ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE FOR RISK MANAGEMENT: A RESEARCH AGENDA FOR PUBLIC-PRIVATE COMPARISON

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Abstract

The paper analyses the role of artificial intelligence (AI) in supporting enterprise risk management and improving operational efficiency through a systematic review of 85 peer-reviewed articles published between 2014 and 2024. The aim is to develop a research agenda by mapping the current scientific literature on the contribution of AI to risk identification, prediction and mitigation, with a focus on its impact on organisational performance. This study provides a novel cross-sectoral perspective by systematically comparing public and private sector applications, an aspect that remains underexplored in the existing literature. The findings suggest that AI is increasingly positioned as a key enabler for predictive analytics and data-driven decision-making. However, the literature remains fragmented. The most significant gaps include a lack of empirical studies on implementation failures, insufficient integration of sustainability goals, and limited benchmarking between public and private sector applications. In particular, the public sector appears to be less dynamic in adopting AI than the private sector due to regulatory and structural constraints. Furthermore, the focus of the literature is more on citizen service delivery than on risk management, contributing to a misalignment between the two domains. By synthesising dispersed evidence and highlighting sector-specific differences, this article contributes an original framework for understanding how AI can support risk governance across organisational contexts. This article contributes a structured synthesis of existing knowledge and proposes future research directions to guide an effective and responsible integration of AI across organisational domains.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Enterprise Risk Management, Operational Efficiency, Public Sector, Private Sector, Research Agenda

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1. INTRODUCTION

Artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming the way organisations identify, assess and manage risks. Its applications, from predictive analytics to automation, are redefining business decision-making processes, increasing speed, accuracy and responsiveness. The integration of AI into enterprise risk management systems offers opportunities to improve resilience, reduce uncertainty and enhance strategic planning (Shukla et al., 2007). These developments are particularly relevant in a global context where businesses and institutions are under increasing pressure to manage complex and multidimensional risks (Martusewicz et al., 2024). The recent approval of the European Union (EU) AI Act[1] marks a significant step towards the regulation of high-risk AI systems, particularly in public administration. The regulation introduces requirements for transparency, human oversight and accountability, with the aim of ensuring the ethical and safe use of AI technologies. However, it focuses mainly on compliance and risk prevention, offering limited guidance on how AI can be exploited operationally in risk management in the private sector (Dam et al., 2019). In recent years, several contributions have examined the role of AI in improving corporate risk frameworks, highlighting use cases in financial, operational, compliance and fraud detection (Davahli, 2020; Dacre et al., 2020). Despite this growing interest, current knowledge is still fragmented. There is a lack of structured analysis comparing how AI is adopted in public versus private organisations and how it affects governance models, risk culture and long-term value creation. Against this background, the central research question guiding this study is:

RQ: How is artificial intelligence applied to risk management in public and private organisations, and what research gaps and future directions emerge from a systematic literature review of the existing studies?

This paper aims to fill this gap by conducting a systematic literature review (SLR) on AI and risk management in various organisational contexts. It focuses on publications from 2014 to 2024 and adopts a bibliometric approach using the Bibliometrix in R tool. The aim is to map the evolution of academic research and develop a research agenda that identifies emerging themes, gaps and strategic implications for both scholars and practitioners. By comparing public and private sector perspectives, this review contributes to a deeper understanding of how AI is reshaping risk governance. It also highlights the need for integrated frameworks that combine technical innovation with the regulatory, ethical and cultural dimensions of risk (Gallo, 2024). This study contributes to the literature by providing a structured cross-sectoral synthesis of AI applications in risk management and by identifying critical gaps that hinder effective implementation across different organisational settings, particularly between public and private organisations.

The remainder of the paper is organised as follows. Section 2 reviews the literature on AI and risk management and identifies key research gaps. Section 3 describes the methodology adopted for the SLR. Section 4 presents the results of the analysis, while Section 5 discusses their theoretical and practical implications and limitations. Finally, Section 6 concludes the paper and outlines directions for future research.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Theoretical background

In recent years, the integration of AI into risk management frameworks has attracted wide academic and practical interest. The potential of AI to improve decision-making, anticipate risks and optimise internal processes has been particularly emphasised in studies conducted in both the public and private sectors (Kalkan, 2024). This literature review aims to explore the current state of research on the intersection between AI, risk governance and organisational performance, with a focus on sectoral variations. AI technologies, such as machine learning (ML), natural language processing and intelligent automation, have been recognised as tools that can transform traditional risk management strategies, enabling predictive analysis and improving responsiveness to environmental volatility (Alabbasi et al., 2024; Dal Mas et al., 2023). In the private sector, empirical research highlights the role of AI in streamlining compliance, internal control and risk modelling processes (Elapanda et al., 2020). For example, several studies have shown how AI-based solutions reduce operational inefficiencies and support early risk detection. In contrast, in the public sector, AI adoption is more fragmented and often influenced by regulatory and bureaucratic constraints. Public administrations face additional challenges, including outdated systems, skills shortages and accountability requirements that limit the flexibility of digital experimentation (Dacre et al., 2020). A consistent theme emerging from the literature is the transformative capacity of AI in reshaping governance models, particularly through improved data analysis, automation of review procedures and support for strategic planning. However, some scholars warn that these technologies can amplify asymmetries in organisational capabilities, especially when introduced without adequate digital infrastructure or ethical oversight (Dam et al., 2019). Another relevant strand of research focuses on sectoral dynamics. Although finance, insurance and healthcare (Comite, 2025) are among the sectors with the highest rate of integration of AI, comparative analysis on the heterogeneity of adoption between public and private organisations is still limited. Zhang et al. (2023, as cited in Li et al., 2021) suggest that public organisations tend to prioritise transparency and accountability over efficiency, which may influence the design and implementation of AI-driven risk systems. This divergence introduces complexity in assessing outcomes and measuring performance in a unified manner.

Furthermore, regulatory developments such as the EU AI Act have started to outline the institutional framework for the responsible use of AI. Although the law emphasises the risk-based classification of AI systems (Gallo, 2024), it does not yet fully address operational risk management in private companies (Comite et al., 2025). The main focus remains on public interest issues such as

[1] http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1689/oj

fundamental rights, security and accountability, especially in contexts such as public administration, healthcare and law enforcement.

The literature, therefore, points to an evolving, but fragmented landscape. On the one hand, AI offers promising solutions for enterprise risk management (Ali et al., 2024), particularly through automation and predictive capabilities. On the other hand, substantial gaps remain in the knowledge of industry-specific risks, implementation failures and ethical challenges. Overall, existing studies tend to analyse public and private sector applications separately, highlighting the need for a systematic cross-sectoral perspective. These findings underline the need for a more structured research agenda that addresses cross-sectoral comparisons, empirical case studies and the long-term impact of AI on risk culture and governance models.

2.2. Research gaps

Despite the growing literature on AI and risk management, several significant research gaps remain. First, many contributions focus on the technical potential of AI, especially in the private sector, while neglecting how AI is applied in public risk governance, where decision-making is often influenced by accountability mechanisms and transparency requirements (Dal Mas et al., 2023; Al-Haji & Bakar, 2024). Second, the existing literature largely emphasises the positive impacts of AI, often failing to address implementation failures, unintended consequences or cases of organisational resistance, particularly in highly regulated contexts (Dacre et al., 2020; Tsang et al., 2018). Critical understanding of barriers and contradictions in AI adoption, such as ethical concerns, lack of trust in algorithms or poor data quality, remains underdeveloped (Martusewicz et al., 2024). Third, there is a lack of comparative studies systematically analysing how AI-driven risk management varies between public and private organisations. While the private sector is more driven by efficiency and competitiveness, public institutions face constraints related to citizens' rights, legality and public value (Kalkan, 2024). Furthermore, studies integrating sustainability goals with AI-based risk models are still limited. Given the environmental and social pressures that organisations face, future research should address how AI can support sustainable and inclusive risk governance, especially through tools such as Explainable AI (XAI) (Kamaliah et al., 2018). Not enough attention is paid to sector-specific dynamics, such as in healthcare, education or mobility, where risk perceptions and decision-making logics differ considerably. Moreover, the literature does not yet fully explore how AI adoption interacts with institutional cultures and national regulations, particularly in hybrid governance contexts. Overall, these gaps highlight the absence of a comprehensive cross-sectoral framework capable of explaining how AI-driven risk management evolves across different organisational settings, reinforcing the need for a structured research agenda.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative approach based on an SLR aimed at analysing the role of AI in risk management processes, both in public and private organisations and in relation to public value creation (Pastore et al., 2026). The SLR methodology makes it possible to collect, synthesise and critically evaluate existing scientific contributions to ensure a comprehensive and rigorous understanding of the topic. The review process was supported by the MySLR software, which enables automated screening, classification and extraction activities. The databases selected were Scopus and Web of Science, for their broad coverage and academic reliability. The search string included keyword combinations such as "artificial intelligence", "risk management", "corporate risk management", "public administration", "governance", "accountability", "operational efficiency" and "sustainability". The dataset was constructed from peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2014 and 2024, representing the time frame analysed in this study. The search focused on contributions published within this period, with the aim of identifying the most recent developments and trends. Only peer-reviewed journal articles written in English were considered, excluding conference proceedings, editorials and non-scientific papers. After removing duplicates and applying relevance criteria based on titles and abstracts, 85 articles were included in the final corpus. The data were analysed through a two-level coding process:

1) descriptive and thematic coding, aimed at classifying articles by year, sector and thematic area (e.g., public/private sector, sustainability, decision-making);

2) interpretive coding, focused on identifying the underlying theoretical frameworks, the methodologies used and the types of risks addressed.

In particular, an attempt was made to identify how AI tools are applied in risk assessment, prediction and mitigation processes and how they contribute not only to increasing the organisational efficiency of companies, but also to promoting transparency, accountability and trust in the public sector, dimensions associated with the broader concept of public value.

The end result includes: a) a thematic synthesis of the reviewed literature; b) a typology of AI applications in risk governance; and c) identification of gaps in the literature and future research directions. This approach ensures that the analysis is not only descriptive, but also interpretive and generative, offering a research agenda aligned to contemporary challenges in AI risk management.

4. RESEARCH RESULTS

The results of this literature-based survey reveal that the integration of AI into risk management frameworks is a growing field of academic and practical relevance. The contributions reviewed converge on the idea that AI does not simply serve as an automation tool, but rather as a strategic tool that can improve forecasting accuracy, resource allocation and transparency in both public and private governance contexts (Kalkan, 2024). A significant part of the analysed literature emphasises the transformative power of AI in enterprise risk management. Algorithms such as ML and deep learning are being applied to predict financial difficulties, assess operational vulnerabilities and anticipate compliance issues with

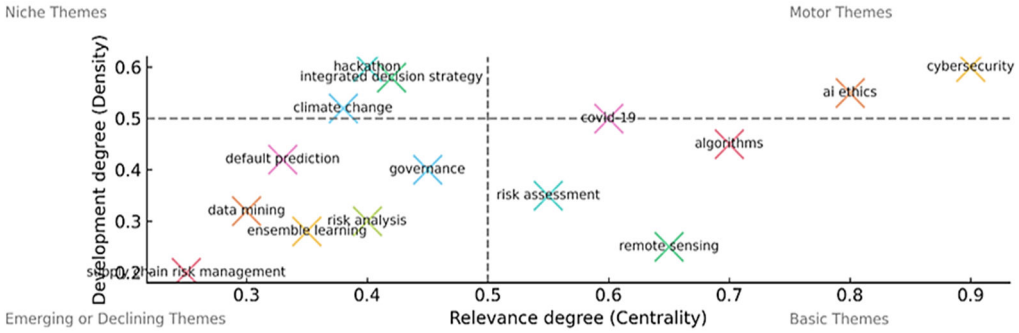
a degree of accuracy previously unattainable through traditional models. Furthermore, digital twins (Dal Mas et al., 2023) and real-time analytics are emerging as complementary technologies that enable simulation and monitoring of complex organisational systems, facilitating proactive rather than reactive strategies (Martusewicz et al., 2024).

Studies in the field of public administration highlight the potential of AI in supporting broader governance objectives, such as transparency, responsiveness and public value creation, particularly in relation to citizen interaction (Comite et al., 2025). In contrast, the private sector literature tends to emphasise financial optimisation, efficiency gains and market resilience. However, the reviewed studies largely address public and private sector applications separately, with limited evidence of integrated analyses examining their interconnections. The cross-sectoral comparison also brings attention to how regulatory frameworks shape the use of AI in risk management. For example, the EU AI Act introduces a risk-based classification of AI systems that may influence corporate risk governance strategies, especially in sectors such as finance, healthcare and public services (Kalkan, 2024). Despite these advances, several limitations and challenges persist. The literature shows a fragmented approach to empirical validation, with few studies offering robust, longitudinal assessments of the impact of AI on risk mitigation outcomes (Kamaliah et al., 2018). Ethical issues such as algorithmic bias, opacity and data security remain insufficiently explored in operational contexts (Dacre et al., 2020; Dal Mas et al., 2023). There is also limited investigation into organisational readiness factors influencing AI adoption in risk management, including leadership commitment, digital skills and interdepartmental coordination. An emerging line of research concerns the integration of environmental, social and governance (ESG) indicators into AI-driven predictive models. As organisations increasingly align their strategies with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), AI may represent a technological infrastructure capable of advancing both operational efficiency and long-term sustainability.

4.1. Thematic mapping and structural insights

To better understand the conceptual structure of the literature on AI and risk management, a thematic map was generated through word analysis using the MySLR platform. The map (see Figure 1) organises research topics according to two parameters: centrality, which measures the degree of interaction with other topics, and density, which reflects internal coherence and development. The thematic clusters in the top right quadrant, such as cybersecurity, AI ethics and algorithms, represent mature, core topics, indicating that they are at the centre of academic and regulatory debates. Topics such as risk assessment and governance fall into the core themes quadrant, revealing their widespread, but still under-theorised presence. In contrast, hackathons, integrated decision strategy and climate change are classified as niche topics, characterised by their depth, but limited connectivity. Finally, risk analysis, ensemble learning and supply chain risk management are classified as embryonic or declining themes, suggesting recent entry into the field or low interest. This thematic structure confirms the evolving multidisciplinarity of the field and the need for deeper cross-sectoral theoretical integration, especially with regard to the role of governance and risk in the public sector.

Figure 1. Thematic map of the literature on AI and risk management



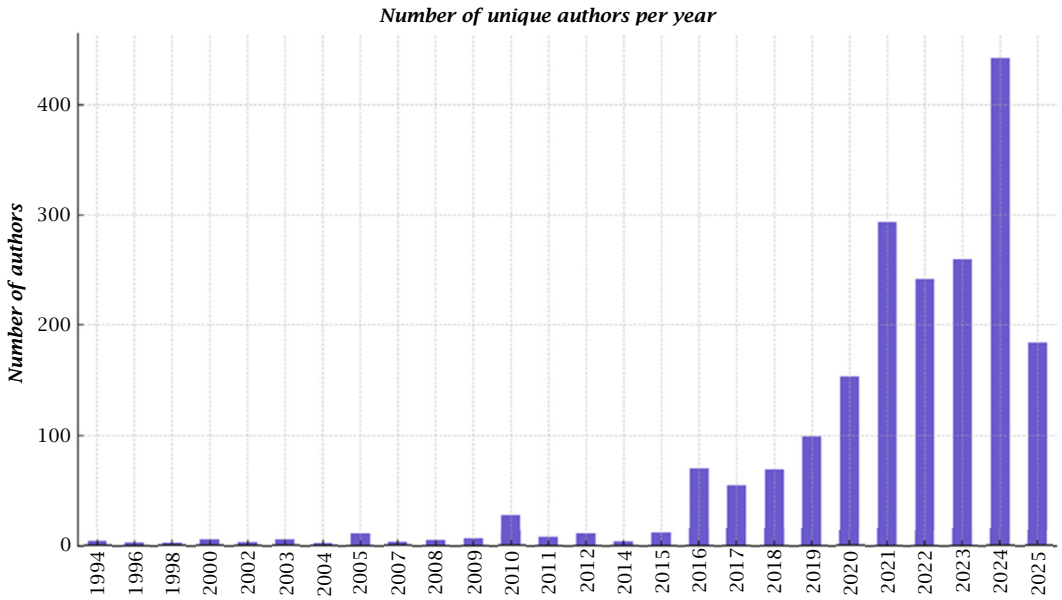
Source: Authors' elaboration based on Scopus and Web of Science data processed with the Bibliometrix package in R.

4.2. Authors' involvement over time

To assess the evolution of scholarly interest in the intersection of AI and risk management, we analysed the number of unique authors publishing on the topic each year. This indicator reflects not only the expansion of the research community, but also the degree of dispersion or consolidation of knowledge production over time. As shown in Figure 2, the sector has experienced a significant increase in participation, particularly from 2015 onwards, with a marked acceleration after 2020. This growth seems to align with global events that have amplified the relevance of AI for governance and risk contexts, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the rise of regulatory debates on digital transformation and algorithmic accountability. The number of contributors peaked in 2024, indicating that the topic is still actively expanding, attracting researchers from different disciplines. However, the substantial drop observed in 2025 (at the time of data extraction) may reflect an incomplete registration for the current year rather than a real decline in interest. While the trend confirms a broadening of academic engagement, it also raises questions about the sustainability of contributions over time. Year-to-year variability suggests that many researchers engage in the field temporarily, without developing stable lines of research or longitudinal studies. This dynamic may

hinder theoretical consolidation and cumulative knowledge development, especially in areas where AI intersects with public value creation, regulatory frameworks and ethical risk governance. Encouraging stronger academic networks, long-term projects and interdisciplinary consortia could help stabilise the research trajectory and strengthen the field's contribution to scientific debate and institutional practice.

Figure 2. Number of unique authors per year in the AI and risk literature



Source: Authors' elaboration based on Scopus and Web of Science data processed with the Bibliometrix package in R.

5. DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The findings of this review suggest that AI is increasingly influencing risk governance across organisational contexts, although the patterns of adoption differ substantially between the public and private sectors. While much of the existing literature emphasises improvements in efficiency and predictive capacity, the present analysis indicates that institutional and regulatory conditions play a decisive role in determining how AI is implemented. Public organisations tend to adopt AI within frameworks emphasising accountability, transparency and public value, whereas private firms focus more strongly on competitiveness, operational performance and financial outcomes (Kalkan, 2024). The review also reveals a lack of integrated studies examining interactions between public and private sector applications. Most contributions analyse sector-specific cases, with limited attention to cross-sectoral learning or policy transfer. This separation restricts the development of comprehensive risk management approaches that could be applied across different institutional environments and may partly explain the uneven pace of adoption observed in highly regulated contexts.

In addition, persistent concerns regarding ethical implications, implementation difficulties and limited empirical validation indicate that AI-based risk management is still evolving. Rather than representing a universally effective solution, AI appears to deliver benefits only when supported by adequate organisational capabilities, data governance structures and regulatory alignment. This finding is consistent with earlier warnings about the risks associated with deploying advanced technologies without sufficient oversight (Dam et al., 2019). Another relevant aspect emerging from the analysis concerns sustainability. Increasing attention to ESG criteria suggests that organisations are beginning to integrate broader societal considerations into risk management processes. In this context, AI may support not only operational improvements, but also longer-term resilience strategies aligned with sustainable development objectives.

The results indicate that the impact of AI on risk governance depends less on technological sophistication alone and more on the organisational and institutional conditions in which these systems are introduced. This underscores the importance of interdisciplinary approaches that combine technological innovation with regulatory, managerial and ethical considerations when evaluating the potential of AI in complex governance settings.

The findings of this study offer a number of implications for both academic research and organisational practice, particularly in light of the increasing integration of AI into risk governance models. From a theoretical perspective, the increasing use of AI in risk management invites a reassessment of traditional governance frameworks. The literature suggests that AI enables not only improved predictive capabilities, but also new forms of decision-making based on real-time analysis and ML models. This challenges linear and hierarchical conceptions of risk governance and calls for more dynamic, adaptive and distributed models. The fragmentation observed in the academic field also highlights the need for a more consolidated and interdisciplinary research agenda linking public administration, the corporate field, data science and ethics. In terms of managerial and policy implications, the study emphasises the dual challenge that organisations face: harnessing AI for

operational efficiency while ensuring compliance with regulatory frameworks, in particular the EU AI Act. Public institutions, in particular, are tasked with aligning AI applications with principles of transparency, fairness and public value, thus requiring the design of algorithmic governance systems that are not only technically robust, but also normatively sound. For private sector actors, the implications are equally significant. Companies are increasingly expected to integrate ESG criteria into their risk management models, and AI is a potential enabler of this transition. However, implementing AI-based solutions requires not only technical skills, but also organisational preparedness, ethical oversight and cross-functional coordination. Managers need to develop AI skills and foster a culture of responsibility towards automated decision-making systems. Furthermore, the literature reveals a lack of empirical studies examining failed implementations or unintended consequences of AI in risk governance. A more critical engagement with these cases could help develop more robust frameworks and avoid the reproduction of biases or opacity in algorithmic decision-making. The research identifies a strategic opportunity for public-private synergies. As both sectors face common challenges in navigating uncertainty, collaborative approaches to AI deployment — through joint workshops, regulatory sandboxes and jointly designed standards — could improve learning, deployment and legitimacy.

Table 1. Implications of AI in risk governance

Area	*Key implications*
Theoretical	AI fosters adaptive risk models; the literature needs more coherence and interdisciplinary approaches.
Managerial	Align AI with (e.g., EU AI Act), develop ESG strategies, build internal capacity.
Policy	Promote public-private labs and regulatory sandboxes.
Ethical	Study AI failures to reduce bias, opacity and unintended risks.

Despite the systematic nature of the review conducted, the work has some limitations that should be highlighted. Firstly, the geographical distribution of the contributions analysed is somewhat unbalanced: the body of literature is heavily concentrated on European and Asian contexts, with less representation of studies from Africa, Latin America and emerging administrative systems. This reduces the possibility of drawing a global map of the evolution of AI in risk management. It is worth noting the lack of contributions that comparatively analyse AI adoption patterns between the public and private sectors. This lack has made it necessary to treat the two fields separately, highlighting their specificities, but without being able to offer an integrated view of the differences and potential synergies in terms of governance, risk culture and value-generating capacity.

6. CONCLUSION

This study offered a structured and critical review of the literature on the adoption of AI in risk governance, highlighting its role in improving operational efficiency and promoting public value. The analysis reveals that although the topic has gained significant academic traction, the field still lacks theoretical coherence and consistent empirical validation. A key contribution of this work lies in the systematic mapping of existing studies, which has brought to light the dominant research trends, the most investigated application domains and the main gaps, particularly within the public sector literature.

Among the most relevant findings is the clear disparity between the private and public sectors in the adoption of AI. While private organisations are progressively integrating AI into their risk governance processes, public administrations appear to proceed more cautiously and unevenly. This divergence reflects not only technological and regulatory asymmetries, but also deeper issues of institutional preparedness and digital maturity. These results confirm the importance of contextual factors — organisational, legal and cultural — in shaping the effectiveness of AI-driven risk management systems. Despite its contributions, the study has some limitations. The analysis is based exclusively on peer-reviewed journal articles published in English and may, therefore, underrepresent developments in other languages or grey literature. In addition, the scarcity of comparative empirical studies between public and private organisations constrained the possibility of developing an integrated cross-sectoral model. These insights call for the development of a focused, interdisciplinary research agenda aimed at filling empirical gaps, assessing real-world failures and exploring sector-specific trajectories. Special attention should be paid to how AI can be integrated into public sector governance in a way that strengthens, rather than weakens, legitimacy, equity and democratic accountability. Future research should prioritise longitudinal studies, comparative analyses across institutional contexts and empirical evaluations of implementation outcomes, particularly in highly regulated environments.

Fostering closer collaboration between researchers, institutions and policymakers will be key to designing adaptive governance frameworks, shared assessment tools and accountable AI practices capable of responding to increasingly complex and uncertain environments shaped by algorithmic governance.

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