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A Systematic Review of Human Resource Management Strategies for Enhancing Employees' Psychological Flexibility: A Case Study of Wasit Governorate

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to systematically review the published literature to identify, classify, and develop an integrated framework of the strategies and factors influencing the enhancement of employees' psychological flexibility in Wasit Governorate, Iraq. To achieve this objective, a systematic review method and an extensive search of reputable scientific databases were employed. The PRISMA 2020 guidelines were followed to improve the accuracy and transparency of reporting. The study corpus comprised all scientific articles related to human resource management and employees' psychological flexibility in governmental organizations. The search and screening process was conducted in several stages, resulting in the inclusion of 40 articles—35 identified through the primary search pathway and five through the supplementary pathway—as the final sources for analysis. The CASP checklist was used to assess the quality of the articles, and the data were analyzed using a systematic content analysis approach. The content analysis identified several strategies for enhancing employees' psychological flexibility, including "strategic and participatory human resource management," "supportive and adaptive leadership," "learning and development strategies," and "psychological flexibility training interventions." The influential factors identified included "psychological capital," "self-efficacy," "emotion regulation," "mindfulness," "social support," "psychological safety," "a supportive organizational culture," and "organizational justice." Finally, a four-level conceptual model was developed, comprising organizational strategies, psychological mechanisms, social and team resources, and outcomes. The principal contribution of this study is the identification and presentation of an integrated framework of the strategies and factors affecting employees' psychological flexibility, emphasizing the central roles of psychological capital and organizational support as core constructs. The findings may assist human resource managers and policymakers in governmental organizations in developing and implementing policies and practices that respond more effectively to employees' needs and expectations, thereby improving psychological flexibility and organizational productivity.

Keywords: systematic review, human resource management strategies, employees' psychological flexibility, Wasit Governorate, content analysis

Introduction

Contemporary organizations operate in an environment characterized by accelerated technological change, economic uncertainty, institutional restructuring, workforce diversity, and increasingly complex stakeholder expectations. Digital transformation, artificial intelligence, automation, and Fourth Industrial Revolution technologies are altering job roles, competency requirements, decision-making processes, and established patterns of interaction between employees and organizations. Consequently, employees are expected not only to possess technical capabilities but also to respond constructively to ambiguity, disruption, and continuous change. Strategic human resource management has therefore moved

beyond administrative functions toward the development of adaptive capabilities that enable employees and organizations to remain effective under unstable conditions. The digital economy has particularly intensified the need for flexible career structures, continuous skill development, technology-based human resource systems, and data-informed workforce planning [1, 2]. The integration of advanced technologies into human resource practices can enhance productivity and organizational responsiveness, although its effectiveness depends on employees' ability to adapt psychologically and behaviorally to new working arrangements [3]. Similarly, artificial intelligence-driven human resource management may strengthen employee resilience and adaptive performance when it supports autonomy, competence development, trust, and meaningful engagement rather than merely increasing technological control [4].

Within this changing organizational environment, psychological flexibility has emerged as an important psychological and managerial construct. Psychological flexibility refers to an individual's capacity to remain aware of present circumstances, accept difficult thoughts and emotions without becoming excessively controlled by them, adjust behavioral responses to situational demands, and continue acting in accordance with meaningful personal and professional values. It does not imply passive tolerance of unfavorable conditions or unrestricted behavioral variability; rather, it represents context-sensitive adaptation and the ability to select effective responses despite stress, uncertainty, or emotional discomfort. Psychological flexibility is associated with better mental health, greater life satisfaction, and a stronger capacity to cope with adversity [5]. Evidence obtained during the COVID-19 pandemic also demonstrated that individuals with greater psychological flexibility were better able to employ adaptive coping strategies and maintain psychological well-being under conditions of widespread uncertainty and disruption [6]. From a leadership perspective, psychological flexibility enables managers and employees to reconsider ineffective assumptions, manage competing demands, and respond to twenty-first-century workplace challenges without losing alignment with organizational and ethical values [7]. Flexible and secure working conditions are likewise associated with employees' mental health, suggesting that psychological flexibility is influenced not only by individual characteristics but also by the quality of employment arrangements and organizational structures [8].

Psychological flexibility is conceptually related to, but distinct from, employee resilience, adaptability, and adaptive performance. Psychological flexibility primarily concerns the processes through which employees regulate their internal experiences and modify behavior in response to contextual demands. Resilience refers more directly to the capacity to withstand, recover from, or grow through adversity, whereas adaptive performance concerns observable effectiveness when tasks, technologies, roles, or interpersonal circumstances change. In practice, these constructs frequently interact. Psychological flexibility can provide the internal regulatory foundation through which resilience and adaptive performance develop. Contemporary models of individual job performance increasingly include adaptability, creativity, responsiveness, and problem-solving alongside traditional task performance [9]. Adaptive performance may also strengthen the relationship between person–organization fit and organizational citizenship behavior by enabling employees to translate their compatibility with organizational values into constructive behavior under changing conditions [10]. In service-intensive settings, adaptability and organizational engagement are particularly important for maintaining commitment to service quality and reducing turnover intentions [11]. Among younger healthcare workers, resilience is also associated with professional identity, indicating that employees' ability to manage demanding circumstances can influence their connection to occupational roles and institutions [12].

Because employees' psychological responses are shaped by organizational systems, psychological flexibility cannot be treated solely as a personal trait or individual responsibility. Human resource management policies determine the distribution of job demands, resources, developmental opportunities, rewards, autonomy, information, and social support. Strategic human resource management systems can therefore create conditions that either facilitate or restrict flexible psychological and behavioral responses. Strategic practices involving training, participation, job security, performance management, career development, and employee involvement have been associated with resilient employee and organizational behavior [13]. Integrated strategic human resource management systems may enhance resilience through psychological empowerment, particularly when employees perceive that they possess competence, autonomy, influence, and meaningfulness in their work [14]. Sustainable human resource management practices similarly contribute to employee resilience and positive outcomes when they are organized around common-good values and balance organizational performance with employee well-being [15]. Furthermore, employees' perceptions of human resource management practices can influence their resilience and long-term employment intentions, demonstrating that formal policies must be experienced as credible, supportive, and relevant to employees' needs [16].

Participatory and involvement-oriented human resource practices are especially important because psychological flexibility requires employees to perceive that they have sufficient voice, autonomy, and access to organizational resources. High-involvement human resource management can enhance employee resilience by strengthening participation, communication, learning opportunities, and adaptation to technological changes [17]. Collectivism-oriented human resource management can also promote resilience by reinforcing cooperation, collective identity, mutual trust, shared responsibility, and perceptions of fairness [18]. These social and participatory mechanisms are relevant because flexibility is not produced only through individual decision-making; it is also shaped by whether employees feel safe enough to express concerns, experiment with alternative solutions, and seek assistance. Flexible organizational values and a supportive participation climate are associated with constructive job attitudes, readiness for change, and employees' sense of ownership [19]. Moreover, flexible human resource practices can improve job satisfaction when employees perceive that skill deployment, behavioral expectations, career arrangements, and organizational procedures can be adapted to changing circumstances [20]. Thus, participatory human resource management provides both structural opportunities and psychological signals that encourage adaptive responses.

Employee well-being represents another central pathway connecting human resource management with psychological flexibility. Human resource practices designed to promote well-being typically include manageable workloads, fair compensation, job security, development opportunities, work–life balance, supportive supervision, mental health resources, and employee participation. In academic institutions, psychologically healthy human resource practices can enhance faculty well-being by strengthening psychological capital, emotional resources, meaningfulness, and perceived organizational support [21]. A systematic examination of employee well-being-oriented human resource practices similarly shows that isolated policies are generally insufficient and that coordinated bundles of mutually reinforcing practices are required to address employees' professional, psychological, and personal needs [22]. Job satisfaction is also connected to organizational performance and employees' mental health, suggesting that positive job attitudes may function both as outcomes of supportive management and as resources that help employees respond more flexibly to occupational demands [23]. Psychological empowerment can further protect employees' mental health by increasing their perceived control,

competence, and capacity to influence workplace outcomes [24]. Similarly, management approaches that strengthen employees' psychological empowerment may enhance their confidence and willingness to respond proactively to complex organizational conditions [25].

Leadership constitutes a critical mechanism through which human resource policies are translated into employees' daily experiences. Even well-designed human resource strategies may fail when line managers implement them inconsistently, communicate them poorly, or create climates characterized by fear and mistrust. Supportive and adaptive leaders help employees interpret change, access organizational resources, and maintain confidence during periods of uncertainty. In extreme contexts such as armed conflict, relational human resource management and supportive leadership become essential for maintaining employee well-being, organizational connection, and resilience [26]. Supportive human resource practices are also more likely to enhance organizational resilience when managers themselves demonstrate resilient behavior and can respond effectively to changing demands [27]. Servant leadership and effective safety management may support employees' mental health by emphasizing responsibility, care, trust, and protection [28]. Psychological safety is particularly relevant because employees who feel safe from humiliation or punishment are more willing to acknowledge difficulties, request support, learn from mistakes, and propose alternative courses of action [29]. Internal social capital, including trust, shared understanding, and supportive relationships, can also reinforce the effects of psychological capital on adaptive performance [30]. At the team level, individualized work arrangements may stimulate breakthrough innovation when they facilitate knowledge sharing, transactive memory, cognitive flexibility, and mutual support [31].

The design of work arrangements is another major determinant of psychological flexibility. Flexible schedules, remote work, compressed workweeks, role flexibility, and decentralized decision-making can help employees coordinate professional and personal responsibilities and adapt their work behavior to changing circumstances. Work flexibility has been associated with job satisfaction and job performance, making it an important component of sustainable human resource management [32]. Nevertheless, flexibility is not inherently beneficial. Smart working in the public sector can increase autonomy and work–life integration, but it can also intensify workloads, blur work–life boundaries, create digital fatigue, and reduce social connection when employees lack adequate support or the right to disconnect [33]. The introduction of service robots and other intelligent technologies similarly requires supportive organizational interventions to reduce perceived burdensomeness and preserve employees' self-worth, role meaningfulness, and opportunities for development [34]. Performance management systems must therefore be redesigned for uncertain conditions by emphasizing adaptable objectives, developmental feedback, multidimensional performance information, and attention to employee retention [35]. The pandemic also revealed substantial differences in employee well-being, demonstrating that uniform organizational responses may overlook variations in vulnerability, trust, social support, and coping resources [36].

In addition to organizational policies and work design, targeted psychological interventions can directly strengthen the mechanisms underlying psychological flexibility. Such interventions commonly include mindfulness, self-awareness, acceptance, cognitive defusion, emotion regulation, values clarification, self-efficacy development, and behavioral commitment. Psychological flexibility training has been proposed as a structured method for enhancing resilience and readiness among military personnel exposed to demanding and unpredictable conditions [37]. Mindfulness training may similarly improve psychological well-being and occupational adjustment by helping employees observe internal experiences without immediately reacting to them [38]. Self-efficacy is another essential resource because employees who believe in their

ability to manage difficult situations are more likely to persist, seek solutions, and maintain constructive behavior during employment uncertainty or organizational change [39]. Qualitative evidence from palliative care professionals further indicates that resilience is supported by self-regulation, emotional balance, rest, reflective practices, family support, supportive colleagues, and organizational policies [40]. Accordingly, training programs are most effective when they are embedded within supportive organizational systems rather than being used to shift responsibility for structural problems entirely onto employees.

The relationship between human resource management and psychological flexibility must also be interpreted in relation to national, institutional, and cultural contexts. Human resource management practices are not universally transferable because their meaning and effectiveness depend on labor-market conditions, administrative traditions, leadership norms, collective values, and institutional arrangements. Research on human resource management in Asia highlights the importance of contextual sensitivity, particularly regarding cultural values, organizational hierarchy, work–life expectations, and employees' perceptions of support [41]. The literature on organizational resilience likewise demonstrates that the field has evolved from a narrow emphasis on recovery toward a multidimensional understanding involving anticipation, adaptation, learning, renewal, and system-level capability [42]. Qualitative analyses of human resource management also indicate that psychological elements, strategic practices, leadership, and organizational context must be considered jointly when explaining employee outcomes [43]. These observations are particularly relevant to governmental organizations, where formal regulations, hierarchical authority, public accountability, bureaucratic procedures, and limited resource discretion may shape how employees experience human resource policies and organizational change.

Governmental organizations and local administrative institutions face distinctive challenges that make employees' psychological flexibility especially important. Public employees are expected to maintain service continuity, comply with legal and administrative requirements, respond to changing political and social priorities, and address citizens' needs, often under conditions of resource scarcity and procedural constraint. Governorates occupy an important position in this institutional structure because they connect central policy with local implementation and coordinate multiple administrative, social, and developmental functions. Employees working in such settings may encounter role ambiguity, centralized decision-making, limited promotion opportunities, changing technologies, heavy workloads, and competing expectations from managers, political authorities, and members of the public. Under these circumstances, psychological flexibility can support constructive coping, adaptive performance, interpersonal cooperation, and sustained commitment. However, the development of such flexibility requires more than individual resilience. It depends on strategic human resource management, supportive leadership, psychological safety, organizational justice, meaningful work, learning opportunities, social support, and flexible yet accountable work systems.

Despite the growing literature on employee resilience, adaptive performance, psychological empowerment, well-being, flexible work, and supportive human resource management, the available evidence remains conceptually fragmented. Some studies focus on psychological resources such as self-efficacy and psychological capital, whereas others examine leadership, work design, technology, participation, social support, or organizational culture. Moreover, psychological flexibility is sometimes treated as a personal capability, sometimes as an outcome of favorable working conditions, and sometimes as a mechanism linking organizational practices with well-being and performance. This fragmentation makes it difficult for public-sector decision-makers to determine which strategies should be prioritized, how different factors interact, and which

constructs operate as antecedents, mediators, moderators, or outcomes. A systematic review is therefore required to identify recurrent patterns, compare findings across organizational settings, classify the relevant strategies and factors, and develop an integrated conceptual framework. The use of transparent review procedures is essential to ensure that study identification, screening, quality assessment, and synthesis are conducted in a reproducible manner, as emphasized by the PRISMA 2020 reporting guidelines [44].

Accordingly, the present study aimed to systematically identify, categorize, and synthesize human resource management strategies and organizational, psychological, social, and team-related factors that enhance employees' psychological flexibility and to develop an integrated conceptual framework applicable to Wasit Governorate in Iraq.

Methodology

Study Type and Research Approach

The present research is a systematic review. Unlike primary research articles, literature reviews do not generate new data; rather, they evaluate and synthesize previously published findings and provide readers with the best available evidence (Okoli & Schabram, 2010). In the present study, systematic content analysis was used to analyze the data.

Systematic Review Process

The systematic review process was conducted in accordance with the PRISMA 2020 guidelines (Page et al., 2021). This process comprised three main phases—review planning, review implementation, and review reporting—and eight operational steps.

Research Quality

The 10-item version of the CASP checklist for quantitative studies was used to evaluate the quality of the selected articles. This instrument includes 10 key questions addressing different aspects of a research article, including the research objective, research questions, data collection methods, data analysis, and presentation of results. Each question was scored as fully satisfied (2), not satisfied (0), or partially satisfied (1). The maximum possible score for an article was 20, and articles scoring above 14, equivalent to 70%, were approved for inclusion in the final stage (Long et al., 2020).

Review Steps

Step One: Formulating the Research Questions

Systematic review studies require clearly defined research questions, as these questions guide researchers toward achieving specific objectives (Okoli & Schabram, 2010). The main research questions of the present study were as follows:

1. What strategies are effective in enhancing employees' psychological flexibility in Wasit Governorate?
2. What factors influence the enhancement of employees' psychological flexibility in Wasit Governorate?

Step Two: Designing the Systematic Review Protocol

Designing a systematic review protocol is a fundamental step in conducting review studies because it defines the research pathway and enhances the transparency, accuracy, and reproducibility of the findings (Higgins & Green, 2011). The review protocol was designed according to the PICo framework—Population, Interest, and Context (Lockhart & Frampton, 2015):

- **Population:** Employees of governmental organizations, particularly governorates and local government institutions
- **Interest:** Strategies, policies, practices, and managerial mechanisms affecting employees' psychological flexibility
- **Context:** Governmental organizations, local government, and regional administrative structures

In the present study, all stages were planned and implemented in accordance with the PRISMA 2020 guidelines and the scientific principles of systematic reviews. This process was intended to ensure that the final set of selected studies could adequately answer the research questions concerning strategies for enhancing employees' psychological flexibility in Wasit Governorate.

Step Three: Identifying Sources and Developing the Search Strategy

Keywords used in a literature review must be selected and examined carefully and accurately. In the present study, the keywords were selected in consultation with expert academics and researchers in the field, as presented in Table 1. The search strategy consisted of an organized combination of keywords, phrases, and Boolean operators, including AND and OR, for searching the databases.

Table 1

Keywords and Search Strategy Used in the Databases

Databases	Search strategy
Scopus and Web of Science	("human resource management" OR "human resources management" OR "HRM" OR "HR management" OR "HR practices" OR "human resource practices" OR "personnel management" OR "personnel administration" OR "human capital management" OR "HC management" OR "strategic human resource management" OR SHRM OR "HR strategies" OR "human resource strategies" OR "workforce management" OR "talent management") AND ("psychological flexibility" OR "employee psychological flexibility" OR "workplace psychological flexibility" OR "behavioral flexibility" OR "cognitive flexibility" OR "emotional flexibility" OR "employee adaptability" OR "work adaptability" OR "adaptive performance" OR "employee resilience" OR "psychological resilience" OR "occupational resilience" OR "flexible behavior" OR "job flexibility" OR "work flexibility" OR "Determinants of psychological flexibility" OR "Predictors of psychological flexibility" OR "Drivers of psychological flexibility" OR "Psychological flexibility outcomes" OR "Psychological flexibility models" OR "Measurement of psychological flexibility" OR "psychological flexibility scale" OR "PF scale")

Step Four: Searching the Databases

Following the identification of sources and development of the search strategy, the systematic search for scientific studies was initiated to comprehensively collect evidence relevant to the research objectives.

Search of the primary databases: In the first step, a structured search was conducted in two reputable scientific databases, Scopus and Web of Science. In Scopus, the search was performed within the article title, abstract, and keyword fields. In Web of Science, the search was conducted within the article title field. This systematic search identified 3,756 scientific records as the initial raw dataset.

Supplementary search using other methods: To increase the comprehensiveness of the systematic review and ensure that important studies not indexed in the primary databases were not excluded, supplementary searches were conducted in open-access scientific resources, including Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, MDPI, Springer Open Access, and Emerald Open Access. This supplementary search identified 46 relevant scientific records.

Step Five: Study Selection and Screening

To obtain valid scientific evidence and accurately answer the research questions, the study identification and screening process was conducted in accordance with the PRISMA guidelines. Screening was performed through two pathways: a primary pathway and a supplementary pathway (Page et al., 2021).

- **Pathway One: Scopus and Web of Science**

A systematic search of the literature was conducted in Scopus and the Web of Science Core Collection. Following the extraction of the search results, all records were merged into a consolidated database, and a two-stage screening process was applied in accordance with the PRISMA approach.

- **Stage One: Initial Screening**

Step 1—Removal of duplicate articles: After merging the Scopus and Web of Science outputs, duplicate articles were removed based on normalized DOI values. For records without a DOI, duplicates were identified by matching the article title and publication year.

Step 2—Removal of incomplete records: Articles lacking a title or simultaneously lacking both an abstract and keywords were excluded because they could not be scientifically evaluated.

Step 3—Removal of invalid sources: Records with inappropriate document types, such as editorials, notes, and letters, or those without a publication year, were excluded. Only research and review articles were retained.

Step 4—Removal of irrelevant articles: Based on an examination of the titles, abstracts, and keywords, articles that were not directly related to human resource management and employees' psychological flexibility were excluded.

Stage-one output: 206 valid and relevant articles

- **Stage Two: Content Screening**

Step 5—Topical relevance and open access: Articles whose principal focus fell outside human resource management and employees' psychological flexibility or whose full text was not openly accessible were excluded.

Step 6—Assessment of research quality: Articles demonstrating fundamental weaknesses in their methodology, theoretical framework, analytical model, or empirical analysis were excluded.

Step 7—Assessment of scientific structure: Finally, articles lacking a coherent scientific structure, a transparent research method, or reliable results were excluded.

Final output: 35 high-quality articles with the greatest topical relevance

Table 2

Summary of the Screening Process for the Primary Pathway

Process stage	Number of articles
Initial identification of records	3,756
After duplicate removal	3,693
After title and abstract screening	290
After initial content screening	206
After more detailed content assessment	135
Articles with full-text access	57
Articles relevant to the organizational context	53
Final studies included in the research	35

- **Pathway Two: Other Sources and Google Scholar**

To complete the coverage of studies concerning strategies and factors influencing the enhancement of employees' psychological flexibility, a supplementary search was conducted on open-access scientific websites and resources. This search was intended to identify studies that might not have been indexed in the primary databases but were directly relevant to the subject of the present research.

The following databases and resources were searched: Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, MDPI, Springer Open Access, and Emerald Open Access. These searches identified 46 scientific records.

In the next stage, the titles, abstracts, and keywords of the articles were examined. Articles whose focus was not aligned with the subject of the present study were excluded. The primary reasons for exclusion at this stage were a lack of focus on employees and organizational environments, an examination of flexibility in individual or clinical contexts without an organizational connection, and a lack of relevance to human resource management. Consequently, 28 articles were excluded, and 18 articles remained for the next stage.

The full texts of the remaining 18 articles were then examined. At this stage, the principal focus was on whether strategies, factors, or policies affecting the enhancement of employees' psychological flexibility could be extracted. Thirteen articles were excluded because of methodological weaknesses or the inability to extract relevant strategies.

Ultimately, five scientific articles were identified through this pathway as meeting the content-related, methodological, and research-objective criteria required for inclusion in the final analysis.

Table 3

Summary of the Screening Process for Other Open-Access Sources

Process stage	Number of articles
Initial extraction from open-access databases and resources	46
Excluded after title, abstract, and keyword screening	28
Articles remaining for full-text assessment	18
Excluded after full-text assessment	13
Final studies included in the research	5

Step Six: Quality Assessment of the Selected Studies

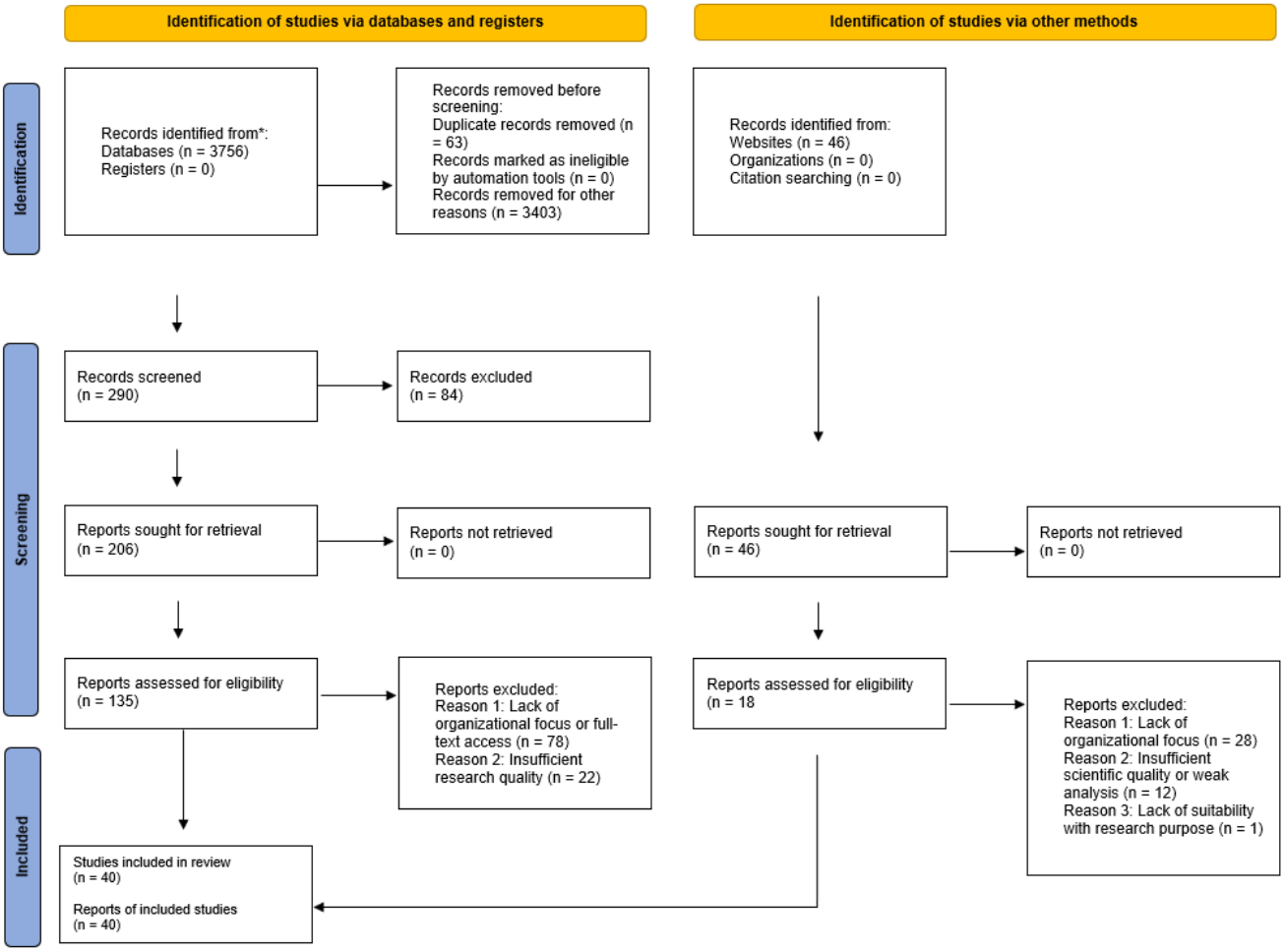
Following the identification, initial screening, and full-text assessment stages, 40 eligible articles were ultimately selected for inclusion in the final analysis: 35 articles from the primary pathway and five from the supplementary pathway. To ensure the methodological quality of these studies and enhance the credibility of the findings, the selected articles were qualitatively assessed using the CASP checklist.

The assessment results indicated that a substantial proportion of the selected articles obtained high scores on the main CASP criteria. The first reason for the high quality of these studies was the clarity and transparency of their research objectives; nearly all the articles had clearly defined research problems, explicit research questions, and coherent theoretical frameworks. The second reason was the appropriateness and robustness of their methodological designs. Most articles employed valid quantitative designs, including structural equation modeling, multivariate regression, and confirmatory factor analysis. The third factor contributing to their high quality was the reliability and validity of the measurement instruments. The fourth reason was the transparency of the data analysis and interpretation of the findings. Finally, the practical applicability of the findings and their relevance to human resource management and psychological flexibility constituted another key factor contributing to high CASP scores.

Based on the comprehensive assessment conducted using the CASP instrument, all 40 articles included in the present study were determined to have "very good" to "excellent" methodological quality. No study was excluded from the research process because of weaknesses in its design, analysis, or reporting. Therefore, it can be stated with a high degree of scientific confidence that the findings and conceptual framework derived from this study are based on valid, consistent, and reliable evidence.

Figure 1

Flowchart of Article Selection



Step Seven: Data Extraction

Following the final selection of 40 articles—35 from the primary pathway and five from the supplementary pathway—the strategies and factors affecting the enhancement of employees' psychological flexibility were extracted. For each article, the full research title, authors, publication year, and key human resource management strategies were extracted and recorded. Table 4 provides a comprehensive summary of this process.

Table 4

Data Extracted From the 40 Selected Articles

No.	Article title	Authors	Year	Extracted strategies	Extracted factors
1	*Fostering Faculty Well-Being: Evidence on Human Resource Practices for a Psychologically Healthy Academia*	Batta et al.	2025	Implementation of high-performance HRM practices; design of interventions to strengthen psychological capital; digital empowerment; development of emotional-intelligence programs; strengthening meaningfulness and value alignment	Psychological capital; perceived stress; emotional intelligence; spiritual intelligence; organizational support
2	*SHRM Practices Employee and Organizational Resilient Behavior: Implications for Open Innovation*	Reza et al.	2021	Strategic human resource management; strategic planning; adaptive management; competency development; institutionalization of the social process of resilience development	Training; employee participation; job security; clear job descriptions; performance appraisal; promotion opportunities; compensation
3	*How and When AI-Driven HRM Promotes Employee Resilience and Adaptive Performance*	Du et al.	2026	Implementation of AI-driven HRM; development of exploratory skills; strengthening trust in technology	Employee exploration; trust in artificial intelligence; adaptive performance
4	*Strategic Human Resource Management in the Digital Economy Era*	Alexandru	2025	Strategic HRM aligned with the digital economy; development of digital skills; talent attraction and retention; design of flexible career paths	Digital skills; continuous learning; learning-oriented organizational culture; flexibility of work structures

5	*Organizational Resilience: 30 Years of Intellectual Structure and Future Perspectives*	López-López et al.	2022	Institutionalization of strategic resilience; movement toward adaptive management; strengthening a culture of learning from errors; employee empowerment	Supportive organizational culture; trust-based leadership style; psychological resources; structural flexibility
6	*Digital Human Resource Management Influence on the Organizational Resilience*	Ahmić and Ćosić	2025	Digitalization of HRM processes; implementation of integrated HRM information systems; data-driven strategic talent management	Structural flexibility; adaptive organizational culture; psychological empowerment; information transparency
7	*Determining Organizational Resilience Through Employee Resilient Characteristics and Supportive HR Practices*	Al-Juwaid	2025	Supportive HRM practices; employee recognition; emotional support; instrumental support; creation of equal development opportunities	Employees' resilience characteristics; problem-focused coping; emotion-focused coping; psychological safety; managerial resilience
8	*Service Robots in the Workplace: Fostering Sustainable Collaboration*	Al-Meked and Lee	2024	Strengthening organizational support; managing job demands; designing technology-related supportive interventions; facilitating learning opportunities	Reduced feelings of being burdensome; job-related self-esteem; self-development; psychological safety; meaningfulness of the job role
9	*High-Involvement Human Resource Management Practices and Employee Resilience*	Kahandi et al.	2024	Participatory HRM; continuous training and development; facilitation of technological adaptation; participatory management	Employee flexibility; technological adaptability; psychological capital
10	*The Effect of Collectivism-Oriented Human Resource Management on Employee Resilience*	Chen et al.	2024	Collectivism-oriented HRM; teamwork and collaboration; participatory decision-making; creation of support networks	Overall justice perceptions; collective identity; mutual trust; psychological safety
11	*Mapping Promoting Factors and Mechanisms of Resilience for Performance Improvement*	Zhai et al.	2023	Integrated SHRM systems; psychological empowerment; design of positive work experiences	Psychological empowerment; positive emotions; self-efficacy; psychological resilience
12	*Work Flexibility, Job Satisfaction, and Job Performance*	Davidescu et al.	2020	Composite flexibility index; design of a multidimensional flexibility package; working from home; flexibility in the number of working days	Work flexibility; job satisfaction; pay satisfaction; gender; job type
13	*Does Workplace Partnership Deliver Mutual Gains at Work?*	Saridakis et al.	2020	Task-based participation; face-to-face communication with senior management; information sharing; employee involvement in organizational change	Job satisfaction; organizational commitment; quality of employee voice; job autonomy
14	*Scientometric Study of Digital Transformation and Human Resources*	Ries-Cornejo et al.	2025	Bibliometric analysis of digital transformation; identification of research gaps; development of digital skills	Digital competence; technological adaptability; work–life balance
15	*Exploring Factors Shaping Sustainable Employee Performance*	Hendry	2025	Design of an integrated HRM package; institutionalization of organizational support; strengthening supportive leadership; development of a learning culture; increased employee participation	Human resource management; leadership; psychological factors; engagement; organizational culture
16	*Workplace Disruption in the Public Sector and HRM Practices to Enhance Employee Resilience*	Kim et al.	2024	Design of supportive jobs; strengthening public service motivation; value alignment; creation of supportive relationships	Perceived organizational support; sense of meaningfulness; self-efficacy; psychological safety
17	*The Multifaceted Nature of Individual Job Performance*	Huseynat et al.	2024	Strengthening organizational support; developing an innovation climate; implementing transformational leadership; creating a team learning climate	Flexibility and adaptability; creative problem-solving; self-efficacy; work engagement
18	*Assessment of Adaptive Performance and Its Role as a Moderator*	Gorostiaga et al.	2022	Assessment and development of adaptive performance; psychological empowerment; ensuring flexibility in employee selection	Adaptive performance; interpersonal adaptability; stress management; creativity
19	*Investment Areas to Enhance Public Employee Resilience During COVID-19*	Danaeefard et al.	2022	Design of crisis-responsive administrative policies; implementation of personal health measures; training for adaptation to technology; development of mental-health programs	Physical health; mental calmness; hope for the future; social support; transparency of information
20	*Talent Management Challenges During COVID-19 and Beyond*	Aguinis and Burgi-Tian	2021	Flexibility in performance objectives; outcome measurement; stay interviews; multisource performance-management systems	Adaptive performance; organizational citizenship behavior; self-efficacy; flexibility
21	*Commitment to Quality Service in Hospitality*	Rabie et al.	2025	Creation of a flexible work environment; ensuring work–life balance; specialized training interventions	Organizational engagement; interpersonal adaptability skills; emotional capacity; sense of meaningfulness
22	*The Role of HRM in Building Resilience: The Relationality Imperative in Times of War*	Daouk-Öyry et al.	2025	Adoption of a relationality strategy; implementation of retention programs; increased investment in internal training; utilization of technology	Psychological capital; employee well-being; individual and organizational resilience
23	*Resilience and Professional Identity Among Young Healthcare Workers*	Shu et al.	2025	Provision of administrative support; improvement of working conditions; development of targeted interventions; provision of mental-health resources	Resilience; intrinsic motivation; professional identity; satisfaction with humanistic care
24	*Integrating Fourth Industrial Revolution Technologies in Human Resource Practices*	Al-Suwaidi et al.	2025	Flexible work arrangements; remote work; compressed workweeks; shift work	Work–life balance; quality of working life; job satisfaction; employee autonomy
25	*The Bright and Dark Side of Smart Working in the Public Sector*	Todisco et al.	2023	Development of flexible organizational models; improvement of work–life balance; decentralization of decision-making; protection of the right to disconnect	Technological transformation; polyvalent skills; mutual trust; digital well-being
26	*Team Idiosyncratic Deals and Team Breakthrough Innovation*	Fan et al.	2022	Establishment of idiosyncratic deals; nonstandard work arrangements; strengthening team cognitive flexibility	Knowledge sharing; transactive memory systems; mutual support and trust
27	*The Effects of Psychological Capital and Internal Social Capital on*	Lu et al.	2021	Cultivation of dynamic capabilities; increased role flexibility; strengthening internal social capital	Psychological capital; social capital; self-efficacy; reduced job pressure

	Frontline Hotel Employees' Adaptive Performance				
28	*Human Resource Management Research and Practice in Asia*	Cooke et al.	2020	Flexible work policies; organizational culture supportive of work–life balance; management sensitive to cultural context	Cultural values; perceived organizational support; institutional structures
29	*Do Opportunities for Formal Learning Stimulate Follow-Up Participation in Informal Learning?*	Bednall and Sanders	2017	Adoption of human resource development strategies; provision of formal learning opportunities; creation of a strong HRM system	Job-related learning; knowledge sharing; HRM system strength
30	*Job Burnout and Resilience Among Palliative Care Professionals*	Tan et al.	2025	Self-regulation and emotional balance; purposeful rest and recovery; mindfulness; reflective practices	Initial motivation; family support; supportive coworker relationships; policy support
31	*Resilience Unveiled: The Transformative Power of Self-Efficacy*	Mangundjaya et al.	2024	Organizational flexibility-development programs; strengthening self-efficacy; positive-thinking training; psychological empowerment	Self-efficacy; positive attitudes; optimism; psychological capital
32	*Sustainable Human Resource Management Practices, Employee Resilience, and Employee Outcomes*	Lu et al.	2023	Targeted managerial interventions; supportive leadership; strengthening meaningfulness at work; development of psychological capital	Affective commitment; work ethics; psychological resources; organizational culture
33	*Investigating the Links Between Resilience, Perceived HRM Practices, and Retirement Intentions*	Salminen et al.	2019	Strengthening and developing flexibility; activation of organizational resources; enhancement of adaptive capacity	High-involvement work practices; information sharing; performance-based rewards
34	*The Great Divide Between Employees: Clustering Employee "Well-Being" During a Pandemic*	Bugin et al.	2025	Employee segmentation; selective dialogue; strengthening institutional trust; design of targeted interventions	Institutional trust; perceived vulnerability; maintenance of lifestyle; social support
35	*Enhancing Resiliency and Optimizing Readiness in Military Personnel*	Patterson et al.	2023	Psychological flexibility training; experiential workshops; mindfulness exercises; values clarification	Psychological flexibility; mindfulness; self-efficacy; unit cohesion
36	*Exploring the Role of Flexible Human Resource Practices in Enhancing Employee Job Satisfaction*	Sasal et al.	2025	Skill and behavioral flexibility; reconfiguration of HRM processes; alignment of individual and organizational goals	Psychological safety; job autonomy; organizational commitment; strategic alignment
37	*Employee Well-Being Human Resource Practices: A Systematic Literature Review*	Boyar and Sinha	2024	Well-being-oriented HRM bundles; integration of bundle implementation; training covering professional and personal development; strengthening job flexibility	Job security; fair pay; person–job fit; emotional intelligence; mental-health support
38	*Cultivating Flexibility: The Relationship Between Flexible Organizational Values, Participation Climate, and Job Attitudes*	Hofstad et al.	2024	Strengthening clan-oriented cultural values; development of adhocracy values; creation of a participatory climate; institutionalization of managerial support	Organizational commitment; readiness for change; sense of ownership; psychological safety
39	*The Role of HRM Practices in Enhancing Employee Performance and Reducing Turnover Intentions*	Hoxha et al.	2025	Implementation of performance-oriented HRM practices; continuous training; employee participation in decision-making; design of transparent career paths	HRM practices; learning capability; job discretion; organizational commitment
40	*Work Commitment in Business Organizations: Systematic Literature Mapping*	Suárez-Amaya et al.	2024	Strengthening supportive and ethical leadership; managerial behavioral role-modeling; creation of a climate of trust; development of leadership skills	Leadership style; trust; psychological safety; organizational commitment

Findings and Results

At this stage, the strategies and factors extracted from the 40 selected articles were analyzed and synthesized. The purpose of this stage was to integrate conceptually related and aligned constructs and abstract them into broad strategies for enhancing employees' psychological flexibility.

Despite the apparent conceptual fragmentation in the literature on employees' psychological flexibility, the literature follows coherent and generalizable patterns. At this stage, similar and related concepts were integrated at a higher level and organized into broad strategies, each representing a fundamental dimension of enhancing employees' psychological flexibility.

The first broad strategy is **strategic and participatory human resource management**, which is rooted in human resource management and organizational behavior theories. Concepts such as high-involvement HRM, collectivism-oriented HRM, fair reward and procedural systems, employee participation, job security, and clear job descriptions represent managerial approaches that create motivation, security, and participation and thereby provide the conditions required to enhance employees' psychological flexibility.

In contrast, **supportive and adaptive leadership**, as the second strategy, emphasizes managers' roles in creating a safe and supportive environment. Ethical leadership, team-oriented leadership, and leadership under conditions of change are

behaviors that help employees demonstrate greater flexibility when confronting challenges by fostering trust, support, and appropriate direction.

Learning and development strategies, as the third strategy, emphasize the importance of continuous training, organizational learning, and knowledge sharing in enhancing psychological flexibility. This strategy indicates that organizations that institutionalize a learning culture develop employees with a greater capacity to adapt to change and manage challenges.

Psychological flexibility training interventions, as the fourth strategy, emphasize specialized training designed to strengthen employees' psychological flexibility. Psychological flexibility training, experiential workshops, mindfulness exercises, and booster sessions are interventions designed to increase awareness, self-regulation, and acceptance of change.

Table 5 presents the results of the analysis and synthesis process and demonstrates how the diverse concepts extracted from the 40 articles were organized into broad strategies.

Table 5

Analysis and Synthesis of Findings: Categorization of Broad Strategies

No.	Identified broad strategy	Principal concepts and components	Representative articles
1	Strategic and participatory human resource management	High-involvement/participatory HRM; collectivism-oriented HRM; fair reward and procedural systems; employee participation; job security	Reza et al. (2021); Kahandi et al. (2024); Chen et al. (2024); Saridakis et al. (2020)
2	Supportive and adaptive leadership	Ethical leadership; team-oriented leadership; leadership under conditions of change; transformational leadership	Alexandru (2025); Daouk-Öyry et al. (2025); Hoxha et al. (2025); Suárez-Amaya et al. (2024)
3	Learning and development strategies	Continuous training; organizational learning; knowledge sharing; formal learning opportunities; digital-skill development	Bednall and Sanders (2017); Hendry (2025); Ries-Cornejo et al. (2025); López-López et al. (2022)
4	Psychological flexibility training interventions	Psychological flexibility training; experiential workshops; mindfulness exercises; values clarification; booster sessions and longitudinal follow-up	Patterson et al. (2023); Tan et al. (2025); Mangundjaya et al. (2024); Kavousi Ghafi (2023)
5	Individual psychological factors	Psychological flexibility; self-efficacy; emotion regulation; mindfulness and present-moment awareness; cognitive defusion from dysfunctional thoughts; meaningfulness and value orientation at work; intrinsic motivation	Zhai et al. (2023); Lu et al. (2021); Lu et al. (2023); Richardson (2019)
6	Social and team resources	Coworker social support; leadership support; team cohesion; psychological safety; overall justice perceptions; organizational identity	Chen et al. (2024); Fan et al. (2022); Khoshrouy et al. (2022); Salehi et al. (2018)

Table 6 presents the transformation of the extracted categories into abstract theoretical concepts.

Table 6

Transformation of Categories Into Theoretical Concepts

No.	Category	Abstract theoretical concept	Conceptual definition
1	Strategic and participatory human resource management	Empowering management systems	A set of human resource management policies and practices that creates participation, security, and fairness and thereby provides the conditions required to enhance employees' psychological flexibility
2	Supportive and adaptive leadership	Empowering and ethical leadership style	Leadership behaviors that empower employees to confront challenges by creating trust, providing support, and offering appropriate direction
3	Learning and development strategies	Organizational learning infrastructure	A set of organizational measures and programs designed to continuously develop employees' knowledge, skills, and capabilities
4	Psychological flexibility training interventions	Psychological empowerment programs	Specialized and structured training designed to strengthen employees' awareness, self-regulation, and acceptance of change
5	Individual psychological factors	Internal flexibility resources	Individual psychological characteristics and capabilities that assist employees in adapting to change and managing challenges
6	Social and team resources	Social capital and organizational support	Supportive resources available in the workplace that enhance psychological flexibility through social relationships and support from coworkers and managers

Table 7 presents the recurring patterns of relationships identified across the selected studies.

Table 7

Recurring Patterns of Relationships in the Selected Studies

No.	Pattern extracted from the literature	Recurring evidence across the articles
1	HRM strategies do not independently generate outcomes	Most studies indicate that the effect of HRM on psychological flexibility is weak in the absence of psychological or structural variables (Batta et al., 2026; Reza et al., 2021)
2	Psychological capital plays a central role	Perceived self-efficacy, meaningfulness, and intrinsic motivation are prerequisites for developing sustainable psychological flexibility (Lu et al., 2021; Zhai et al., 2023)
3	Organizational support has a mediating role	In most studies, organizational support mediates the relationship between HRM strategies and psychological flexibility (Al-Juwaid, 2025; Kim et al., 2024)
4	Leadership serves as an intermediary link	Supportive leadership connects organizational structures with employees' psychological experiences (Alexandru, 2025; Daouk-Öyry et al., 2025)
5	Outcomes occur at multiple levels	The effects of psychological flexibility are observed at the individual level through well-being, at the organizational level through performance, and at the social level through commitment (Davidescu et al., 2020; Salminen et al., 2019)
6	Justice and support are prerequisites	Without perceived justice and organizational support, other strategies are likely to encounter resistance (Bugin et al., 2025; Hofstad et al., 2024)
7	Emerging contexts are becoming increasingly important	Digitalization and flexible work approaches are emerging as new contexts for enhancing psychological flexibility (Ahmić & Ćosić, 2025; Todisco et al., 2023)

Based on the findings of this systematic review, the final conceptual model of employees' psychological flexibility is structured at four levels.

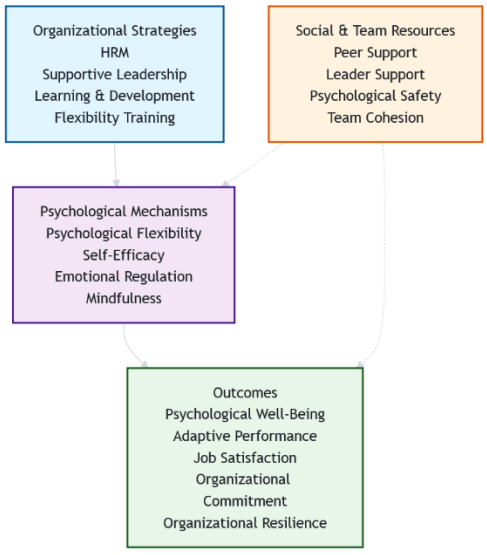
Table 8

Final Conceptual Model Extracted From the Systematic Review

Level	Constructs	Role in the model
Organizational strategies	Strategic and participatory human resource management; supportive and adaptive leadership; learning and development strategies; psychological flexibility training interventions	Independent variables and causal factors
Psychological mechanisms	Psychological flexibility; self-efficacy; emotion regulation; mindfulness; meaningfulness and value orientation at work; intrinsic motivation	Mediating variables and psychological constructs
Social and team resources	Coworker social support; leadership support; team cohesion; psychological safety; overall justice perceptions; organizational identity	Moderating and contextual variables
Outcomes	Reduced burnout and mental-health symptoms; increased quality of life and well-being; improved adaptive performance; increased job satisfaction; occupational commitment and retention; reduced turnover intention; organizational resilience and sustainability	Dependent variables comprising individual, organizational, and social outcomes

Figure 2

Final Research Model



Discussion and Conclusion

The present systematic review sought to identify and synthesize human resource management strategies and organizational, psychological, social, and team-related factors that contribute to employees' psychological flexibility, with particular relevance to the administrative context of Wasit Governorate. The analysis of 40 selected studies resulted in four principal categories of organizational strategy: strategic and participatory human resource management, supportive and adaptive leadership, learning and development strategies, and psychological flexibility training interventions. The findings further identified individual psychological mechanisms—including self-efficacy, emotion regulation, mindfulness, meaningfulness, intrinsic motivation, and psychological capital—and social and team resources, such as coworker support, leadership support, team cohesion, psychological safety, organizational justice, and organizational identity. The final conceptual model therefore indicates that employees' psychological flexibility is not produced by a single intervention or isolated personal characteristic. Rather, it develops through the interaction of organizational practices, internal psychological resources, and supportive social conditions, which collectively influence individual, organizational, and social outcomes.

The first major finding was that strategic and participatory human resource management represents a fundamental organizational foundation for strengthening employees' psychological flexibility. The reviewed evidence showed that high-involvement practices, fair reward systems, employee participation, job security, transparent job descriptions, and opportunities for career development create conditions in which employees can respond more constructively to organizational demands. These practices appear to increase employees' sense of control, predictability, and inclusion, thereby reducing rigid or defensive responses to change. This interpretation is consistent with evidence that strategic human resource management practices enhance resilient behavior by integrating employee development, participation, performance management, and organizational support [13]. Similarly, high-involvement human resource management practices have been shown to strengthen employee resilience partly through improved adaptation to technology, suggesting that participation and developmental opportunities help employees transform technological disruption into a manageable learning process [17]. Collectivism-oriented human resource management also contributes to resilience by reinforcing cooperation, shared responsibility, trust, and collective identity [18].

The importance of participatory human resource management can be explained through the role of employee voice and psychological empowerment. When employees are included in decisions, receive adequate information, and are permitted to exercise judgment, they are more likely to perceive themselves as active contributors rather than passive recipients of change. This perception can increase their willingness to revise existing behavior, tolerate uncertainty, and engage in problem-solving. The present findings therefore align with research indicating that strategic human resource management systems improve resilience through psychological empowerment [14]. They are also consistent with evidence that psychological empowerment supports employees' mental health and increases their perceived capacity to influence workplace outcomes [24, 25]. Moreover, sustainable human resource management practices appear to enhance resilience and employee outcomes when organizational performance is balanced with employee welfare and common-good values [15]. Thus, participatory and strategic practices may enhance psychological flexibility because they provide both objective resources and subjective perceptions of autonomy, competence, and organizational membership.

The second major finding concerned the central role of supportive and adaptive leadership. The reviewed studies consistently indicated that leadership acts as an intermediary mechanism linking formal human resource policies with

employees' everyday psychological experiences. Organizational policies may formally emphasize participation, development, fairness, or well-being, but their practical influence depends greatly on how managers communicate, implement, and reinforce them. Supportive leaders reduce ambiguity, clarify organizational expectations, encourage help-seeking, and legitimize adaptive responses during change. This finding is consistent with evidence that relational and supportive human resource management becomes particularly important during periods of extreme disruption, such as war, because employees require trust, social connection, and institutional reassurance in addition to formal policies [26]. The finding also corresponds with research demonstrating that supportive human resource practices are more effective when managerial resilience is high [27].

Supportive leadership may strengthen psychological flexibility through several mechanisms. First, it contributes to psychological safety by reducing employees' fear of negative interpersonal consequences when they acknowledge uncertainty, report mistakes, or propose alternative solutions. Second, it provides emotional and instrumental support that helps employees regulate distress and maintain work engagement. Third, adaptive leaders model flexible behavior by reconsidering decisions, responding to new evidence, and modifying procedures when circumstances change. The importance of psychological safety is supported by findings showing that safe organizational environments increase optimism and positive expectations among employees [29]. Similarly, servant leadership and safety-oriented management have been associated with better employee mental health, emphasizing the importance of care, responsibility, and protection in managerial relationships [28]. The present findings therefore suggest that leadership is not merely an additional organizational variable but a transmission mechanism through which strategic human resource management influences employees' psychological resources.

The third major finding was that learning and development strategies constitute an essential pathway for enhancing psychological flexibility. Continuous training, knowledge sharing, organizational learning, digital skills development, and formal and informal learning opportunities enable employees to acquire the competencies required to adapt to changing work demands. Psychological flexibility requires employees to recognize that existing behavioral patterns may no longer be effective and to develop alternative responses. Learning-oriented organizations facilitate this process by normalizing experimentation, reflection, and the correction of errors. The finding is consistent with research on strategic human resource management in the digital economy, which emphasizes continuous learning, flexible career structures, digital competence, and talent development as essential responses to technological change [1]. It also aligns with scientometric evidence showing that digital transformation has increasingly redirected human resource research toward technological adaptability, reskilling, and new forms of workforce development [2].

The significance of learning strategies is particularly evident in relation to artificial intelligence and Fourth Industrial Revolution technologies. Technology-driven human resource systems may enhance organizational responsiveness, but they can also generate uncertainty, surveillance concerns, role ambiguity, and perceived threats to job security. The findings of the present review indicate that technological change is more likely to support psychological flexibility when employees receive relevant training, retain a sense of autonomy, and develop trust in technological systems. This interpretation is consistent with evidence that AI-driven human resource management enhances resilience and adaptive performance when it supports self-determined motivation, competence, and constructive technology exploration [4]. The integration of Fourth Industrial Revolution technologies also appears to improve productivity through work flexibility, quality of life, and

perceptions of distributive fairness [3]. Therefore, technological modernization should be accompanied by human-centered learning systems rather than being treated solely as a technical or administrative transformation.

The fourth major finding concerned the effectiveness of targeted psychological flexibility and resilience interventions. The reviewed literature identified mindfulness exercises, values clarification, experiential workshops, emotion-regulation training, self-efficacy enhancement, and structured follow-up sessions as potentially useful interventions. These programs target the internal processes that allow employees to remain engaged with difficult situations while selecting responses consistent with professional and organizational values. The present finding is supported by evidence that structured psychological flexibility training can strengthen resilience and readiness among personnel working under demanding and unpredictable conditions [37]. Mindfulness training has similarly been associated with improved psychological well-being and occupational adjustment among employees [38]. Furthermore, psychological flexibility has been linked with better mental health and life satisfaction, indicating that the capacity to accept internal experiences and act in accordance with values may have broad well-being benefits [5].

However, the findings also indicate that training interventions should not be implemented as substitutes for improvements in organizational conditions. Employees cannot be expected to regulate their emotions, remain mindful, or demonstrate resilience indefinitely when they experience chronic injustice, excessive workload, employment insecurity, or unsupportive leadership. The effectiveness of psychological interventions is therefore likely to depend on the presence of complementary human resource practices. This interpretation is consistent with systematic evidence indicating that employee well-being is best supported through integrated bundles of human resource practices rather than isolated programs [22]. Research in academic settings likewise suggests that psychological capital and well-being are strengthened when personal-development initiatives are combined with supportive human resource practices, meaningful work, emotional resources, and organizational support [21]. Accordingly, individual-level interventions should be embedded in a broader organizational strategy that also addresses work design, fairness, leadership, and access to resources.

A further important finding was the core role of psychological capital and self-efficacy in the proposed model. Across the reviewed studies, self-efficacy, hope, optimism, resilience, meaningfulness, and intrinsic motivation repeatedly appeared as mechanisms through which organizational practices influenced adaptive outcomes. Employees with stronger self-efficacy are more likely to regard difficult tasks as manageable, persist in the face of setbacks, and search for alternative solutions. This supports the finding that self-efficacy can substantially contribute to employee survival and resilience under threatening employment conditions [39]. Psychological capital and internal social capital have also been shown to improve adaptive performance among frontline employees, indicating that personal confidence and supportive relationships operate jointly rather than independently [30]. The present review therefore places psychological capital at the center of the model because it converts organizational resources into motivated and adaptive behavior.

Mindfulness, emotion regulation, meaningfulness, and intrinsic motivation were also identified as central psychological mechanisms. Mindfulness may help employees attend to present demands without becoming overwhelmed by distressing thoughts, whereas emotion regulation enables them to modify the intensity and expression of emotional responses. Meaningfulness and value orientation provide direction for behavior during uncertainty, and intrinsic motivation sustains effort when external rewards are delayed or ambiguous. Evidence obtained during the COVID-19 pandemic showed that psychological flexibility was associated with adaptive coping, better mental health, and greater well-being [6]. Qualitative

evidence among palliative care professionals similarly identified self-regulation, emotional balance, reflective practices, rest, supportive relationships, and organizational policies as important components of resilience [40]. These findings reinforce the conclusion that psychological flexibility is a multidimensional regulatory capacity rather than a single attitude or personality characteristic.

The findings further demonstrated that social and team resources function as important contextual and moderating variables. Coworker support, team cohesion, trust, knowledge sharing, organizational identity, and psychological safety can strengthen or weaken the effects of human resource strategies. Even employees with strong personal resources may experience difficulty adapting when they work in socially fragmented or distrustful environments. Conversely, supportive teams provide access to information, emotional reassurance, practical assistance, and alternative perspectives. This conclusion aligns with evidence that team-level individualized arrangements can support breakthrough innovation through knowledge sharing, transactive memory, and cognitive flexibility [31]. Flexible organizational values and participatory climates are likewise associated with more favorable job attitudes and readiness for change [19]. The role of social resources is also visible in collectivist human resource systems, where shared identity and mutual trust reinforce employee resilience [18].

Organizational justice emerged as a necessary precondition for the success of other strategies. Employees are unlikely to interpret flexibility initiatives positively when they believe rewards, development opportunities, workloads, or decision-making procedures are unfair. Under such circumstances, flexible working arrangements may be perceived as arbitrary, technology may be interpreted as a mechanism of surveillance, and participation may be viewed as symbolic rather than genuine. The importance of fairness is consistent with evidence that distributive fairness contributes to the positive effects of technology-integrated human resource practices [3]. Employee well-being patterns during crises also differ according to institutional trust, perceived vulnerability, and access to support, indicating that organizational responses must account for variations in employees' circumstances [36]. The present findings therefore suggest that justice and support are not merely parallel predictors of psychological flexibility; they establish the legitimacy required for employees to engage with organizational interventions.

The results also highlighted the multidimensional nature of work flexibility. Flexible schedules, remote work, adaptable roles, and decentralized decision-making can support job satisfaction, work–life balance, and adaptive performance. This finding is consistent with evidence linking work flexibility to job satisfaction and job performance [32]. Job flexibility and employment security have also been associated with employees' mental health, suggesting that flexibility is most beneficial when accompanied by stability and adequate protections [8]. Nevertheless, smart working may produce both positive and negative outcomes. It can increase autonomy and reduce commuting demands, but it can also intensify digital overload, weaken interpersonal connection, and blur work–life boundaries [33]. Flexible work must therefore be designed carefully, with clear expectations, sufficient resources, opportunities for social interaction, and protection of employees' right to disconnect.

The effects of psychological flexibility were found to extend across individual, organizational, and social levels. At the individual level, psychological flexibility was associated with lower burnout and psychological distress and with greater well-being, occupational adjustment, and quality of life. At the organizational level, it supported adaptive performance, job satisfaction, innovation, resilience, and service quality. At the social level, it contributed to commitment, retention,

cooperation, and sustained professional identity. The relationship between adaptability, engagement, and commitment to service quality supports these findings [11]. Resilience has also been associated with professional identity among healthcare workers, indicating that the ability to manage adversity may strengthen employees' attachment to their profession [12]. Similarly, employees' perceptions of supportive human resource practices and resilience influence retirement intentions, demonstrating the long-term employment consequences of organizational support [16].

These results are particularly relevant to Wasit Governorate and comparable public-sector institutions. Public organizations operate within formal administrative hierarchies and are frequently constrained by regulations, centralized authority, resource limitations, and political or social pressures. Under such conditions, psychological flexibility is important for maintaining service continuity and responding to citizens' changing needs. Nevertheless, public-sector organizations may face challenges in implementing participatory human resource practices, flexible work systems, and individualized development programs. The evidence reviewed in this study suggests that these constraints can be addressed by strengthening managerial support, transparent communication, employee involvement, fair procedures, psychological safety, and continuous learning. Context-sensitive human resource management is particularly important because practices developed in one national or organizational setting may not produce the same effects elsewhere [41]. The broader literature on organizational resilience also supports a shift from reactive recovery toward anticipation, adaptation, learning, and renewal [42].

Overall, the final model derived from this review proposes that organizational strategies influence employee outcomes primarily through psychological mechanisms and in interaction with social and team resources. Strategic and participatory human resource management, supportive leadership, learning and development, and psychological flexibility interventions constitute the principal organizational inputs. Psychological capital, self-efficacy, emotion regulation, mindfulness, meaningfulness, and intrinsic motivation operate as mediating mechanisms, while social support, psychological safety, team cohesion, justice, and organizational identity shape the strength and direction of these relationships. This model explains why isolated human resource practices may have limited effectiveness and why integrated systems are more likely to generate sustainable outcomes. The findings are therefore consistent with multidimensional approaches to human resource management that connect strategic practices, psychological processes, employee well-being, and organizational performance [7, 43].

The present study has several limitations. First, the review included only studies that were accessible through the selected databases and open-access resources, which may have resulted in the exclusion of relevant subscription-based, unpublished, or locally published evidence. Second, the included studies differed considerably in their definitions and measurements of psychological flexibility, resilience, adaptability, psychological empowerment, and adaptive performance, limiting direct comparison across findings. Third, most of the reviewed evidence was derived from organizational contexts outside Iraq, and its transferability to Wasit Governorate may therefore be affected by cultural, administrative, political, and institutional differences. Fourth, the review incorporated quantitative, qualitative, and review studies, creating methodological heterogeneity. Finally, although the proposed model identifies plausible relationships among organizational strategies, psychological mechanisms, social resources, and outcomes, the review design does not permit causal conclusions or empirical confirmation of the proposed pathways.

Future research should empirically test the proposed conceptual model among employees of Wasit Governorate and other Iraqi governmental institutions using longitudinal and multilevel research designs. Researchers should develop or validate culturally appropriate measures of psychological flexibility in Arabic and examine whether the construct is empirically distinct from resilience, adaptive performance, and psychological empowerment. Future studies should also test the mediating roles of psychological capital, self-efficacy, mindfulness, emotion regulation, and meaningful work, as well as the moderating effects of organizational justice, psychological safety, leadership support, and team cohesion. Comparative research across governorates, ministries, and private-sector organizations could clarify the influence of institutional context. Intervention studies are also required to compare the effects of participatory human resource practices, leadership development, mindfulness training, flexible work arrangements, and integrated multicomponent programs on employee and organizational outcomes.

Human resource managers and policymakers in Wasit Governorate should adopt an integrated approach rather than relying on isolated training programs. Priority should be given to increasing employee participation, clarifying roles and performance expectations, ensuring procedural and distributive fairness, strengthening job security, and providing transparent career-development opportunities. Managers should receive training in supportive, ethical, and adaptive leadership and should be evaluated partly on their ability to promote psychological safety and employee development. Continuous learning systems should be established to support digital competence, problem-solving, emotion regulation, mindfulness, and adaptive performance. Flexible work arrangements should be implemented with clear boundaries, adequate technological support, and protection of work–life balance. Regular assessments of employee well-being, psychological capital, perceived support, and organizational justice should be used to identify vulnerable groups and design targeted interventions.

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Authors' Contributions

All authors equally contributed to this study.

Declaration of Interest

The authors of this article declared no conflict of interest.

Ethical Considerations

The study protocol adhered to the principles outlined in the Helsinki Declaration, which provides guidelines for ethical research involving human participants. Written consent was obtained from all participants in the study.

Transparency of Data

In accordance with the principles of transparency and open research, we declare that all data and materials used in this study are available upon request.

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