Stepping into the Era of Artificial Intelligence in Human Resource Management: A Qualitative Study on Professionals' Experiences

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Abstract: *The aim of this study is to thoroughly examine the experiences of human resources professionals in Türkiye with artificial intelligence (AI) applications within the framework of human resources functions. The research was structured using a qualitative methodology. Participants in the study consisted of human resources professionals working in private sector organizations in Türkiye. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis. This study shows that AI applications in human resources are still in the development phase, that participants are increasingly turning to these technologies, but that human interaction is still indispensable in digital processes. The results of the study show that AI and generative AI are used in recruitment, training, performance management, operational processes, and human resources analytics. It has been revealed that AI applications are particularly concentrated in the recruitment function. According to the study, human resources professionals view AI not as a competitor but as a complementary tool that lightens their workload. This study aims to contribute to the literature and practitioners in this field by presenting experiences related to AI-powered talent hunting, video interview analysis, improving employee experience, candidate prediction, and predicting employee turnover.*

1. Introduction

"Artificial intelligence reaches its greatest potential when aligned with human ethical frameworks. The final decision in the decision-making process still rests with us." (Gulliford & Parker Dixon, 2019: 53).

Today, artificial intelligence (AI) is defined as software and robots that mimic the workings of human intelligence (Hmoud & Laszlo, 2019). According to Singh and Shaurya (2021), AI is characterized as a systems capacity to effectively process external information, derive insights through learning from these data, and apply the acquired knowledge with adaptive flexibility to achieve defined objectives and perform designated tasks.

Waheed et al. (2019) highlight that businesses are increasingly recognizing the critical role and inevitability of AI in human resource management (HRM) as a means to adapt to rapidly evolving environments and maintain a competitive edge in highly competitive markets. HRM, as defined by Tambe et al. (2019), encompasses the strategic process of developing, sustaining, and enhancing organizational skills, capacities, and competencies through the workforce by employing diverse management approaches. While

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HRM is still largely dependent on human inputs, today businesses are taking steps toward digitalization by integrating AI into their processes (Köchling et al., 2022). Empirical studies indicate that the advantages of implementing AI surpass the associated investment costs, prompting human resource departments to integrate AI technologies and capitalize on the opportunities they present (Li et al., 2023; Rani & Kajla, 2023). Additionally, human resource (HR) professionals play a key role in integrating AI into HR practices (Guggemos, 2024).

Jaser et al. (2022) report that among UK-based employers and recruiting organisations, 86% have implemented AI-driven automated video interviews in their recruitment processes. Similarly, a recent survey conducted by the Human Resources Association indicates that 79% of large organizations now utilize AI to streamline their HR operations (Stone et al., 2024). AI helps businesses gain a competitive advantage in attracting, motivating, and retaining talented employees. AI applications provide numerous benefits to organizations, such as reducing processing times, cutting costs, improving employee services, and streamlining processes (Varma et al., 2024).

As organizations increasingly digitize HR operations, examining AI's influence on various domains—including employee productivity, health and safety, payroll management, workplace comfort, and real-time feedback—has become crucial (Urba et al., 2022). This accelerated adoption of AI in HR practices, often termed the "new era of HR," has catalyzed a significant expansion in scholarly literature on the topic (Upadhyay & Khandelwal, 2018).

Several recent studies have examined various aspects of AI in HR, such as its positive effects on employee engagement and performance (Prentice et al., 2023; Veshne & Jamnani, 2024), the use of AI for ethical decision-making in HRM (Rodgers et al., 2023), the adoption of AI in recruitment from employers' perspectives (Pan et al., 2022), candidates' experiences with AI-powered recruitment processes (Horodyski, 2023), employee experience (Krishnan et al., 2024), tactical HRM applications of AI (Votto et al., 2021), and the impact of AI on HR digitalization (Murugesan et al., 2023), the transformation of recruitment processes in the context of algorithmic management (Paramita et al., 2024), the low level of AI adoption in recruitment due to uncertainty and limited knowledge among HR professionals (Malin et al., 2023), the active use of AI in recruitment, talent management, HR service operations, and analytics (Sithambaram & Tajudeen, 2023), and the role of AI in simplifying tasks, providing personalized learning, and improving organizational performance (Khushk et al., 2025) challenges related to data structuring and high costs associated with improper implementation (Radonjić et al., 2024).

Although AI is increasingly being adopted in HR processes on a global scale, qualitative research on how professionals in Türkiye perceive, experience, and use these technologies is quite limited (Dersan Tonbil & Yavuz Aksakal, 2024; Tezel & Ünsar, 2025). This study aims to fill this gap in the literature by focusing on the lived experiences of HR professionals, to provide contextual insights into HR practices in Türkiye, and to offer practical implications for organizations' AI integration processes into HR functions. The aim of this study is to examine in depth the experiences of HR professionals in Türkiye with AI applications within the framework of HR functions. The research questions are as follows: How do human resources professionals in Türkiye experience AI applications within the scope of HRM functions? What challenges do HR professionals encounter when using AI applications? This study offers theoretical and managerial contributions by providing concrete insights into AI applications in HR processes. Furthermore, this study presents qualitative findings that could contribute to developing a more comprehensive understanding of how AI is applied in HRM across various sectors in Türkiye. The views of HR professionals on AI, expected transformations, and challenges are explored.

In this context, the study consists of several sections. The first section addresses the theoretical background and comprehensively reviews the literature on AI applications in HRM. The second section provides detailed information about the purpose, method, data collection, and analysis process of the qualitative research conducted. The third section presents the findings of the field research within the framework of themes and interprets direct quotes obtained from participants. The fourth section discusses

the research results in light of the existing literature and explains the managerial implications of the findings. At the end of this section, the limitations of the research are stated and recommendations are made.

2. Theoretical Background and Review of Literature

The resource-based view emphasizes the value of key resources that determine business performance. According to this theory developed by Barney (1991), valuable, rare, difficult to imitate and irreplaceable resources provide businesses with a sustainable competitive advantage. Today, AI is increasingly regarded as a critical and abstract strategic resource (Mikalef & Gupta, 2021). In this context, the added value that AI technologies provide to businesses is directly related to their effective use in HR processes and plays an important role in improving business performance.

Therefore, the adoption of AI-supported HR processes can be explained by organizational and individual acceptance dynamics. This situation ensures that the technology acceptance model plays a complementary role in terms of the theoretical background of the study. The technology acceptance model (TAM) developed by Davis (1989) is used to understand technology adoption behaviors and attitudes. The TAM states that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use are the key determinants of users' attitudes toward technology and that these also influence their intention to use the technology. This theory provides a framework for examining how HR professionals experience AI tools in different HR functions in terms of perceived benefits and ease of use.

AI technologies, with components such as natural language processing, predictive modelling and robotic systems, have found wide application in the digitization and automation of HRM processes (Pannu, 2015: 80). By increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of HRM functions, they improve the employee experience and contribute to organizational performance (Garg et al., 2022). AI-supported applications provide strategic support to HR professionals in areas such as employee rewards, recruitment, talent management, employee development, performance evaluation, and human resources analytics, accelerating the transformation of HR processes (Li et al., 2023; Shahzad et al., 2023).

AI is increasingly finding its place in HRM and creating transformative effects in various functions. In recruitment processes, AI takes on repetitive and time-consuming tasks, allowing HR professionals to focus on strategic tasks (Upadhyay & Khandelwal, 2018). It provides benefits such as faster candidate screening, quick filling of vacant positions, and reduced labour costs (Can, 2018; Vardarlıer & Zafer, 2020). AI-supported asynchronous video interviews (AI-AVI) combine acoustic and image recognition with machine learning to evaluate candidates' verbal and non-verbal communication cues and provide employers with objective data during the pre-screening process (Hickman et al., 2022). These applications also affect psychosocial dimensions such as candidate perception, trust, and interview anxiety (Nørskov et al., 2022; Suen et al., 2019; Suen & Hung, 2023) and increase their participation in the process by offering updates that strengthen HR professionals' interaction with candidates (Strazzulla, 2024). In recruitment processes, AI's contributions in areas such as talent acquisition and candidate analysis are highlighted. Paramita et al. (2024) discussed how AI transforms recruitment processes in the context of algorithmic management in their qualitative study conducted in Sweden. Similarly, Malin et al. (2023) found that despite the potential of AI in recruitment processes, the level of adoption is low due to uncertainty and limited knowledge about these technologies among HR professionals. Similarly, Sithambaram and Tajudeen (2023) show that AI is actively used in many HR functions, such as recruitment, talent management, HR service operations, and analytics.

AI enables businesses to develop personalized training programmes by taking into account individual differences (role, native language, learning style, etc.) (Stone et al., 2024). Productive AI tools (ChatGPT, Bard, etc.) provide employees with personalized feedback in online training and skill development processes, while also guiding HR professionals (Raman, 2024). In performance management, AI supports the setting of SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound) goals by considering past performance data and business needs, and provides continuous feedback (Tambe et al., 2019; Varma et al., 2024). This enables HR managers to conduct performance evaluations in a more goal-oriented and analytical manner (Strohmeier & Piazza, 2015).

AI analytics applications enable data-driven decision-making processes that allow for the prediction of employee behavior and organizational outcomes. Predictive analytics uses advanced techniques such as data mining and machine learning to discover hidden patterns in large data sets and produce informed predictions about future events (Cote, 2021; Shrivastava et al., 2018).

The current literature shows that AI provides efficiency, accuracy, and cost advantages in HRM processes. For example, Nawaz et al. (2024) demonstrate that AI provides businesses with significant time and cost savings in workforce planning and decision-making processes by reducing human error. They also note that it can increase organizational commitment by improving the employee experience. The impact of AI on HR processes is not limited to operational benefits; it also leads to organizational transformations. Khushk et al. (2025) found in their study of automotive companies in China that AI plays important roles in simplifying tasks, providing personalized learning, and improving organizational performance. These findings show that AI affects not only business processes but also employee development and engagement levels.

However, there are some structural and perceptual barriers to the implementation of AI. Radonjić et al. (2024) emphasized that despite the advantages AI offers in terms of big data governance, data structuring remains a significant challenge and improper implementation can lead to high costs.

Studies in the literature reveal that AI offers significant opportunities in HRM, particularly in areas such as recruitment, talent management, HR service operations, and employee development (Khushk et al., 2025; Malin et al., 2023; Paramita et al., 2024; Sithambaram & Tajudeen, 2023). However, these studies also emphasize that various limitations, such as technological complexity, lack of knowledge, ethical concerns, difficulties in data management, and high costs, complicate implementation (Radonjić et al., 2024; Roppelt et al., 2025). This study aims to fill this gap by revealing the AI experiences of human resources professionals in Türkiye, thereby contributing to the literature in a contextual manner.

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants and Interview Guide

The participants in this study are HR professionals who are currently employed in, or have previously worked for, private sector organizations in Türkiye. They were selected to provide insights based on their overall professional experience in HR, not limited to their current employer. Participants from various positions and sectors were reached using purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a method in which the researcher uses specific knowledge about certain groups to identify participants who are representative of the population (Berg & Lune, 2015: 71). According to Patton (2018), purposive sampling allows the researcher to use various strategies to select situations that are rich in information (Patton, 2018: 230). In this context, a combination of the criteria sampling, maximum diversity sampling, and snowball sampling strategies, which are subtypes of purposeful sampling, was used.

Criterion sampling is described as the process of selecting cases that fulfill predetermined, significant criteria (Patton, 2018: 238). To ensure the data's relevance to the research objectives, the following criteria were applied in participant selection: (1) Experience as an HR professional in the private sector, either past or current, and (2) a minimum of one year of experience with AI applications. The selection of research participants was based on the criterion that AI applications are part of the HR processes of the businesses where the participants currently work or have worked. This approach aims to obtain in-depth data from participants with experience and knowledge of AI usage, aligning with the purpose of the study. Creswell (2018) emphasizes that maximum variation sampling is important in qualitative research as it reflects the diversity and differences in the findings accurately. In this study, interviews were conducted with participants from various sectors. The snowball sampling strategy, on the other hand, involves the researcher starting with a group of people who possess certain characteristics related to the research topic and asking them to refer others with similar attributes (Berg & Lune, 2015: 71-72).

The semi-structured interview questions were developed based on a comprehensive review of the relevant literature on AI applications in HR (Aguinis et al., 2024; Hemalatha et al., 2021; Huang et al., 2023;

Suen & Hung, 2023; Stone et al., 2024; Upadhyay & Khandelwal, 2018; Varma et al., 2024) and were subsequently reviewed by academics to ensure clarity, relevance, and comprehensiveness. This approach helped to refine the questions and enhance their validity. The semi-structured interview form used in the field research consists of a total of nine open-ended questions. The questions are directly related to the research questions and have been reviewed in terms of language, scope, and clarity as a result of the pilot study.

Within the framework of the research, semi-structured interviews were carried out with 10 participants holding diverse roles. Semi-structured interviews provide enough structure to allow the researcher to systematically analyze the most important topics, while also enabling the interviewees to explain their thoughts in depth, which helps in the emergence of new concepts (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015). As seen in Table 1, the participant with the least experience had 7 years of experience, while the participant with the most experience had 26 years of experience.

Table 1. Characteristics of Participants

Participants	Sector	Position	Experience (Years)
P1	Call Centre	Recruitment and Training-Development Director	20
P2	Food	Senior Human Resources Manager	11
P3	Banking	Executive Vice President, Head of HR	26
P4	Logistics	HR Deputy Manager	18
P5	Furniture	HR Manager	10
P6	Banking	HR Supervisor	15
P7	Aviation	Chief Human Resources Officer	21
P8	Service	HR Management Consultant	20
P9	Aviation	HRBP Senior Manager	20
P10	Consumer Goods	HR Manager	7

In qualitative research, sample size is determined by considering the purpose of the research, the context, and the level of data saturation. In qualitative research, the data collection process is based on the principle of theoretical saturation, and it is recommended that the interview process be terminated when the data obtained begins to repeat itself and the defined categories become sufficiently clear (Charmaz, 2015: 300). In this study, the increase in repetitions in the data obtained during the interviews and the absence of new conceptual categories were evaluated as reaching data saturation. Indeed, Guest et al. (2006) note that data saturation is typically achieved between 6 and 12 interviews in many qualitative studies. The homogeneous structure of the participants, the scope of the data collection tool, and the standardized interview process make it possible to achieve data saturation with a smaller number of participants (Guest et al., 2006: 75, 78). Therefore, the sample size was determined based on the contextual characteristics of the study and the level of data saturation achieved, and the characteristics of the participants are shown in Table 1.

The ethics committee approval was obtained from Tarsus University for the study. The interviews were conducted in 2024 via online video calls. In this context, each interview lasted between 20 and 45 minutes on average. It was explicitly communicated that the participants' real names and the names of the organizations they were affiliated with would remain confidential. Following the participants' informed consent, the interviews were recorded audibly for analysis. The researcher ensured the maintenance of anonymity and informed the participants regarding confidentiality procedures. In this context, verbal consent (University of Oxford, 2021) was deemed appropriate and implemented in the study, in accordance with all ethical principles and international ethical guidelines.

3.2. Credibility, Transferability and Confirmability

The strategy of member checking, also known as participant validation, was utilized to ensure internal validity or credibility (Merriam, 2015: 207). Upon completion of the interviews, the researcher synthesized the gathered data and requested feedback from the participants to verify the accuracy and validity of these summaries (Erlandson et al., 1993). The researcher performed member checking by summarizing the data at the conclusion of each interview and obtaining participants' comments on the accuracy of the information. To ensure transferability, participants' statements were described in a detailed and in-depth manner (Merriam, 2015: 219). Confirmability refers to the researcher's ability to validate the findings by comparing them with raw data and logically explaining the results to readers. To ensure confirmability, the researcher preserved the coding manual, which included data collection tools and raw data (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018: 283). According to Creswell (2018: 253), recording field notes using an audio recorder and later transcribing them is one of the methods that enhances the reliability, or confirmability, of a study.
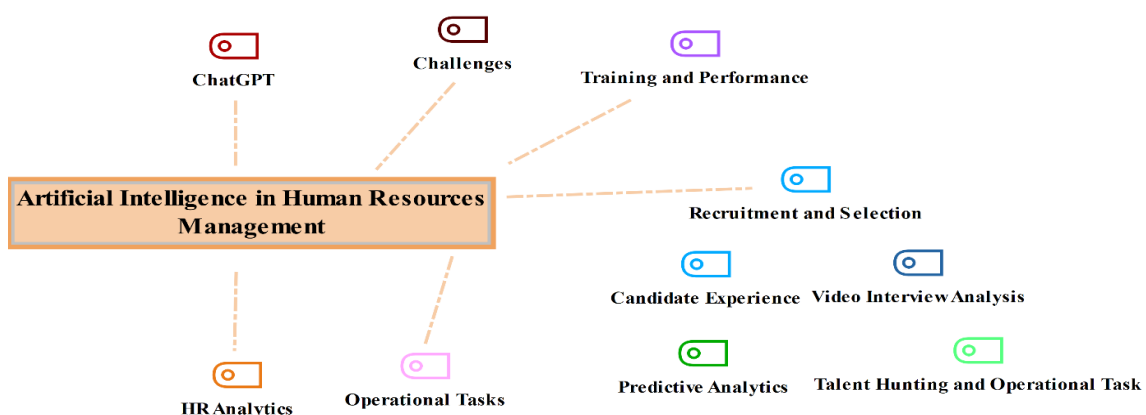
3.3. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis. Miles and Huberman (2019) propose a three-phase approach to qualitative data analysis: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

During the data analysis process, the audio recordings were first listened to, and transcription was performed. In the coding phase, data groups were labeled (Punch, 2016: 194). A total of 30 codes were identified as a result of the coding process. For organizing codes, Saldaña's (2019) code-subcategory-category-theme flowchart was adopted (Saldaña, 2019: 14). A codebook containing participants' statements was created and memo-writing was employed during the transcription process. In the final stage of qualitative data analysis, participants' statements were directly quoted to provide an in-depth description of their experiences and views. For data visualization and presentation, the Maxqda Analytics Pro software was used. This program has created a model map that visualizes themes and categories. Additionally, a word cloud analysis was conducted to reveal which words participants used most frequently in relation to the topic.

4. Findings

Thematic analysis yielded a total of six main themes and four categories. The experiences of HR professionals regarding AI were categorized under the themes of "recruitment and selection, ChatGPT, operational tasks, training and performance, HR analytics and challenges." Figure 1 shows the themes and categories identified through data analysis.

Figure 1. Theme and Category Model Map

According to the word cloud analysis (Figure 2), the most frequently used words are artificial intelligence, work, human, think, and ask. This finding shows that HR professionals focus on both work processes and the human dimension when explaining artificial intelligence. Participants adopted a questioning and thoughtful approach when evaluating the topic. However, the word cloud only reflects usage frequency, while the meaning of the concepts was examined in depth within the scope of thematic analysis.

Figure 2. Word Cloud

Theme 1: Recruitment and Selection

The research findings reveal that HR professionals have experienced AI applications in candidate sourcing and selection processes in four main areas. These areas are categorized as (1) talent hunting and automation of operational processes, (2) improvement of candidate experience, (3) use of video interview analysis, and (4) integration of predictive analytics into decision support processes.

Category 1: Talent Hunt and Operational Tasks

In organizations, HR professionals engage in talent hunt to identify and attract qualified employees. One participant shared that they use AI applications to conduct talent searches on LinkedIn. These AI tools support not only talent hunt but also operational processes such as sending tests to candidates:

"For example, if you search for the CEO of a high-level company named Ahmet, it analyzes Ahmet's profile. It offers options like: 'Send an initial email to Ahmet' or 'Invite Ahmet to a job interview.' When you click on 'Invite Ahmet to a job interview,' it prepares email templates you can send. It also provides recommendations like: "When contacting Ahmet, pay attention to this, or "If you write the email this way, the likelihood of getting a response will be higher." (P5)

The AI application that hunts for talent can determine the most suitable mail format for the candidate based on the data about the candidate by analyzing the candidate profile. According to the candidate's data, this application can report what the recruitment professional should pay attention to when contacting the candidate. As stated by the participant, the AI application increases the attraction rate of the candidate in the talent hunt.

"We receive between 500 and 1000 applications, which is very challenging for a recruiter to review individually. AI is helpful in such cases." (P2)

"We use AI during interviews. AI evaluates this data and generates competency-based interview questions tailored to the candidate." (P9)

"We have an AI platform. The AI searches LinkedIn, scans relevant résumés and emails us a report. We manually review the pre-screened résumés. For instance, out of 200 candidates, we shortlist 100. Then, we enter the names of these 100 candidates into the AI platform and give the command to send them tests. We primarily use it for operational tasks." (P5)

AI applications streamline the process, particularly when there is a high volume of applications, reducing the workload for recruiters. Additionally, these tools can generate interview questions and assist in evaluating interviews.

Category 2: Candidate Experience

Candidate experience in recruitment is crucial for employer branding and attracting qualified candidates.

"We did not specifically put avatars in the interviews. We think it is very distracting for the candidates within the scope of our experience. There was no difference in terms of experience on the candidate front. The recruitment process is already a stressful process. We think that a human interview is better than a robot interview. We have very high goals about what kind of experience we give the candidate. At the point of touching, making them feel valuable, we need to communicate with the candidate. At some point, the decision maker is human, but it can be very useful at operational points." (P2)

"Candidates have prejudice against AI. They have perspectives such as "I applied and the bot eliminated me". Again, I think a human touch is needed." (P6)

P2 evaluated robot-assisted interviews as negative for the candidate experience, emphasizing that digital representations like avatars could distract candidates. The participant highlighted the importance of interaction between candidates and HR professionals to enhance the candidate experience.

Category 3: Video Interview Analysis

AI applications analyze recorded video interviews based on predefined criteria, significantly reducing the workload for recruiters and yielding more objective results.

"For call center candidates, recruiters primarily focus on diction and communication skills. Previously, 100–150 candidates with poor accents were eliminated after submitting video interviews. From these, we selected a sample group of candidates with excellent diction, such as those speaking Istanbul Turkish. There was about 70% accuracy. We expect AI to handle diction checks. We hire 6000 people annually, which would require hundreds of recruiters. We are trying to use AI for scoring and evaluation. We selected a sample group of high-performing employees and developed alignment models. AI also conducts interviews for IT roles." (P1)

A manager in the call center sector explained that they hire 6000 people annually and that AI completes tasks faster than hundreds of recruiters could. The AI application evaluates video interviews based on the characteristics of high-performing employees, providing concrete analysis.

"We have an annual talent program for young professionals. AI reviewed approximately 5,000 videos during the process, saving significant time. Reviewing the same number of videos with human resources would take 45 workdays, but AI reduced it to just a few minutes. We fed expected answers for each question into the machine learning model and categorized performance into four tiers: 0–25, 25–50, 50–75 and 75–100. This process was very time-efficient. However, we encountered an issue where a candidate's microphone malfunctioned, and their voice was not recorded, resulting in a zero score. While human evaluations can be subjective, AI standardized the process." (P2)

The participant noted that AI saves a significant amount of time in high-volume video analysis, pointing to its efficiency-enhancing effect in recruitment processes. However, technical issues such as a candidate receiving zero points due to a microphone malfunction demonstrate that AI systems lack

contextual flexibility and that human oversight remains important. This finding reveals that while AI provides standardization in evaluation processes, it also brings with it ethical and technical limitations.

Category 4: Predictive Analytics

P2 emphasizes how important predictive analytics has become in recruitment processes. The machine learning model, which is also used in video interview analysis, supports the recruitment decision of the right candidate.

"On the recruitment front, we use predictive analytics as follows. We have embedded machine learning in recruitment again. There is a predictive tool in the inventory we send. In line with the answers given by the candidate, it tells us the following: the probability of high performance, the probability of leaving the job, the rate of cultural adaptation. People we call talented are generally more likely to leave the job." (P2)

Nevertheless, results such as "turnover probability of talented individuals" also show that these systems are only a support tool and that human resources professionals remain responsible for interpreting the data and taking appropriate actions to retain talented employees.

Theme 2: ChatGPT

One participant stated that he received new idea suggestions from ChatGPT, a productive AI model, and that he utilized it in employee engagement practices.

"For example, I try to utilize it as follows: X department has low employee engagement. When I write to ChatGPT, it shows suggestions on this topic. Is the e-mail formal enough or clear enough?" (P5)

A participant in the aviation sector explained that he follows the information about the rules, procedures and standards regulating aviation activities through ChatGPT.

"I use ChatGPT very actively. We follow some regulations related to aviation. Since there are so many regulations, it is not easy to find them on the internet. I say 'Chicago contract' and it pulls it out immediately." (P7)

"Apart from this, we use ChatGPT very intensively. Now we take them and bury them in a single GBT. We make the arrangements and advertise. We need to do talent hunting. While doing this, of course, your search part must be very strong. We ask which are the biggest companies in these areas. We make the evaluation for all positions of manager and above. We have evaluation sets that we have created for them. He is successful in case studies and scenarios." (P2)

Similarly, P2 emphasized that he uses this AI application a lot. ChatGPT facilitates the work of HR professionals in many stages of recruitment processes such as talent hunt, preparation of job advertisements and creation of candidate evaluation sets.

"I use it a lot, especially in my e-mails. I use it to summarize reports. We have a system, we analyze the data coming from there. When we give key topics to AI, it gives us a summary." (P8)

P8 demonstrates how ChatGPT offers added value in knowledge management and analytical processes. It can assist the HR professional in matters such as writing the appropriate e-mail and summarizing data.

"ChatGPT is not currently used in our company for security reasons." (P4)

Another participant, P4, shared that they do not use these applications by drawing attention to the security-related difficulties of ChatGPT unlike other participants.

Theme 3: Operational Tasks

With the AI application called "Ask me", employees can find answers to certain questions. Thus, both the workload of HR professionals is reduced and the performance of the HR department is positively supported because these robots are always accessible.

"We have an AI robot called "Ask me". Our employees can ask questions there. Operational tasks such as how much annual leave I have left. When the employee arrives, we ask them when they do not know what and how they can do about the job, the robot throws links to them. We have entered several variants of a question into the programme. Of course, it does not answer questions such as how much my raise will be." (P4)

The HR manager in the furniture sector particularly emphasized the contribution of AI applications to time management.

"AI contributes significantly to time management. While we sit one by one and look at the training and development plans of employees, AI does it. We see the benefits of AI in terms of time management and operational processes, it enables us to work more efficiently." (P5)

"Routine jobs do not benefit the careers of educated people. Robots perform operational processes with high repetition. The quality of our work is increasing." (P7)

According to P7, the delegation of repetitive and operational tasks to robots enables employees to concentrate on more strategic, creative, and value-enhancing activities. This not only enhances the quality of the work performed but also positively influences the career progression of the employees.

"We use Gamma in our presentations. When we upload the text, it turns it into a presentation within a few minutes. We use AI in announcement texts in employer branding studies." (P8)

"I have turned AI into a personal assistant. It has increased my productivity tremendously. I make AI do analyses, I give it data, I communicate with it, I thank it, I criticise it, I tell it that this is not right, I push it, it pushes me. I use AI from social media posts, candidate evaluation, collecting the interview form and uploading it to the system, analysing the candidate's CV and asking what kind of questions I can ask about it." (P9)

Operational tasks such as preparing presentations also started to take less time with AI. P9 drew attention to his interaction with AI applications. The participant, who stated that AI increased his productivity, supports many operational tasks and routine activities related to recruitment with AI applications.

Theme 4: Training and Performance

Some of the participants in the study mentioned the issue of AI applications in training and performance management functions. One participant shared that the AI application performs personalized training needs analysis specific to the employee's development plan and presents it to the manager.

"An AI interprets what is written in these development plans and makes suggestions to the employee's managers, for example, X has written result orientation in the development plan, here are 3 trainings that may be suitable for X." (P5)

"We use AI in the performance management system. AI supports us while creating your goals here. When I ask what the goals of an HR director in the aviation sector can be, it produces a lot of alternatives for me. There were some metrics I never knew. For example, he produced them for me. HR managers in the aviation sector around the world follow these metrics, for example." (P7)

"In the performance management system, we use AI to analyze our outputs. As a result of this analysis, what are the top 10 training needs in the company? We use AI to determine which departments we should focus on." (P9)

Another participant stated that they use AI to set performance targets. Productive AI suggests performance targets according to the specified position. This finding is important in terms of harmonization with global trends in performance targets of enterprises through AI. P9 stated that they use AI in the analysis of performance evaluation results and emphasized the support of AI in the performance development process.

Theme 5: HR Analytics

The machine learning model of AI can support data-driven decision-making processes of enterprises, especially in HR analytics applications. Looking at the statements of HR professionals participating in the research, it is a striking finding that only one business has an HR analytics application based on AI.

"We also looked at global trends while defining our model. We used the Gartner HR analytics model. After the descriptive phase, we moved to the prescriptive phase. You can think of the descriptive phase as follows: it shows us data instantly. There are over 80 thousand employees in this holding, we can see this instantly. When the training hours are reduced, what is the effect on performance, we looked at these in diagnostic analytics. There is a methodology we use in remuneration. When you stay within that range and move one click below the range, what is the output for us? We conducted a study with the advanced analytics team. We used machine learning. We have 3 main KPI. The first one is about talent management. There is something called 'nine boxes' in talent management. Employees who fit in 3 boxes are seen as talented. Those in boxes 3-5 are seen as critical or those who manage the business. The 6th has potential but has not yet shown itself. Secondly, we tried to predict turnover. For example, what is Ayşe's turnover rate according to current data? If we do not want to lose that employee, we should intervene in that employee instantly. The third was performance forecasting. After this analysis, we also match the accuracy. As realized or likely to be realized. Many models are used there through the decision tree. The lower and upper layers are looked at and the accuracy rate is told. We received very positive feedback from business partners. The employee can be very talented but introverted. Before leaving, he/she may not be able to verbally tell his/her environment and HR business partner that he/she will leave. The talent code of the employee affects whether the employee is promoted or not. It can affect training processes. By objectifying these processes, we do not want to put the fate of employees in the hands of ABC person." (P10)

The HR manager in the consumer goods sector drew attention to analyses such as turnover prediction and performance prediction. With these AI applications, it is possible to retain qualified employees, make the right promotions and generally make all HR processes more objective.

Theme 6: Challenges

According to the statement of P1, harmonizing the practices of the organization with AI is seen as one of the most important challenges. The participant underlined that AI applications remain in rhetoric and described the current state of these applications as "the country where everyone wants to go". The participant emphasized that AI applications in Turkish enterprises are still at the beginning of the road and pointed to the existence of more concrete applications.

"Here, HRM's biggest challenge is to prepare the organization for AI. With AI, you need to change all your education policies accordingly. I do not believe in the use of AI according to generations. I think it changes according to the mindset, that is, it changes according to the mood. AI in Türkiye is a little bit more like the country everyone wants to go to. Everyone says AI, but when we look at organizations, how do they use it concretely? In a training I attended in the UK, the presenter asked "who uses AI in operational jobs?". Almost all of them raised their hands. In our country, there is a need to concretize the processes related to AI in human resources. It is still at the beginning of the road in Türkiye." (P1)

The HR professionals participating in the research stated that AI will not replace human beings in general and explained that the HR field will continue in the future as a department where human interaction is required.

"I think there will always be a need for human communication in human resources. Yes, robots will have a lot to do. An employee is crying in front of you. How sincere will this be to the employee? How much will it meet that feeling? Because there is such a thing as human to human, heart to heart." (P4)

"We will not be replaced by robots. On the contrary, we are in an era where emotions and leadership skills are much more important."(P3)

"In the past, an intellectual CV used to help you. Now that knowledge is useless. This makes us lazy. It is nice to have someone who thinks like me instead of me." (P7)

"No matter how much AI develops, it cannot replace a human being. We always need people's emotions, gestures and body language. Coaching is a must for human resources professionals." (P8)

According to the participants, the most basic feature that distinguishes humans from AI is seen as "emotion". Another participant drew attention to the fact that knowledge capital has lost its importance in working life, while another participant emphasized different roles such as coaching.

5. Conclusion and Discussion

In conclusion, this study has revealed that AI applications in the field of human resources are still in the development process and that HR professionals are increasingly turning to these technologies. Especially the recruitment process stands out as the function where AI applications are most intensively used. Participant opinions indicate that AI is not seen as a threat by HR professionals, but rather as a complementary tool that reduces workload, accelerates operational processes, and increases efficiency. In line with the results of the study conducted by Akram et al. (2024), it has been observed that users' intention to use a technology is determined by their perceptions of the perceived benefits and perceived ease of use provided by that technology.

Research findings reveal that AI technologies are effectively applied in various areas within recruitment processes, primarily talent acquisition; automation of operational tasks, improvement of candidate experience, conducting video interview analyses, and the use of predictive analytics applications. This situation demonstrates that AI offers multifaceted contributions to recruitment processes and supports strategic decision-making processes. Nawaz et al. (2024), Dersan Tonbil and Yavuz Aksakal (2024) and Paramita et al. (2024), in a similar vein, highlight that AI contributes to businesses in terms of ensuring objectivity in recruitment, saving time, and enhancing candidate experience.

Unlike Suen and Hung (2024), this study suggests that the use of avatars in AI-supported video interviews may have a negative impact on the candidate experience. A mixed-methods study by Mirowska and Mesnet (2022) found that candidates felt a lack of transparency and trust in interviews evaluated by AI. Candidates tend to prefer familiar and traditional interview methods. This reflects the notion that 'familiar things are better.' This may stem from some candidates' reluctance to interact with a machine (Strazzulla, 2024).

In this study, HR professionals stated that AI analyzed thousands of video interviews and was able to predict candidates. According to various studies, AI applications are believed to be less biased and more equitable in their decision-making because they conduct recruitment and selection processes without direct human intervention (Allal-Chérif et al., 2021; Horodyski, 2023). This study also found that candidate evaluation and prediction results support hiring decisions and that HR professionals are satisfied with these results.

The findings of this study support the growing interest in the practical use of AI applications in HR processes in the literature. Similar to the results of this study, Giordano et al. (2024) found in their study on the impact of ChatGPT on human skills that this tool can be used in areas such as email creation and technical documentation preparation. Aguinis et al. (2024) explain that when used appropriately, ChatGPT can serve as a flexible, efficient, and adaptable assistant for HR professionals in HR areas, but that ChatGPT cannot replace competent and well-trained HR professionals (Aguinis et al., 2024). Unlike the studies by Raman et al. (2024) and Bhatt et al. (2023), this study shows that ChatGPT, a generative AI model, is also used to

generate application recommendations for employee engagement. However, AI models, including ChatGPT, typically rely on large datasets containing sensitive employee information. Ensuring the confidentiality and security of this data is crucial to prevent unauthorized access and misuse (Rane, 2024: 18). In this study, some HR professionals avoided using ChatGPT due to concerns about data security and confidentiality, which supports the above discussion.

This study, in parallel with Maity (2019) and Varma et al. (2024), reveals that AI is considered a functional tool in areas such as determining training needs, delivering training, and performance management in HR operations. Participant views indicate that AI is beginning to play a supportive role not only in operational processes but also in strategic human resources decisions, thereby validating and expanding existing theoretical approaches in an applied context.

HR professionals generally appear to have a cautious optimism towards AI. While participants acknowledge the efficiency and supportive role that AI provides, they emphasized that the human touch, particularly emotional and relational skills such as empathy, body language and coaching, cannot be replaced. Critical thoughts were also expressed regarding generational differences in adaptation to AI and the value of intellectual labour. These statements underscore that AI is seen as a complementary tool in HRM, but that human interaction is indispensable. The results of the study conducted by Tezel and Ünsar (2025) also support these statements. According to the study, managers have emphasized the compatibility of AI and the human factor for effective HRM.

In this study, participants emphasized that one of the biggest challenges related to AI is its alignment with HR practices. A qualitative study by Khushk et al. (2025) also highlighted a lack of information on the impact of AI on HRM practices, procedures, and management approaches, which is consistent with the findings of this study. Nawaz (2024) similarly explains that there are challenges such as integrating AI into HR processes, obtaining quality data, and ensuring data security. Additionally, there is a risk of misuse of confidential documents and policies shared by organisations.

5.1. Managerial Implications

In this era, where we are experiencing the fifth industrial revolution focused on society, the aim is to "raise the level of prosperity by using technologies such as the Internet of Things and AI." The three fundamental elements of Society 5.0 are human-centeredness, sustainability, and resilience (Alves et al., 2023). It is possible to say that AI supports both quality education and employee well-being in line with sustainability goals. By performing routine and repetitive operational tasks, AI reduces the workload of employees, allowing them to focus on more meaningful work. This is particularly important in terms of enabling educated individuals to use their skills more efficiently and achieve professional satisfaction.

One of the original contributions of this study is that it reveals that human resources professionals in Türkiye use AI-supported tools on professional social networking platforms such as LinkedIn to hunt for talent. This finding provides a field-based example of the practical use of AI, which has received limited attention in the existing literature (Balcioğlu & Artar, 2024; İlhan et al., 2025), and offers a new perspective on how digital recruitment practices are shaped in a local context.

In order to improve the candidate experience, it is recommended that AI-supported video interviews feature a user-friendly interface, guidance, and the ability for candidates to communicate with recruitment professionals (Strazzulla, 2024). This study emphasizes the importance of not using avatars in AI-supported video interviews in terms of employee experience.

Another important managerial and theoretical contribution of this study is the results regarding the application of AI-based HR analytics. AI makes the talent management process more objective and supports the retention of key talent by predicting employees who intend to leave the company. It is hoped that the findings of this study on AI-supported HR analytics will guide businesses. As Thakral et al. (2023) state, more research is needed on AI-based HR analytics.

The new role of HR will be to create a competitive advantage by acquiring AI to increase companies' competencies in areas such as speed and responsiveness. The new strategic role of HR will be to review company structures and integrate AI in the best possible way. HR teams need to develop their skills to adapt to this new role (Li et al., 2023). Mastery of digital technologies has become a performance criterion for human resources employees, while it stands out as a selection criterion for candidates with this skill (Cherif et al., 2021: 3). AI is considered one of the most important technological trends of our time and plays a decisive role as a driving force in the future of HRM (Stone et al., 2024). The results of this study provide valuable information to HR professionals to enable them to make more effective and strategic management decisions. The results regarding the application of AI in HRM contribute to improving decisions related to employees. It is hoped that businesses will be able to develop their HRM strategies by utilizing the results of this study.

5.2. Limitations and Future Research Suggestions

A limitation of this research is that the results of the study are based on a limited sample size of HR professionals who participated in the interviews. Due to small sample sizes in qualitative research, findings about trends, regularities or distributions cannot be generalized to a larger population (Willig, 2008). Qualitative research does not aim for generalization. However, this study provides in-depth insights by offering comprehensive explanations for a small sample group (Patton, 2018: 40). Since the sample of the study consisted solely of HR managers in Türkiye, the findings are culturally limited.

The HR departments of the organizations in Türkiye that participated in the study seem to have stepped into the AI era, but what about afterwards? It is possible to say that more steps are needed for advanced and sustainable AI applications. It can be stated that there is a need for more advanced AI applications, especially in compensation management and HR analytics functions.

This article focuses more on AI experiences in HRM applications, but future research is suggested to examine different topics such as bias and challenges in AI algorithms, employee attitudes towards AI applications, and new competencies expected from HR professionals.

Declarations and Disclosures

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