excessive fragmentation can misalign HRM objectives and reduce decision-making effectiveness. Ethical complexities arise in AI-driven HR decisions. Without proper oversight, AI systems can introduce bias, reduce accountability, and erode employee trust (Rodgers et al., 2023). AI-powered recruitment tools, for example, have been found to favor certain demographic groups, raising concerns about fairness and equal opportunity compliance. Balancing efficiency with employee well-being remains a persistent challenge. While rapid decision-making and cost-cutting measures improve operational efficiency, they can also lead to job insecurity, increased workload, and lower job satisfaction (Govender & Bussin, 2020). To address these challenges, HR leaders must integrate technological innovation with ethical leadership, ensuring HRM strategies enhance productivity while fostering an inclusive and supportive work environment. The future of HRM leadership depends on bridging the gap between efficiency and workforce sustainability, creating a leadership model that is both data-driven and people-centric.

Organizations must integrate innovation, ethical governance, and workforce development into leadership strategies to enhance HRM decision-making effectiveness. Investing in leadership development programs emphasizing adaptability, strategic thinking, and data-driven decision-making strengthens HR leaders' ability to implement sustainable HRM policies (Ahsan, 2024). AI literacy programs are essential to ensure HR professionals leverage technology responsibly while maintaining ethical workforce management practices (Fiaz et al., 2017). Transparent communication and structured feedback mechanisms are critical in fostering trust and accountability. Establishing open forums for employee input ensures that HR policies reflect diverse perspectives and workforce concerns (Prihantini et al., 2024). Ethical AI implementation requires regulatory frameworks to mitigate biases, enhance transparency, and uphold fair labor practices (LeGrand, 2023). A change management approach that encourages continuous learning and flexibility enables organizations to adapt HR strategies to evolving workforce needs. While AI and automation streamline HRM processes, leaders must balance efficiency with employee well-being, ensuring that job security, engagement, and work-life balance are not compromised. Implementing holistic HR policies integrating well-being initiatives, professional development, and flexible work arrangements enhances decision-making effectiveness while fostering a resilient workforce. By combining leadership training, ethical governance, and technological innovation, organizations can create HRM frameworks that maximize efficiency without sacrificing fairness, inclusivity, or employee satisfaction. This balanced approach ensures sustainable workforce management while maintaining high-performance standards in a rapidly evolving business environment.

## **Discussion**

The findings of this study underscore the pivotal role of leadership in enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of decision-making in human resource management (HRM). Different leadership styles, including transformational leadership, adaptive leadership, and ethical leadership, significantly shape workforce management strategies within

organizations. Leaders who adopt transformational leadership foster an inspiring and collaborative work culture, enhancing employee motivation, engagement, and productivity. This aligns with leadership theories suggesting that leadership is not merely an administrative function but a strategic tool for cultivating innovation and workforce sustainability (Boselie & van der Heijden, 2024). On the other hand, adaptive leadership enables HRM leaders to respond flexibly to evolving business environments and labor market fluctuations. Ethical leadership ensures that decision-making is rooted in fairness, transparency, and employee well-being, strengthening the workforce's trust and commitment (Ahsan, 2024). The study further indicates that organizations integrating these leadership styles into HRM frameworks experience higher employee satisfaction and long-term workforce retention. Leaders who balance strategic decision-making with a people-centered approach will likely sustain a motivated, engaged, and high-performing workforce.

Beyond leadership styles, the study highlights that effective HRM decision-making increasingly depends on data-driven strategies. HR analytics, AI-driven workforce planning, and predictive modeling allow organizations to optimize recruitment processes, enhance employee retention, and precisely identify performance trends. Leaders who possess technological literacy are better equipped to develop responsive HRM policies that align with shifting workforce dynamics and business priorities (Rodgers et al., 2023). The findings support previous research indicating that evidence-based decision-making enhances HRM efficiency by reducing bias, improving decision accuracy, and expediting policy implementation (Prihantini et al., 2024). Moreover, organizations integrating HR technology and AI-driven analytics gain a competitive advantage by anticipating workforce needs and proactively addressing skill gaps. The study further reveals that HR leaders who incorporate digital tools into workforce planning achieve greater agility in managing HR processes. However, while technological advancements significantly enhance HRM decision-making, organizations must ensure that AI-driven HR policies are designed with fairness, inclusivity, and ethical considerations.

Efficiency in HRM decision-making has emerged as a key determinant of workforce management success. Leaders who effectively allocate resources, eliminate bureaucratic inefficiencies, and leverage automation can expedite HR policies while maintaining quality outcomes. This study finds that organizations adopting technology-driven leadership approaches exhibit significantly higher efficiency levels than those relying on traditional HRM methods. Automation in recruitment, performance evaluation, and workforce analytics has proven effective in reducing operational costs, minimizing time constraints, and enhancing workforce planning accuracy (Tambe et al., 2019). AI-driven screening tools allow HR professionals to identify top talent more efficiently, assess employee competencies, and predict workforce trends with more excellent reliability. The findings indicate that organizations integrating HR digitalization strategies experience improved employee satisfaction, as streamlined administrative processes reduce inefficiencies and support a more proactive HRM approach. However, while technological integration enhances efficiency, organizations must balance automation and human-centered leadership. A leadership approach prioritizes efficiency and employee engagement and ensures that HRM strategies remain sustainable, adaptable, and responsive to workforce needs (LeGrand, 2023).

Despite these advantages, AI-driven HR policies' ethical implications and transparency challenges remain critical concerns. The findings indicate that leaders who adopt an ethical leadership approach are more successful in balancing operational efficiency and workforce well-being. Ethical HR leaders ensure that technology enhances fairness and does not replace human decision-making entirely. One of the key concerns revealed in this study is the risk of algorithmic bias in AI-driven HR processes, particularly in recruitment, promotions, and performance assessments (Rodgers et al., 2023). Without proper oversight, AI-powered HR tools can inadvertently perpetuate biases that

disadvantage certain demographic groups, raising concerns about fairness and compliance with labor laws (Adeniyi et al., 2024). To mitigate these risks, HR leaders must implement governance mechanisms that uphold transparency, ethical AI use, and regulatory compliance. This finding aligns with prior research highlighting the necessity of human intervention in AI-driven HRM to ensure accountability and ethical decision-making (Boselie & van der Heijden, 2024). While AI significantly enhances efficiency, accuracy, and cost-effectiveness, its implementation must be carefully regulated to maintain fairness, trust, and human oversight in all HR processes. Organizations integrating transparent AI governance are better positioned to strengthen workforce confidence and optimize HRM effectiveness. Ultimately, while AI reshapes HRM practices, its ethical deployment remains essential in fostering a balanced, inclusive, high-performing organizational culture.

The findings of this study align closely with Transformational Leadership Theory, which emphasizes the importance of vision, inspiration, and employee empowerment in shaping effective workforce policies. Transformational leaders are distinguished by their ability to motivate employees, foster innovation, and create a dynamic organizational culture beyond mere administrative management. Unlike transactional leaders, who focus on structured roles and reward-based performance, transformational leaders prioritize long-term employee engagement, personal development, and continuous learning within the workforce (Bass, 1985). This leadership approach is particularly relevant in modern HRM decision-making, where adaptability, strategic foresight, and innovation play an increasingly significant role. The study reveals that transformational leadership positively influences HRM decision-making by fostering a collaborative, high-performance work environment where employees feel motivated to contribute meaningfully to organizational goals. Leaders who adopt this style inspire their workforce through clear communication, shared vision, and a commitment to professional growth. As a result, organizations led by transformational leaders experience higher employee satisfaction, lower turnover rates, and more muscular workforce retention, which are critical for long-term success. Furthermore, transformational leadership enables HR professionals to navigate technological disruptions and integrate AI-driven decision-making processes effectively, ensuring that technology enhances, rather than replaces, human judgment. By empowering employees, promoting ethical decision-making, and encouraging innovation, transformational leadership remains a fundamental framework for achieving efficiency and sustainability in HRM strategies.

Compared to previous studies, the findings of this research demonstrate a strong alignment with existing literature on HRM and leadership effectiveness. For instance, Boselie and van der Heijden (2024) emphasize the critical role of leadership in shaping HRM policies that prioritize employee well-being and engagement, which aligns with the conclusions of this study. Their research highlights that leaders who actively foster an inclusive and supportive work culture contribute to higher employee satisfaction and long-term sustainability, reinforcing the argument that HRM leadership must balance efficiency with ethical workforce management. The findings are consistent with Rodgers et al. (2023), who explored the impact of AI on HRM decision-making. Their study supports that AI can enhance decision-making efficiency but must be carefully integrated with ethical and transparent governance mechanisms to maintain fairness and accountability. This perspective aligns with the present study's conclusion that leaders must ensure AI-driven HRM tools complement, rather than replace, human judgment to maintain trust and compliance in workforce management. However, this study also identifies specific challenges organizations face in adopting AI and digital transformation within HRM. This contrasts with Bondarouk and Brewster (2016), who argue that digitalization has been widely adopted across industries without significant resistance. The discrepancy may be attributed to organizational differences, varying levels of workforce digital readiness, and cultural resistance to technological changes. These variations highlight that while digital transformation is inevitable, its success depends on leadership strategies that facilitate

change management, employee adaptation, and long-term workforce development.

The practical implications of this study are highly relevant for HR practitioners and organizational leaders, particularly in addressing the evolving demands of technology-driven HRM decision-making. One of the key implications is the urgent need for leadership development programs that integrate technological proficiency. Organizations must ensure that HR leaders possess sufficient digital literacy to adopt AI, big data, and predictive analytics in workforce management. The ability to interpret data-driven insights and apply them in HRM strategies is becoming increasingly critical as organizations seek to optimize talent acquisition, employee retention, and performance evaluation. However, technological proficiency alone is not enough—organizations must also emphasize ethical leadership training, ensuring that decision-making processes balance efficiency with fairness, inclusivity, and employee well-being. Without these safeguards, AI-driven HRM decisions risk creating distrust, ethical concerns, and unintended biases in workforce management. Organizations must strengthen transparency policies in HRM, particularly concerning AI-assisted decision-making. Employees should clearly understand how AI tools influence hiring, promotions, and performance evaluations, thereby reducing skepticism and reinforcing trust in leadership. Another critical implication is the need for comprehensive change management strategies to facilitate the transition toward data-driven HR leadership. HR leaders should be trained in managing resistance to change, effectively communicating the benefits of digital transformation, and fostering a culture of continuous learning and adaptability.

## **Conclusion and Suggestion**

This study has explored the critical role of leadership in effective and efficient HRM decision-making, highlighting how different leadership styles influence strategic workforce management. This study has provided insights into how leadership approaches shape HRM policies, particularly in recruitment, talent retention, workforce planning, and performance management, by examining transformational, adaptive, ethical, and AI-driven leadership models. The research has also emphasized the increasing role of data-driven decision-making and AI technologies in optimizing HR functions while maintaining a human-centered leadership approach. Furthermore, the findings underscore that while technology enhances efficiency, the ethical dimensions of HRM decision-making remain crucial in ensuring fairness, transparency, and employee well-being. By addressing these aspects, the study has responded to the research question on how leadership styles impact HRM decision-making effectiveness, offering a comprehensive synthesis of current challenges and opportunities in leadership-driven HRM strategies.

Theoretically and practically, this study contributes significantly to leadership and HRM research. The findings extend the discourse on leadership effectiveness by integrating traditional leadership theories with modern digital transformation challenges. Unlike previous studies focusing primarily on leadership's impact on motivation and job satisfaction, this study positions leadership as the key determinant of HRM decision-making quality and organizational agility. Practically, this study provides actionable recommendations for HR practitioners, policymakers, and corporate leaders, emphasizing the need for leadership development programs that incorporate digital literacy, data-driven HR analytics, and ethical governance. Organizations should prioritize AI and automation while ensuring transparency and trust in HR decision-making. Moreover, developing adaptive and transformational leadership capabilities will be critical for organizations that navigate complex workforce challenges, enhance productivity, and create sustainable HRM frameworks. These implications highlight the practical value of this study in informing leadership development initiatives and HRM policy refinement.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that should be addressed in future research. First, the reliance on secondary data through a systematic literature review



(SLR) limits empirical validation, as findings are synthesized from existing studies rather than primary data collection. Future research should incorporate quantitative and qualitative methodologies to assess the direct impact of leadership styles on HRM decision-making effectiveness in real-world settings. Second, contextual variations in leadership effectiveness across industries and cultural settings require further exploration. Future studies should investigate how leadership styles differ in impact across diverse organizational structures and workforce compositions. Lastly, AI-driven HRM decisions' ethical considerations remain evolving, necessitating ongoing research on best practices for balancing technological efficiency with human-centric leadership values. Future studies can further refine leadership models, enhance HRM decision-making frameworks, and contribute to the evolving discourse on strategic HR leadership in the digital era by addressing these gaps.

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