

Leveraging People Analytics and Artificial Intelligence (AI) In the Modern Workplace: A Comprehensive Review

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Abstract: As organizations continue to harness the power of data-driven decision-making, the convergence of People Analytics and Artificial Intelligence (AI) has emerged as a game-changer in the modern workplace. People Analytics when combined with AI, how it works to optimize human resources management, revolutionize talent acquisition, employee engagement, performance evaluation, and workforce planning etc. This research article provides a comprehensive review of the integration of People Analytics and Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the contemporary workplace; also explore the integration of People Analytics and AI in various workplace scenarios, its impact on employee experience and organizational performance and challenges that accompany this emerging blend. It explores the historical evolution of People Analytics and the rise of AI technologies, highlighting their convergence and impact on talent management, employee engagement, performance evaluation, and organizational productivity. The findings shed light on the transformative potential of People Analytics and AI in shaping the future of work.

Keywords: People Analytics; Artificial Intelligence; HR analytics; workplace; talent management; employee engagement; chatbots.

1. Introduction:

In today's data-driven world, organizations are witnessing a transformative shift in the way they manage and optimize their workforce. People analytics, the practice of using data and statistical analysis to make informed decisions about employees, has emerged as a powerful tool for human resource management. With advancements in machine learning (ML) and artificial intelligence (AI), the integration of AI and people analytics is creating a dynamic and efficient workplace ecosystem. This research article delves into the various aspects of this emerging blend at the workplace like, convergence of people analytics and AI, exploring its impact on talent acquisition, employee engagement, performance management, and the overall employee experience etc.

The advent of AI has brought about revolutionary changes across industries, and the field of human resources is no exception. Traditional HR practices, primarily based on subjective decision-making, are being replaced by data-driven strategies (Berg, 2016). People analytics leverages data to enhance HR processes and outcomes, and the integration of AI further empowers these analytics with predictive capabilities (De Stefano, 2018).

1.1 People Analytics: Management and Maintenance of Capital

Today AI is perceived as one of the most promising and innovative tools for people management and workplace. Worldwide, in many countries, the HR departments have already started implementing AI and AI based apps to make the work smoother. Majorities of these organizations are USA based, but significant numbers are observed for Asian and European organizations as well, as they are also ready to kickstart this process. A survey by PricewaterhouseCoopers says that more of international businesses are at the verge of witnessing the importance of Artificial Intelligence in supporting and helping in organization and employee management (PwC, 2018). It was also found many employees, working in the strategic HR departments of tech companies and a few others, are restructuring the policies and strategies of organizations by using the AI. This eventually is helping them to optimize the knowledge and insights gathered from employee feedback and using the technology for

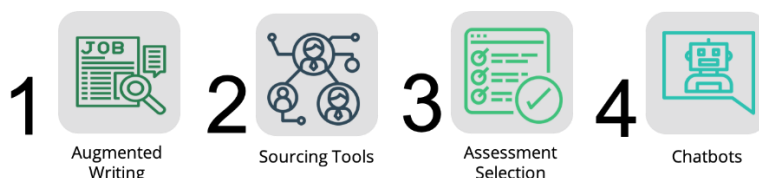
adaptability and learning in a more relevant way (Kar, 2018). A report showed by IBM (2018) stated that many chief HR managers had anticipated and marked the importance of technology in HR field, related to some transactional HR activities like hiring, retention, and development. Another example of this can be, a report presented by Deloitte, showing that 71% of organizations (international) find HR analytics as a major subject for supporting the growth of their work places (Collins, Fineman, and Tsuchida, 2017); which allows organizations in offering good business knowledge and insight and also deals with some important issues like “people problem.”

“People problems” and “people risks” often used interchangeably. These two have several aspects and dynamics as mentioned by the Chartered Institute for Personnel Development (CIPD) report, follows:

Business continuity; diversity and equality; reputational risk; employee ethics; talent acquisition and management; employee health and safety; employee relations; (Houghton and Green, 2018).

As mentioned earlier, “People analytics” is a progressively demanding field in HR, where important aspects like big data, digital apps and technologies are used to measure, understand, and report various aspects related to HR field. Majorities of this are the workforce planning, employee performance, talent management, and operational management. It is a well-known fact that every organization requires HR department, which is responsible for every people-oriented thing, from hiring people to offering employment contracts and managing the interpersonal relationships in terms of professional and psychological relationship between employees and employers.

How is AI Impacting Recruitment?



Source: <https://www.myhrfuture.com>

Technically, HR analytics tools are supposedly help the leaders and the organizations to take favourable decisions about the employees. For this case, in people analytics, algorithm based decision-making could be used effectively for supporting employees and workforces by assigning different HR policies like, performance pay, employee performance feedback, and employees CTC, aligning with the business strategy for specific group of employees (Houghton and Green, 2018; Aral et al., 2012). The employees are supposed to be empowered individually and also be trained in technologies that will help them identify potential domains of development, skill upliftment, and achieve long term goals.

Another important domain of people analytics involves recorded job interviews. The area where specifically AI is used to analyse both the nonverbal and verbal cues. One ideal example from this field can be: A group called HireVue makes a product which is now being used by more than 600 companies. The practice has become so common and is followed by big corporate giants like Nike, Unilever, Atlantic Public Schools etc. They use gadgets to conduct interviews on camera. The goal is minimising bias, if at all they are facing at that moment. For an example, if an interviewee is demotivated during the interview, which might not be clearly observed during the physical interview but can be tracked by AI easily; or similarly, if the hiring person on the other hand has any biases to the interview based on some commonality, like race, age, and related demographics, that can also be identified with the help of AI.

1.2. Cobots and Chatbots

1.2.1 Cobots:

In present scenario, in many cases, robots have started replacing employees in the factories. But sometimes, AI gets confused with automation. Automation is known as the process to access and apply the advanced technology which further reduces the need for manual labour. It allows the machine itself to make automatic decisions based on computer algorithms. It is something, eg., can be a household thermostat, a large industrial control system, warehousing robots, or even a self-driven vehicle. This sometimes involves replacing employees with technology, which might lead to higher labour productivity. Automation can be expanded with individualistic machine behavior or so called “thinking” component of the machine. The automation dimension of AI sometimes suggests that the employees’ brains and their limbs might not be needed in future. The future of work related to robots and work prediction, the EU-OSHA review indicates, that the robots will not just work, they will think as well. This signifies how AI is enhanced and inbuilt in a system. (Kaivo-oja, 2015).

Today, in some factories and warehouses cobots are used to work together and along with people in the same factories. Collectively, it makes the work more effective and easier. They help with more complicated range of tasks, instead of automating and performing the entire jobs. Presently, in Amazon there are 100,000 AI-augmented cobots, which systematically reduced the training for workers in the minimum times, sometimes lesser than two days.

1.2.2 Chatbots

Chatbot is another type of AI-enhanced tool. It helps in processing a high percentage of basic queries coming from the customers and processing them. This eventually reduces some work loads of employees working in call centres and helps them addressing more complicated issues. Chatbots work along with people, both within the systems and in physical sense. They are also used over the phone while dealing with customer’s queries .

For example, a company named Currys plc, formerly known as Dixons Carphone plc, uses a chatbot, named Cami. Cami responds to preliminary questions of the consumer on the website and another social media. Another example of an insurance company (named Nuance), that launched a chatbot and call it Nina. Another investment company, Morgan Stanley, provided more than 16,000 financial advisors with algorithms based on machine-learning, which will automate the regular routine tasks (Moore, 2018). Shockingly, the call-centre workers have already started facing massive occupational safety and health (also known as OSH) issues and risks because of the pattern of the work they perform. This type of work is very demanding and repetitive (Woodcock, 2016).

However, chatbots increases the psycho social fears and hazards for the employees as well. The most common of those are losing their jobs and finding replacement. However, to reduce this OSH risk, the employees are supposed to be trained to understand the importance of workplace bots, for knowing the maximum utility of that and to focus on their consequences.

An overwhelming number of queries now are being recorded and measured in call centres. A process, “sentiment analysis” is used to study the words used in e-mails to determine workers’ emotions and facial expressions. Similarly, the signs of fatigue and mental state can also be identified which can affect their performances. This can further cause the OSH risks emerging with overwork, which can again be analysed separately. But even after many precautions there is still high psychosocial risks around fears of getting replaced by chatbots and losing jobs. Employees should be trained properly so that they understand the importance and consequence of workplace bots. They should also be trained on to know what their assistive and collaborative and contributions would be (Moore, 2018).

Leveraging AI in Talent Management:

AI-driven recruitment tools, such as chatbots and applicant tracking systems, have revolutionized the hiring process, making it more efficient and effective. AI algorithms can analyze candidate resumes, identify relevant skills, and predict candidate fit for specific roles, reducing time-to-hire and

enhancing talent acquisition (Houghton, 2018). AI-enabled onboarding processes offer personalized experiences for new employees, leading to better retention rates and faster integration into the company culture (Huws, 2015). Moreover, predictive analytics can identify flight-risk employees, allowing proactive measures to improve employee retention (IBM report, 2018).

AI-Enabled Employee Engagement Personalized employee experiences are facilitated by AI-driven tools that analyze individual preferences, work styles, and communication patterns. AI-powered sentiment analysis tools can assess employee feedback and engagement levels in real-time, helping HR teams identify areas for improvement and devise tailored engagement strategies (Kaivo-oja, 2015). Additionally, AI-driven employee assistance programs provide personalized support to address employee concerns, contributing to a more supportive work environment (Kar, 2018).

In the digital era, data-driven decision-making has become the cornerstone of successful businesses, and the field of Human Resources (HR) is no exception. People Analytics, the application of data analysis to understand and optimize HR practices, has gained momentum (Jimenez, 2018). With the advancement of AI and machine learning, the integration of AI into People Analytics has opened new horizons for HR professionals. This research article presents a comprehensive review of the integration of People Analytics and AI in the workplace, analyzing the impact on various HR functions and its potential implications (Frey, 2013; Forster, 2011).

1. Literature review:

People analytics is a process which involves collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data related to the employees. It helps to gain insights that aid in strategic decision-making (CIPD,2017). Initially, HR data was limited to employee demographics, performance evaluations, and compensation figures. However, with the digital revolution, organizations can now harness vast amounts of data from various sources such as employee surveys, social media, and productivity tools (2018).

	Leading Companies	Non-Leading Companies
1. Employee listening/experience	100%	55%
2. Upskilling HR	100%	86%
3. People analytics technology	100%	82%

Source: Insight222 People Analytics Trends 2022 Report, Figure 5.

Ethical Considerations:

The use of AI in people analytics raises ethical concerns in many aspects like, data privacy, bias, and transparency. Organizations must ensure the responsible use of AI and maintain transparency in data collection and analysis. Additionally, measures should be taken to address any biases present in the data or algorithms to avoid perpetuating discriminatory practices.

Organizational Productivity and AI:

AI-driven workforce scheduling optimizes employee work hours, resulting in better resource utilization and improved productivity (Moore, 2018). AI technologies facilitate seamless team collaboration and communication across geographical locations, leading to enhanced productivity and innovation (Pasquale, 2015). Furthermore, data-driven insights provided by AI, enable decision-making in the organization, contributing to better overall performance (Prassl, 2018).

3.Methods:

For this conceptual work, all the highest cited work from scopus/ABDC/ Web of science were considered. Finally that was analyzed and interpreted on the basis of the narratives.

4.Discussion:

4.1 The Rise of AI in People Analytics:

Most prominent aspects of this would be, processing the natural language for sentiment analysis, machine learning algorithms for talent identification, and predictive analytics for employee attrition risk assessment. The workplace is undergoing a significant transformation as organizations embrace digital technologies and data-driven approaches to improve performance and productivity (Feloni, 2017). People Analytics, often referred to as HR Analytics, is an evolving field that involves gathering, analyzing, and interpreting employee data to make informed decisions about talent management. The integration of AI into People Analytics has unlocked new possibilities, enabling organizations to predict employee behavior, personalize learning and development, and optimize overall workforce strategies (De Stefano, 2018). AI has unlocked new possibilities for people analytics by automating processes, identifying patterns, and predicting future outcomes. AI algorithms can process extensive datasets, extracting valuable information to understand employee behavior, identify skill gaps, and foresee turnover risks. Further, machine learning algorithms can also analyze historical data and on the basis of that can predict future performance, helping HR departments optimize talent management strategies (Collins, 2017).

In one of the important reports published by EU-OSHA's (2018), foresighted the aspects on New and Emerging OSH Risks, where they predicted that by the end of 2025 the occupational safety and health risks might be related to and controlled through digitalization. It was also mentioned that robots will soon allow people to be replaced from hazardous physical work environments, mostly where they face ergonomic and chemical hazards. Considering its positive consequences, it can be said that it might be reducing the OSH risks for workers in hazardous work environment.

In a recent report by Netherlands Organization for Applied Scientific Research (TNO, 2018) states, there are three types of OSH risks in human/ environment /cobot interactions:

a. Robot/human collision risks: Where the machine learning is leading to unpredictable robot and machine behaviour.

b. Security risks: Where robots' Internet links can affect negatively, the design of software programming, and can lead to uncertainties and vulnerabilities in security.

c. Environmental risks: Where in some unstructured environments, some sort of unexpected sensor or human malfunction occurs which increases the environmental risks.

Another important aspect of AI is the AI-permitted pattern. It helps in machine vision and voice recognition, which says that many types of jobs can be replaced in future. A few examples can be some non routine jobs which can be performed easily by cobots. It can be said that AI-induced automation, enables many features which can be easily done by technologies (Frey and Osborne, 2013). One good example can be the chemicals company, produces optical parts for machines. The part which they produce, usually is scanned thoroughly and specifically to check the errors, if any, is incurring. Initially, the task was allotted to the employees who used to sit for several hours immobile and used to identify and detect mistakes with their own eyes, in front of repeated images of chips. Recently, AI has fully replaced this task. By doing this, the OSH risks, which earlier used to include musculoskeletal difficulties specifically, eye strain and damage, now have been, eliminated completely. (Moore, 2019).

4.2. Applications of People Analytics and AI at the Workplace:

Since, both the factors have become extremely important now, a few dimensions of it are described below.

1 Talent Acquisition

AI-powered people analytics has revolutionized talent acquisition by streamlining the hiring process. AI algorithms can analyse resumes, screen desired candidates, and can even conduct initial interviews. This not only saves time and resources but also reduces unconscious biases in the hiring process, leading to more diverse and inclusive teams (Feloni, 2017).

2 Employee Engagement

Engaged employees are more productive and loyal to the organization. AI-driven people analytics can measure employee engagement through sentiment analysis, pulse surveys, and other metrics. These insights enable HR professionals to identify factors affecting engagement levels and devise targeted interventions to improve workplace satisfaction (PWC, 2018).

3 Performance Management

Traditional annual performance evaluations are often subjective and fail to provide timely feedback. AI-based performance management systems can provide continuous feedback and personalized development plans, enhancing employee performance. Moreover, AI can analyze performance data to identify high-potential employees and recommend tailored growth opportunities (Redden, 2019).

4 Employee Experience:

Employee experience is a critical factor influencing retention and productivity (ILO, 2017). AI-powered analytics can track the entire employee lifecycle, from onboarding to exit, to identify pain points and opportunities for improvement. By understanding the employee journey, organizations can enhance workplace culture and boost overall employee satisfaction (Locke, 1824).

5 Performance Evaluation and Development:

AI analytics enable objective and fair performance evaluations by eliminating potential biases in traditional assessment methods (Jimenez, 2016). Continuous learning and skill development are facilitated by AI-powered learning platforms that offer personalized learning paths based on individual needs and preferences (Kaivo-oja, 2015). AI-supported performance appraisals use data-driven insights to provide constructive feedback, empowering employees to enhance their performance (Miller, 2013).

6. Challenges, Opportunities and Future Directions:

Despite its numerous benefits, the integration of AI into People Analytics presents certain challenges. Data privacy concerns, potential bias in AI algorithms, and employee resistance to AI adoption are significant considerations that organizations must address (Rani, 2017). However, with appropriate governance and transparency, these challenges can be mitigated, offering opportunities for organizations to create a more inclusive and efficient workplace. Though the importance of AI in People management is huge, but still there are some real-life challenges. Most important of them are listed below.

Technical Challenges:

The technical challenges associated with integrating People Analytics and AI systems, such as Organizational Adoption:

There are some barriers to organizational adoption of People Analytics and AI. These can be dealt with by implementing some useful strategies to overcome resistance and promote a data-driven culture.

Future Outlook:

The future of People Analytics and AI at the workplace is still a broad way to go. Proper potential advancements should be identified and their impact on HR practices and employee management can be envisioned (PwC, 2018).

While the blend of people analytics and AI offers significant benefits, it is not without challenges. Data quality and security issues, as well as the need for upskilling HR professionals to leverage AI tools effectively, pose hurdles. The future of this emerging blend lies in creating a symbiotic

relationship between AI and human expertise, fostering a more efficient and humane workplace environment.

Implications for the Future of Work:

The fusion of People Analytics and AI will continue to redefine the role of HR professionals, emphasizing the need for data literacy and strategic thinking (Redden, 2019). The AI-enabled workforce will demand a balance between human creativity and critical thinking, complemented by the efficiency and accuracy of AI technologies (The Week, 2015). Moreover, organizations that effectively leverage this blend will have a competitive advantage, attracting top talent and achieving sustainable growth (Basu, 2023).

7. Conclusion:

The fusion of People Analytics and AI represents a powerful tool for organizations seeking to harness the potential of their workforce (TNO, 2018). People analytics and AI form a powerful duo, transforming the HR landscape and ushering in data-driven decision-making in the workplace. By harnessing the potential of AI, organizations can optimize talent management, improve employee engagement, and enhance the overall employee experience. By leveraging AI-driven insights, companies can make data-based decisions that optimize talent management, employee engagement, and overall productivity (Houghton, 2018). Addressing ethical considerations and challenges will be crucial in ensuring a responsible and inclusive application of AI in the workplace. However, ethical considerations and challenges must be addressed (Taylor, 2017) to ensure responsible and equitable AI implementation. As AI becomes an integral part of the modern workforce, HR professionals must adapt and embrace the opportunities presented by this transformative blend to remain competitive and future-ready (Moore, 2019). The integration of people analytics and AI promises a future where HR practices are more strategic, efficient, and employee centric.

Declaration of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process

During the preparation of this work, I used Chat Gpt in order to validate a few data. After using this tool/service, I reviewed and edited the content as needed and take full responsibility for the content of the publication.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

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