

ENSURING JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS: THE ROLE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN LAW AND HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT FOR ACHIEVING SDG 16

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Abstract

This study explores the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in strengthening institutional frameworks within the fields of law and human resource management (HRM) to support the realization of Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16), which emphasizes justice, accountability, and inclusive governance. Through a qualitative analytical approach, the paper examines the ethical challenges posed by AI deployment such as bias, lack of transparency, and accountability gaps and proposes strategic responses rooted in stakeholder engagement, fairness-aware technologies, and robust data governance. A stakeholder matrix is developed to classify and assess the interests and influence of various actors, including judicial figures, HR professionals, technologists, regulatory bodies, and international organizations. Mitigation strategies are identified across technical, organizational, and regulatory domains, emphasizing explainable AI systems, interdisciplinary collaboration, and capacity-building initiatives. The study finds that while AI can enhance efficiency and fairness in decision-making, its benefits can only be realized through deliberate ethical alignment and inclusive oversight. The study contributes value by offering a structured framework for integrating AI responsibly into institutional settings, ensuring that technological advancements support rather than compromise the democratic and human rights principles foundational to SDG 16. This research underscores the need for continuous ethical vigilance, participatory governance, and interdisciplinary cooperation to transform AI into a tool for just and sustainable societal development.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Ethical Governance, Human Resource Management, Law, Sustainable Development Goal 16.

INTRODUCTION

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is revolutionizing various sectors of society, including law and human resource management (HRM) (Nawaz et al., 2024), with profound implications for achieving Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16), Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions (Milton & Alhamawi, 2024). As the world increasingly embraces digital transformation, AI emerges as a powerful tool to address long-standing challenges in justice systems and institutional governance (Alhosani & Alhashmi, 2024). Its ability to process vast amounts of data, identify patterns, and provide actionable insights has the potential to enhance access to justice, improve institutional accountability, and foster inclusivity (Sreenivasan & Suresh, 2024). However, the integration of AI into these critical areas also raises ethical concerns that must be carefully addressed to ensure alignment with SDG 16's objectives.

The background of this study lies in the global pursuit of SDG 16, which aims to promote peaceful and inclusive societies, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable institutions at all levels. Despite progress in some areas, many countries still face significant barriers

in achieving these targets. Legal systems are often burdened with inefficiencies, backlogs, and limited accessibility for marginalized populations (Islam et al., 2024). Similarly, organizations struggle with issues such as workplace bias, inequitable hiring practices, and ineffective human resource management. AI offers innovative solutions to these challenges by automating routine tasks, enhancing decision-making processes, and providing data-driven insights (Broekhuizen et al., 2023). However, these technologies also bring risks related to algorithmic bias, data privacy violations, and lack of transparency.

This research aims to explore the role of AI in advancing SDG 16 through its applications in law and HRM. The primary objectives of this study are to analyze current AI applications in legal systems and HRM practices that contribute to SDG 16 goals, identify ethical challenges and risks associated with AI implementation, evaluate the effectiveness of AI interventions in promoting justice and strengthening institutions, and develop a framework for responsible AI integration that supports SDG 16 objectives while addressing ethical concerns. While the scope of this research encompasses two primary domains which Law and HRM. The study considers both developed and developing country contexts to account for differences in technological infrastructure and regulatory environments.

This research makes both theoretical and practical contributions. From a theoretical perspective, it advances the understanding of how AI can be leveraged to achieve SDG 16 targets. It develops a conceptual framework for ethical AI implementation in law and HRM by integrating insights from technology studies, legal theory, and organizational behavior literature. Furthermore, it contributes to the broader discourse on technology-driven approaches to sustainable development by highlighting the intersection between AI innovation and global governance goals. Practically speaking, this research provides actionable insights for policymakers seeking to develop governance frameworks for AI in legal systems and HRM practices. It offers guidelines for organizations aiming to responsibly integrate AI into their operations while maintaining fairness and accountability. Additionally, it informs legal practitioners about how AI can enhance access to justice by streamlining processes such as case management and evidence analysis.

The novelty of this research lies in its interdisciplinary approach that examines AI's role in both law and HRM within the context of SDG 16. While existing studies often focus on one domain or another, this research bridges the gap by providing a comprehensive analysis of how AI can simultaneously address challenges in access to justice and institutional accountability. Moreover, it introduces an original framework for responsible AI integration that explicitly addresses ethical concerns such as algorithmic bias and transparency issues that are often overlooked in discussions about AI's potential benefits. The findings of this study reveal that AI has significant potential to enhance access to justice by automating routine tasks such as legal document review and case prioritization while improving institutional effectiveness through data-driven decision-making processes. In HRM, AI-powered tools can reduce bias in recruitment by standardizing candidate evaluations based on objective criteria rather than subjective judgments. However, the research also highlights critical challenges related to algorithmic bias where flawed datasets can perpetuate existing inequalities and data privacy concerns stemming from inadequate safeguards against misuse.

The implications of these findings are both broad-reaching and actionable. Organizations must implement robust data governance practices to ensure that AI systems rely on high-quality datasets free from bias or inaccuracies. Policymakers should develop clear ethical guidelines governing the use of AI in high-stakes domains such as criminal justice or recruitment. Investments should be made in training programs that enhance AI literacy among legal professionals and HR managers so they can effectively oversee technology deployment. Multi-stakeholder oversight mechanisms should be established at national or organizational levels to monitor how AI systems impact SDG 16 targets. Periodic audits should be conducted on deployed AI systems to assess their fairness, accuracy, and compliance with ethical standards. To fully harness the potential of AI while mitigating associated risks, legal systems should prioritize deploying transparent algorithms for case management tools that allow stakeholders to understand how decisions are made. Organizations should adopt inclusive

hiring practices supported by unbiased recruitment algorithms designed specifically for diverse candidate pools. Governments should establish regulatory bodies tasked with monitoring AI implementations across sectors critical for achieving SDG 16. By integrating these strategies, stakeholders can leverage AI to build more just societies equipped with strong institutions capable of fostering peace globally.

All In all, this research will underscore the transformative potential of AI in advancing SDG 16 goals but also emphasizes the importance of addressing ethical challenges associated with its deployment. By integrating theoretical insights with practical recommendations tailored for policymakers, organizations, and legal practitioners alike this study provides a roadmap for leveraging responsible innovation toward achieving sustainable development objectives. The responsible use of AI can significantly enhance access to justice, improve institutional effectiveness, and promote equitable employment practices, ultimately contributing to more peaceful and inclusive societies.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS FORMULATION

The integration of AI in Law and HRM has emerged as a transformative force, reshaping traditional practices and offering new opportunities for enhancing organizational effectiveness. This literature review examines recent research on the impact of AI on Law and HRM, focusing on its applications, benefits, challenges, and ethical considerations.

AI applications in HRM span various functions, including recruitment, performance management, employee engagement, and strategic decision-making (Abu Orabi et al., 2024). In recruitment, AI-powered tools have demonstrated the ability to streamline processes, reduce time-to-hire, and improve candidate-job matching accuracy (Zhang, 2024). A study by (Ferrara, 2023) highlighted the potential of AI to enhance fairness in hiring processes, though it also emphasized the need for careful design to avoid perpetuating existing biases. Performance management has seen significant advancements through AI integration. Research by (Kumar et al., 2024) indicates that AI can provide more accurate and timely performance analytics, enabling organizations to make data-driven decisions about employee development and retention. However, the authors caution that the implementation of AI in performance evaluation must be transparent and ethically sound to maintain employee trust.

The role of AI in augmenting human capabilities within HRM is a recurring theme in recent literature. A comprehensive review by (Nawaz et al., 2024) underscores AI's potential to automate routine tasks, allowing HR professionals to focus on more strategic aspects of their roles. This shift aligns with the goals of Sustainable Development Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and Goal 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure). Despite its promise, the integration of AI in Law and HRM faces several challenges. Data privacy and security concerns are paramount, as highlighted by (Bernardo et al., 2024). The authors stress the need for robust data governance policies to protect sensitive employee information and maintain compliance with privacy regulations.

Ethical considerations in AI implementation have gained significant attention. Ghase and Kord (Ghasemaghaei & Kordzadeh, 2024) emphasize the importance of addressing algorithmic bias to prevent discriminatory practices and promote workplace equality. This aligns with the objectives of Sustainable Development Goal 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and underscores the need for continuous monitoring and refinement of AI models. The transformative potential of AI in HRM is further explored in a study by Pesqueira et al (Pesqueira et al., 2024), which identifies both opportunities and challenges in AI adoption. The research highlights AI's capacity to enhance operational efficiency and decision-making processes while cautioning against potential ethical pitfalls.

As organizations increasingly rely on AI for HRM functions, the need for a multi-stakeholder approach to AI design and implementation becomes evident. Rodgers Value Sensitive Algorithm Design framework, as discussed by (Rodgers et al., 2023), provides a foundation for incorporating diverse perspectives in AI development for HRM. The literature consistently emphasizes the need

for responsible AI integration that balances efficiency gains with ethical considerations. This balance is crucial for achieving the targets of Sustainable Development Goal 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions), particularly in fostering transparent and accountable organizational practices. Based on the reviewed literature, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: AI collaboration in law and HRM strengthens institutions and advances SDG 16.

H2: Ethical issues in AI use reduce institutional transparency and accountability.

This hypothesis reflects the potential of AI to enhance Law and HRM functions while acknowledging the importance of ethical implementation and alignment with broader sustainability objectives. Future research should focus on empirical validation of AI's impact on Law and HRM outcomes and the development of frameworks for ethical AI implementation in diverse organizational contexts.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative library research design to explore the integration of AI in Law and HRM and its alignment with SDG number 16. The research relies exclusively on existing literature and documents, without the use of any specialized tools or field research (Khalifa & Albadawy, 2024). The research design focuses on a comprehensive review and analysis of academic journals, books, conference proceedings, policy documents, and reputable online resources published within the last decade (Carrera-Rivera et al., 2022). The target of this research includes scholarly works on AI in Law and HRM, ethical considerations in AI implementation, and literature linking these topics to SDG 16 objectives. Data collection techniques involve systematic searching of academic databases, including Elsevier Scopus Journal, JSTOR, Google Scholar, and industry-specific repositories, using predetermined keywords and Boolean operators to ensure comprehensive coverage. The researcher, serving as the primary instrument for data collection and analysis, developed a standardized form to extract relevant information from each source, including bibliographic details, key findings, methodologies used, and ethical considerations discussed. Data analysis employs a thematic analysis approach, where the researcher identifies recurring themes, patterns, and concepts across the collected literature (Sovacool et al., 2023). The analysis pays particular attention to the evolution of AI applications in Law and HRM, ethical challenges encountered, and strategies for aligning AI implementation with SDG 16 goals. To ensure the validity and reliability of the research, the study employs several strategies: using a diverse range of reputable sources, maintaining a detailed log of the search and analysis process, and conducting a critical evaluation of each source's credibility and relevance. This comprehensive library research approach aims to provide a thorough synthesis of current knowledge on AI in Law and HRM and its implications for achieving SDG 16, offering valuable insights for both academic understanding and practical application in the field.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

AI in Law and HRM Collaboration for Institutional Strengthening for Achieving SDG 16

The strategic integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) across both legal systems and Human Resource Management (HRM) heralds a profound opportunity for institutional strengthening, central to SDG 16's mandate for transparent, accountable, and inclusive governance (Bastida et al., 2025). By elevating procedural efficiency, reinforcing ethical decision-making, and fostering participatory oversight, AI fosters a cross-functional infrastructure capable of responding to complex governance challenges (Díaz-Rodríguez et al., 2023).

1. Reinforcing Shared Governance through Auditability and Transparency

AI-enabled systems in both domains generate explicit decision trails—be it through case analysis, recommendation logs, or candidate evaluations—creating robust evidence base crucial for institutional accountability (Kolade et al., 2024). In HRM, for example, fairness-aware systems

produce standardized candidate assessments that can be audited to detect discrimination (Trautwein et al., 2025). Similarly, in legal settings, automated research platforms like Lexis+ AI document case retrieval processes and rationale mappings, enabling oversight bodies to evaluate legal reasoning patterns. This cross-domain traceability aligns with SDG 16.6 and 16.7, which emphasize transparent institutions and participatory decision-making. The convergence of audit trails across HRM and law ensures shared governance mechanisms that reinforce institutional credibility.

2. Identifying Systemic Inefficiencies through Cross-Sector Analytics

AI analytics can uncover structural inefficiencies—such as judicial backlogs or performative bottlenecks—that transcend their immediate domains. In HRM, highlighted how generative AI reduces time-to-hire and improves candidate-job alignment, reducing resource waste. In legal contexts, predictive analytics assist in case outcome forecasting, facilitating smarter judicial assignments. By integrating data flows across HR and legal systems, institutions can adopt holistic process improvements—for instance, transferring lessons on workload balancing from legal case allocation to optimizing HR evaluation cycles—thus reinforcing institutional coherence and agility (Mikhaylov et al., 2018).

3. Shared Ethical Frameworks: Fairness, Privacy, and Explainability

Legal and HRM applications share ethical obligations surrounding algorithmic fairness, privacy, and transparency (Shin & Park, 2019). Ethical frameworks developed in HRM—such as the Two-Rule Method for generative AI—emphasize “do no harm” and “promote good”. Similarly, research on fair AI design urges attention to distributive, procedural, and interactional fairness. These can be adapted to the legal sphere: just as fairness constraints are applied to recruitment algorithms, they can equally limit demographic influence in bail or sentencing recommendations. Likewise, privacy-first principles shaped by GDPR and business ethics apply seamlessly to both client and employee data systems. This unified ethical stance fosters coherence in institutional governance and supports SDG 16’s call for institutional integrity and rule of law.

4. Institutional Governance Models with Multi-Domain Applicability

Governance frameworks like the “hourglass” model—which embeds ethical oversight across environmental, organizational, and system levels—are applicable across both HRM and legal AI systems (Ghasemaghaei & Kordzadeh, 2024). These models support lifecycle governance and ensure coordination between developers, managers, and oversight bodies. Implementing a shared governance body that spans legal and HRM ensures combined ethical review, audits, and stakeholder representation, fostering consistency and trust. This structural coherence is indispensable for delivering professional-grade procedural justice and workplace equity under SDG 16.

5. Capacity Building and Digital Literacy Across Domains

Collaborative AI deployment necessitates enhancing the competences of stakeholders in both sectors. HRM research identifies critical managerial capabilities—digital, cognitive, and social capital—for effective AI implementation. Providing cross-sectoral AI literacy—encompassing bias mitigation, interpretability, and contestability—empowers both judges and HR professionals. Training that fosters mutual understanding between legal and HR actors promotes collective stewardship of AI ethics, reinforcing institutions as educational hubs committed to transparent and participatory governance aligned with SDG 16.

Ethical Challenges in AI Implementation Across Law and HRM

Despite its transformative potential, the implementation of AI in both Law and HRM is fraught with ethical challenges that must be addressed to ensure alignment with SDG 16 goals. Algorithmic bias emerges as a critical concern in both domains. In legal systems, predictive policing tools have been criticized for perpetuating racial profiling due to flawed datasets (Regona et al., 2024). Similarly, in HRM, recruitment algorithms may inadvertently favor certain demographic groups if trained on biased historical data (Storm et al., 2023). These biases undermine the principles of justice and equality that SDG 16 seeks to uphold.

Data privacy concerns are another shared challenge across both fields. The extensive data collection required for AI systems raises questions about how sensitive information is stored, processed, and protected. For instance, virtual legal assistants must handle confidential client information securely, while HRM systems must safeguard employee data from unauthorized access or misuse. Transparency also remains a significant issue; many AI tools operate as "black boxes," making it difficult for stakeholders to understand how decisions are made or outcomes are generated.

To address these challenges, institutions must adopt robust governance frameworks that prioritize ethical compliance alongside technological innovation. This includes implementing regular audits of AI systems to detect bias and ensure fairness, developing clear guidelines for data protection practices, and fostering collaboration between technologists, ethicists, legal experts, and HR professionals during the design phase of AI tools. The findings suggest modifications to existing theories on technology governance by emphasizing the need for multi-stakeholder involvement and proactive monitoring mechanisms tailored specifically for high-stakes domains like Law and HRM.

1. Core Domains of AI Application in Law and Human Resource Management (HRM)

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has emerged as a critical enabler of innovation and institutional reform in both legal systems and human resource management (HRM), particularly in the context of advancing Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16), which emphasizes peace, justice, and strong institutions. By automating routine processes, improving decision-making, and enhancing accessibility, AI is redefining operational norms across these domains. Its integration not only increases institutional efficiency but also holds the potential to reduce systemic bias and support inclusivity—key pillars of SDG 16.

In the legal domain, AI applications are reshaping traditional judicial and administrative functions (Helberger, 2025). One notable area is predictive policing, wherein historical crime data is processed through machine learning algorithms to forecast future criminal activity (Lee et al., 2024). While such systems are intended to optimize resource allocation, their ethical use remains contested. Additionally, automated legal research tools and virtual legal assistants expedite information retrieval and case preparation, thereby reducing procedural delays and expanding access to legal information for underrepresented populations. AI systems designed to predict case outcomes or support judicial decision-making further contribute to consistent and evidence-based rulings, although their deployment necessitates rigorous ethical oversight to prevent algorithmic bias.

Parallel developments are evident in HRM, where AI tools are being employed to enhance recruitment, performance evaluation, and employee engagement. In recruitment, AI algorithms can filter and rank candidates based on pre-defined criteria, thereby reducing human subjectivity and time-to-hire (G. M. & Suganthi, 2022). Similarly, performance management systems leverage data analytics to monitor productivity trends and generate real-time feedback, facilitating more informed and equitable personnel decisions. AI is also instrumental in designing adaptive training programs and managing workplace diversity initiatives, contributing to the development of inclusive and accountable organizational cultures.

Despite contextual differences, AI applications in both law and HRM share common objectives: enhancing transparency, ensuring procedural fairness, and reinforcing institutional accountability.

These systems enable organizations and judicial bodies to base decisions on empirical data rather than subjective judgment, thereby fostering greater trust among stakeholders. However, the benefits of AI are contingent upon its responsible implementation, which must prioritize ethical design principles, mitigate data privacy risks, and incorporate transparent algorithmic processes.

In summary, the integration of AI across legal and HRM domains illustrates the profound potential of emerging technologies to support SDG 16. Nevertheless, the realization of these benefits demands careful governance, interdisciplinary collaboration, and continuous oversight. Institutions must adopt adaptive regulatory frameworks that balance technological advancement with ethical imperatives, ensuring that AI is not only effective but also aligned with the broader goals of justice, equity, and institutional integrity.

2. Ethical Challenge Categories

As Artificial Intelligence (AI) becomes increasingly embedded in the operational structures of legal and human resource management (HRM) systems, ethical concerns have emerged as a critical dimension requiring systematic analysis. These concerns are not merely technical, but fundamentally normative, as they intersect with values such as fairness, accountability, transparency, and human dignity—all of which are central to Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16). The ethical challenges associated with AI in law and HRM can be categorized into three major domains: algorithmic bias, data privacy and security, and transparency and explainability.

Algorithmic bias represents one of the most pressing ethical risks in AI deployment (Hanna et al., 2025). This issue arises when AI systems produce discriminatory or inequitable outcomes due to biased training data, flawed model design, or unrepresentative datasets. In the legal context, for instance, predictive policing tools have been found to disproportionately target minority communities, reinforcing existing systemic biases rather than mitigating them. Similarly, in HRM, recruitment algorithms trained on historical hiring data may inadvertently replicate past discriminatory practices, favoring candidates based on gender, ethnicity, or socio-economic background. These outcomes directly conflict with the principles of impartiality and justice that SDG 16 seeks to advance, highlighting the need for fairness-aware machine learning models and continuous algorithm auditing.

The second ethical category pertains to data privacy and security, particularly given the sensitive nature of the information processed in both law and HRM. AI systems in the legal sector handle confidential legal documents, client communications, and court records, while HRM systems manage personal employee information, including performance metrics and behavioral data (Shahzad et al., 2023). The large-scale data collection and processing required for AI operation increases the risk of breaches, unauthorized access, and misuse of private data. Failure to ensure robust data protection not only undermines individual privacy rights but also weakens public trust in digital justice and employment systems.

Transparency and explainability form the third critical ethical category. Many AI systems, particularly those using deep learning, function as "black boxes"—producing outputs without clearly articulating how decisions are made. This lack of interpretability poses significant challenges in high-stakes environments such as courtrooms or employment tribunals, where understanding the rationale behind decisions is essential for accountability and legal redress. In both domains, stakeholders must be able to scrutinize and challenge AI-driven decisions, especially when they impact legal outcomes or career progression. Without transparent AI, institutions risk reinforcing opaque and unaccountable decision-making processes, contradicting the governance ideals embedded within SDG 16.

These ethical categories—bias, privacy, and opacity—are not mutually exclusive but often interrelated. A system that lacks transparency is also harder to audit for bias or privacy breaches. As such, a holistic governance approach is required, one that incorporates ethical guidelines into the design, development, and deployment phases of AI systems. This includes conducting regular impact

assessments, adopting fairness metrics, and involving multidisciplinary stakeholders—technologists, legal experts, ethicists, and affected communities—in oversight processes.

All in all, addressing the ethical challenges associated with AI implementation in law and HRM is imperative for aligning technological innovation with the broader goals of peace, justice, and strong institutions. By categorizing and confronting these challenges systematically, institutions can ensure that AI serves not only as a tool of efficiency but as an instrument of equity, accountability, and social good. This requires moving beyond compliance-based approaches to embed ethical reasoning and human rights principles into the core of AI governance strategies.

3. Stakeholder Matrix

The ethical and effective implementation of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in law and human resource management (HRM) is inherently a multi-actor endeavor. As AI technologies become increasingly integrated into institutional decision-making processes, the identification and analysis of stakeholders is essential for ensuring accountability, transparency, and equity—fundamental elements of Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16). The stakeholder matrix serves as a strategic tool to categorize, assess, and engage the various actors involved in or affected by AI deployment across legal and HRM domains.

At the core of the stakeholder matrix are primary stakeholders, namely judicial actors, HR managers, employees, and citizens or legal service users (Govindan et al., 2021). These individuals directly interact with AI systems or are subject to their outputs. Judges, lawyers, and HR professionals rely on AI-assisted tools to inform decisions such as sentencing recommendations or candidate evaluations (Miller, 2022). Meanwhile, employees and legal claimants are the recipients of these AI-generated decisions. Their interests revolve around fairness, transparency, and the ability to appeal or contest automated outcomes. The matrix recognizes these stakeholders as having both high interest and high influence, thereby requiring strong engagement through participatory governance mechanisms and transparency measures.

Secondary stakeholders include technology developers, data scientists, and AI system vendors, who are responsible for designing, building, and maintaining the technical infrastructure of AI tools. Although they may not interact directly with end-users, their design choices—ranging from dataset selection to algorithmic logic—profoundly shape outcomes in legal and HRM contexts. These actors hold high influence but may have limited awareness of domain-specific ethical norms. Therefore, the stakeholder matrix highlights the importance of fostering interdisciplinary collaboration between technologists and domain experts to align technical outputs with ethical and legal standards.

Tertiary stakeholders consist of regulatory bodies, professional associations, academic researchers, and civil society organizations. These actors play a critical role in establishing ethical guidelines, monitoring compliance, and raising public awareness. For instance, data protection authorities and human rights commissions can issue directives to prevent discriminatory practices or safeguard privacy. Similarly, universities and think tanks contribute evidence-based evaluations of AI impacts and support the development of ethical frameworks. Their role in the matrix is marked by high potential influence and indirect interest, suggesting a need for targeted consultation and policy engagement.

In addition, international organizations such as the United Nations, the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the OECD represent global governance stakeholders. Their frameworks and conventions provide normative guidance and set transnational standards for ethical AI use, particularly in areas aligned with the SDGs. These actors influence national policies and shape funding priorities, thereby serving as enablers of ethical and inclusive AI implementation in developing and developed contexts alike.

Briefly, the stakeholder matrix underscores the complexity and interdependence of actors involved in AI deployment in law and HRM. A robust governance strategy must recognize this

diversity by promoting stakeholder-specific roles, enhancing cross-sector dialogue, and fostering inclusive decision-making. By strategically mapping stakeholders based on their influence and interest, institutions can better anticipate ethical risks, ensure procedural justice, and cultivate trust—critical preconditions for leveraging AI to achieve the objectives of SDG 16.

4. Mitigation Strategies

Given the multifaceted ethical challenges associated with Artificial Intelligence (AI) implementation in law and human resource management (HRM), the development of effective mitigation strategies is essential to ensure responsible innovation that aligns with the principles of justice, accountability, and inclusivity embodied in SDG 16. These strategies must address technical, organizational, and regulatory dimensions in a coordinated and context-sensitive manner. A proactive approach that incorporates ethical foresight and cross-sector collaboration is crucial to preempting harm and reinforcing institutional trust.

A primary strategy involves the implementation of fairness-aware machine learning models. These models are designed to detect, measure, and mitigate algorithmic bias at various stages of AI development and deployment (González-Sendino et al., 2024). In legal settings, this may include fairness constraints that limit the influence of protected attributes such as race or gender in predictive models used for bail, sentencing, or parole decisions. In HRM, bias audits and fairness metrics can be embedded in recruitment algorithms to ensure that candidates from underrepresented backgrounds are not disadvantaged. Mitigating bias requires not only technical solutions but also the inclusion of diverse datasets that reflect demographic heterogeneity and historical context.

A second key strategy is the institutionalization of transparent and explainable AI systems, particularly in high-stakes decision-making environments. Explainable AI (XAI) methodologies allow stakeholders—such as judges, HR professionals, and employees—to understand the rationale behind AI-driven recommendations or outcomes (Khosravi et al., 2022). Enhancing interpretability is crucial for ensuring procedural fairness and enabling affected individuals to contest or appeal decisions. In judicial systems, for example, transparency mechanisms can be integrated into legal AI tools to clarify the weighting of evidence or risk assessments. Similarly, HRM platforms should provide interpretable scoring frameworks during hiring or performance evaluations.

Strengthening data governance frameworks represents a third and foundational mitigation strategy. Organizations must adopt comprehensive data protection protocols to ensure that sensitive personal data is handled ethically and securely. This includes practices such as data anonymization, role-based access controls, consent mechanisms, and compliance with data protection regulations like the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Legal firms and HR departments should establish internal data ethics boards or data stewardship roles to oversee compliance and conduct routine audits of data handling practices.

Fourth, the adoption of multi-stakeholder oversight mechanisms can enhance accountability and legitimacy. These mechanisms may include ethics review committees, public advisory panels, or cross-disciplinary task forces composed of legal experts, data scientists, ethicists, and civil society representatives. Such bodies can provide continuous evaluation of AI systems, review grievances, and recommend modifications based on evolving ethical standards. By involving diverse voices, institutions can mitigate the risks of technocratic decision-making and reinforce democratic accountability in AI governance.

Lastly, capacity-building and digital literacy initiatives are essential to empower stakeholders to critically engage with AI systems. Legal practitioners and HR managers require training not only in AI functionalities but also in ethical and regulatory implications. Professional development programs should include modules on algorithmic accountability, bias detection, and data ethics. In parallel, public awareness campaigns can help individuals understand their rights in AI-mediated interactions and advocate for equitable treatment.

In sum, the implementation of these mitigation strategies forms a holistic defense against the ethical pitfalls of AI in law and HRM. By fostering fairness, transparency, accountability, and inclusive governance, these interventions enable institutions to harness AI's potential while adhering to the normative goals of SDG 16. The success of such strategies hinges on sustained commitment, interdisciplinary cooperation, and the continual refinement of ethical frameworks in response to technological and societal change.

5. Alignment with SDG 16

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into the domains of law and human resource management (HRM) presents both transformative opportunities and pressing ethical challenges. Ensuring that these applications align with Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16)—which calls for the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies, access to justice for all, and the development of effective, accountable institutions—is not merely aspirational but essential for responsible innovation. This alignment requires that AI systems be deployed in ways that reinforce rather than undermine human rights, democratic values, and institutional trust.

In the legal domain, AI contributes to the realization of inclusive and accessible justice systems by automating routine tasks, improving case management, and facilitating legal research (Terzidou, 2025). Tools such as virtual legal assistants and case prediction models can reduce the burden on overworked courts, shorten trial durations, and help marginalized populations access legal advice. This increased efficiency contributes directly to SDG 16.3, which emphasizes promoting the rule of law and ensuring equal access to justice. However, alignment with this target also necessitates safeguards to prevent discriminatory outcomes and to ensure that automation does not lead to dehumanization or erosion of procedural fairness.

Within HRM, AI can support transparent and meritocratic employment practices, a key component of institutional integrity under SDG 16.6 and 16.7. AI-enabled recruitment platforms can help standardize candidate evaluation and reduce biases that arise from human subjectivity. Performance analytics and employee engagement tools, when ethically applied, can foster fairness, accountability, and evidence-based decision-making within organizations. These capabilities are vital to building institutions that are responsive, representative, and inclusive—core mandates of SDG 16. Nevertheless, achieving genuine alignment demands careful attention to algorithmic transparency, data privacy, and workplace equity.

Moreover, the ethical deployment of AI enhances public trust in institutions, a foundational prerequisite for peace and sustainable development. By adopting governance mechanisms that emphasize explainability, fairness, and accountability, organizations can demonstrate their commitment to the principles enshrined in SDG 16. The use of stakeholder feedback loops, ethics audits, and transparent reporting structures signals institutional willingness to be scrutinized and held accountable, which in turn fosters civic confidence and social cohesion.

In addition, alignment with SDG 16 involves strengthening institutional resilience through capacity-building and inclusive participation. Training programs aimed at improving AI literacy among legal practitioners, HR professionals, and civil society actors ensure that decision-makers are equipped to understand, question, and ethically guide AI applications. Simultaneously, participatory policy-making processes that include marginalized voices in AI governance enhance democratic legitimacy and align with SDG 16.7's call for inclusive and participatory decision-making at all levels.

While AI presents significant promise in advancing the goals of SDG 16, its alignment with these objectives cannot be presumed; it must be deliberately designed, implemented, and monitored. The ethical integration of AI into legal and HRM systems requires a multi-dimensional strategy that foregrounds justice, transparency, accountability, and inclusivity. When governed responsibly, AI has the potential to serve not only as a tool for operational efficiency but as a catalyst for institutional transformation toward more peaceful and just societies.

CONCLUSION

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into law and human resource management (HRM) offers transformative potential to advance the goals of Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16) by enhancing institutional efficiency, transparency, and access to justice. However, realizing this potential requires a deliberate and ethically grounded approach that addresses risks such as algorithmic bias, lack of transparency, and data misuse. A multi-stakeholder framework, supported by fairness-aware technologies, explainable AI, robust data governance, and inclusive oversight mechanisms, is essential to ensure that AI systems promote accountability and equity rather than entrenching existing inequalities. By embedding ethical foresight, stakeholder engagement, and regulatory safeguards into AI deployment, institutions can build public trust, uphold human rights, and foster inclusive, just, and resilient societies in alignment with the core values of SDG 16.

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