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HUMAN–AI COLLABORATION, SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE, AND ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR IN MODERN SOCIETY

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ABSTRACT

Human–artificial intelligence (AI) collaboration has become an important feature of modern society, influencing decision-making, communication, education, healthcare, business, and social interaction. As AI systems increasingly participate in tasks that require judgment, problem-solving, and coordination, the relationship between human intelligence and machine capabilities requires greater attention. Social intelligence, including communication, empathy, cooperation, and awareness of others, remains essential for ensuring that AI-supported activities serve human needs and social values. However, effective collaboration also raises ethical concerns related to fairness, privacy, transparency, accountability, bias, and human control. Recent research highlights the importance of trust, appropriate reliance, and clear responsibility in human–AI teamwork (Everett et al., 2026; Wang et al., 2026). This article examines the relationship between human–AI collaboration, social intelligence, and ethical behaviour in modern society through a review of existing scholarly literature. It explores how collaborative AI can support human capabilities while identifying risks that may arise when systems are used without sufficient oversight. The article argues that responsible collaboration requires transparent systems, socially aware design, human judgment, and ethical governance. It concludes that AI should complement rather than replace human responsibility, enabling technological progress while protecting dignity, fairness, and social well-being.

KEYWORDS

Human–AI collaboration, social intelligence, ethical behaviour, artificial intelligence, responsible AI, human oversight, trust, modern society.

INTRODUCTION

Artificial intelligence has become an influential part of modern society, transforming how individuals communicate, work, learn, make decisions, and solve complex problems. AI-supported systems are increasingly used in workplaces, educational institutions, healthcare organizations, public services, and digital communication environments. These developments have encouraged a shift from viewing AI exclusively as a technical tool toward understanding it as a participant in collaborative processes. Human–AI collaboration involves the interaction of human knowledge, experience, creativity, and judgment with the computational capabilities of intelligent systems. Wang et al. (2026) explain that research on human–AI collaboration has developed across several conceptual approaches, making it important to clarify how collaboration differs from simple automation or the use of digital tools. Effective collaboration depends not only on technological performance but also on communication, coordination, shared

understanding, and the appropriate distribution of responsibilities.Social intelligence is an important dimension of this relationship because collaborative activities take place within social environments shaped by human expectations, emotions, values, and interpersonal responsibilities. In human teams, social intelligence helps individuals understand others, communicate effectively, manage disagreements, and respond appropriately to different situations. Although AI systems can be designed to recognize language patterns, interpret certain social signals, and generate context-sensitive responses, their performance should not automatically be equated with human social understanding. Murthy et al. (2026) discuss how contemporary human–AI partnerships increasingly involve adaptive communication, coordination, and social interaction, while also raising concerns about transparency and emotional expectations. Consequently, AI systems should be assessed not merely according to their ability to complete tasks but also according to how they influence human relationships, group behaviour, and collective decision-making.Ethical behaviour is equally important because human–AI collaboration can influence decisions affecting individuals, organizations, and communities. AI-generated recommendations may affect recruitment, educational assessment, healthcare decisions, financial services, and public administration. If an AI system produces biased, inaccurate, or misleading outputs, users may make decisions that disadvantage particular individuals or groups. Jiang et al. (2026) highlight a further concern: cooperation between humans and AI may sometimes encourage people to justify unfair decisions rather than critically examine them. This possibility demonstrates that the presence of AI does not automatically make a decision more objective or ethical. Instead, human users must evaluate the quality, relevance, and potential consequences of AI-generated information. Ethical collaboration therefore requires clear accountability, fair procedures, meaningful human oversight, and the ability to question or reject automated recommendations.

Trust is another central element of effective human–AI collaboration. People need sufficient confidence in an AI system to use its assistance, but excessive trust may encourage them to accept outputs without verification. Conversely, insufficient trust may prevent users from benefiting from reliable AI-supported information. Everett et al. (2026) emphasize that trust in AI is shaped by several factors, including perceived competence, morality, individual expectations, and the particular system being used. Similarly, research on organizational collaboration suggests that trustworthiness must be considered alongside technical capability when AI is introduced into professional activities (Khac & Leyer, 2026). Appropriate trust requires users to understand what an AI system can do, recognize its limitations, and retain responsibility for consequential decisions. In this sense, trust should be calibrated according to evidence and context rather than based solely on the system’s confident language or apparent intelligence.The ethical dimension of collaboration also includes privacy, transparency, fairness, inclusion, and human autonomy. AI systems may process personal information, reproduce patterns of historical discrimination, or provide recommendations that are difficult for users to explain. When these systems are adopted without appropriate safeguards, they can weaken public confidence and create unequal outcomes. Haije et al. (2025) examine meaningful human control in human–AI teamwork and emphasize the importance of considering how human authority and moral responsibility are preserved in AI-assisted decisions. Such concerns are especially

important in high-stakes situations, where automated recommendations may affect health, safety, rights, or access to opportunities. Responsible collaboration requires systems that support human judgment, make relevant limitations understandable, and provide clear procedures for reviewing questionable outcomes.In modern society, the relationship between human–AI collaboration, social intelligence, and ethical behaviour should therefore be understood as an interconnected issue rather than three separate technological concerns. Collaboration determines how people and AI systems share tasks; social intelligence influences communication and coordination; and ethical behaviour determines whether the resulting actions respect human values and social responsibilities. Existing literature suggests that successful collaboration requires more than efficiency or accuracy. It also requires trustworthy design, awareness of social consequences, fair decision-making, and effective human supervision (Murthy et al., 2026; Wang et al., 2026). This article reviews these connections to explain how human–AI collaboration can contribute to modern society while reducing the risks of irresponsible use. Its central argument is that AI can strengthen human capabilities when technological performance is combined with social awareness, ethical principles, and meaningful human accountability.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the relationship between human–AI collaboration and social intelligence in modern society.
2. To identify the major ethical challenges associated with human–AI collaboration.
3. To explore how responsible AI practices can promote ethical behaviour, trust, and socially beneficial outcomes.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How does human–AI collaboration influence social intelligence and cooperative behaviour in modern society?
2. What major ethical challenges arise when humans collaborate with AI systems?
3. How can responsible AI practices strengthen ethical behaviour, trust, and human accountability?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Human–AI collaboration has attracted increasing scholarly attention because AI systems are becoming involved in activities that traditionally required human reasoning, expertise, and coordination. Wang et al. (2026) reviewed research on human–AI collaboration and identified the need for clearer concepts and more consistent approaches to evaluating collaborative relationships. Their work suggests that collaboration should be distinguished from automation: a collaborative system supports human activity through shared tasks and complementary capabilities, whereas automation may perform tasks with limited human involvement. This distinction is important because genuine collaboration requires users to understand the role of AI, evaluate its contribution, and maintain appropriate control over decisions. Murthy et al. (2026) similarly describe the evolution of human–AI relationships toward more interactive partnerships, in which communication, adaptability, coordination, and transparency become increasingly

important. Together, these studies indicate that the success of human–AI collaboration depends on both technical competence and the quality of the relationship between human users and intelligent systems.

Social intelligence provides a useful perspective for understanding how humans and AI systems coordinate their activities. In human relationships, social intelligence involves recognizing social contexts, interpreting communication, managing disagreement, and responding appropriately to other people's needs. AI systems can assist these processes through natural-language interaction, pattern recognition, and context-sensitive recommendations. However, the ability to produce socially appropriate responses does not necessarily mean that a system possesses human emotions, moral understanding, or lived experience. Murthy et al. (2026) identify social interaction and adaptive communication as significant features of emerging human–AI partnerships, while also noting concerns related to emotional expectations and the possibility of alienating human users. These observations suggest that AI can support socially intelligent work when it improves communication and coordination, but human judgment remains necessary when situations involve empathy, cultural differences, interpersonal conflict, or moral complexity.Trust is widely recognized as a key condition for effective collaboration. Everett et al. (2026) explain that trust in AI should be understood through several related but distinct concepts, including perceived trustworthiness, actual trust, and trusting behaviour. Their review also emphasizes that trust concerns both performance and morality, meaning that users may evaluate an AI system according to whether it works effectively and whether its behaviour appears appropriate. In collaborative settings, users need to judge when AI recommendations are reliable and when further verification is required. Khac and Leyer (2026) similarly identify trustworthiness as an important component of organizational human–AI collaboration and propose an integrated framework for understanding factors that shape trust. This literature indicates that trust should not be developed through persuasive design alone. Instead, it should be supported by reliable performance, clear communication, transparency about limitations, and opportunities for users to question or correct AI outputs.

Ethical behaviour is particularly important when AI-supported decisions influence the rights and opportunities of other people. Jiang et al. (2026) examine the potential for human–AI cooperation to contribute to unjust decisions, including in recruitment and promotion contexts. Their findings raise concern that individuals may sometimes feel more justified in making biased decisions when AI is involved. This suggests that people can use automated recommendations to reinforce existing assumptions instead of critically evaluating them. Ethical collaboration must therefore include active reflection on fairness, evidence, and the consequences of decisions. Human involvement alone is not sufficient if people merely approve an AI recommendation without examining its reasoning or potential effects. Organizations should establish clear review procedures, document significant decisions, and ensure that responsibility remains with the appropriate human decision-makers.

Meaningful human control offers another important framework for responsible collaboration. Haije et al. (2025) examine human control in AI-assisted triage and consider how different arrangements for allocating tasks and decision-making authority affect the human role. Their

research illustrates the importance of distinguishing between receiving AI advice, delegating selected tasks, and allowing systems to conduct more extensive decision-making independently. These arrangements have different implications for accountability and human authority. In high-stakes environments, human control should be meaningful rather than merely symbolic: users need adequate information, sufficient authority, and a realistic opportunity to intervene when an AI system produces questionable recommendations. This approach can help ensure that collaboration strengthens human decision-making without removing responsibility from those who design, deploy, or use AI systems.

The ethical management of human–AI interaction also requires attention to broader organizational and social conditions. Research on ethical AI management emphasizes that responsible use cannot be achieved through technical safeguards alone; it also requires organizational policies, governance arrangements, and alignment with human values (Mittelstadt, 2019; "Ethical Management of Human-AI Interaction," 2023). Privacy protection, transparency, accountability, fairness, and inclusion must be considered throughout the development and deployment of AI systems. For example, a system may produce efficient recommendations but still cause harm if it relies on incomplete data, disadvantages certain groups, or makes it difficult to challenge an incorrect outcome. Organizations therefore need to assess not only whether AI achieves its immediate objectives but also how its use affects people and communities. Overall, the reviewed literature suggests that socially beneficial human–AI collaboration depends on combining technical performance with social awareness, calibrated trust, meaningful human control, and ethical governance.

METHODOLOGY

This article uses a qualitative, literature-based methodology to examine human–AI collaboration, social intelligence, and ethical behaviour in modern society. It draws on existing scholarly research concerning collaborative AI systems, trust, social interaction, ethical decision-making, and human oversight. Relevant literature was identified through scholarly search sources, including Google Scholar, and publication records from academic journals and research publishers. Priority was given to studies and reviews published between 2019 and 2026 that directly addressed the article's main concepts. The selected literature was examined for recurring themes, key arguments, and implications for responsible collaboration. The analysis focused on how AI supports communication and joint work, how social intelligence shapes human–AI interaction, and how ethical challenges such as bias, privacy, accountability, and excessive reliance can be managed. As this article synthesizes existing publications, it does not claim to report original survey responses, interviews, or experimental findings.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The article adopts a qualitative narrative review design. This design is appropriate because the topic combines technological, social, organizational, and ethical dimensions that cannot be adequately understood through a single technical measure. The review organizes existing literature around three interconnected areas: human–AI collaboration and social intelligence;

ethical risks and responsibilities; and practices that support trustworthy and socially beneficial AI use. Studies were considered for their relevance to these areas and their contribution to understanding human behaviour, collaborative processes, and responsible system design. The approach is interpretive rather than experimental, allowing the article to compare ideas and identify recurring patterns across different research contexts. It does not claim to be a systematic review with an exhaustive database search or a formal risk-of-bias assessment.

DATA ANALYSIS

The collected literature was analyzed through thematic synthesis. The analysis identified recurring ideas across the selected studies and organized them into themes related to collaboration, social intelligence, trust, ethical responsibility, and human control. First, the literature was examined to understand how AI contributes to shared problem-solving, communication, and task coordination. Second, studies concerning trust and social interaction were compared to identify the importance of transparency, reliability, and awareness of human limitations. Third, research on ethical decision-making was reviewed to identify concerns involving bias, unfair outcomes, privacy, and accountability. Finally, the findings from these themes were interpreted together to identify common principles for responsible human–AI collaboration. The analysis was qualitative and interpretive; no statistical calculations, new datasets, or original experimental results were produced.

FINDINGS

The literature review indicates that human–AI collaboration can strengthen problem-solving, productivity, and decision-making when human expertise is combined with the analytical capabilities of AI. AI can help people organize information, identify patterns, generate ideas, and manage complex tasks. However, the benefits depend on the nature of the task, the reliability of the system, and the way responsibilities are distributed between humans and AI. Wang et al. (2026) emphasize the importance of clearly defining collaborative relationships, while Murthy et al. (2026) highlight communication, adaptability, and coordination as important dimensions of human–AI partnerships. The reviewed literature therefore suggests that AI is most useful when it complements human abilities rather than being treated as an unquestionable replacement for human judgment.A second finding is that social intelligence is important for creating effective and responsible collaborative environments. Clear communication, mutual understanding, and the ability to recognize the social consequences of decisions can help people work more effectively with AI systems. Nevertheless, socially appropriate language should not be mistaken for genuine human understanding or moral judgment. AI-generated responses can assist communication, but sensitive interpersonal situations still require human interpretation and responsibility. The literature also indicates that trust must be carefully calibrated. Everett et al. (2026) distinguish trust from trustworthiness and trusting behaviour, supporting the conclusion that users should evaluate AI according to its demonstrated reliability, limitations, and the consequences of its recommendations.

A third finding concerns ethical risks. AI-supported collaboration does not automatically guarantee fair or responsible outcomes. Jiang et al. (2026) highlight the possibility that cooperation with AI may contribute to unjust decisions when people use AI recommendations to justify biased judgments. This finding reinforces the need for independent evaluation, transparent decision-making, and clear accountability. Haije et al. (2025) further demonstrate why meaningful human control matters in situations where AI contributes to decisions with significant consequences. Human oversight must involve the ability to understand, question, modify, or reject system recommendations rather than simply approving automated outputs. Privacy protection, fairness, transparency, and appropriate governance are therefore essential conditions for ethical collaboration.Overall, the reviewed literature suggests that responsible human–AI collaboration requires a balanced relationship between technological capability and human responsibility. Effective collaboration depends on reliable systems, appropriate trust, socially aware communication, and governance mechanisms that protect individuals from unfair or harmful outcomes. These conclusions are derived from the reviewed literature rather than from new empirical data. Further research is needed to understand how these principles operate across different cultures, professions, and real-world social settings.

CONCLUSION

Human–AI collaboration, social intelligence, and ethical behaviour are closely connected dimensions of technological development in modern society. AI systems can support human problem-solving, communication, creativity, and decision-making, but their value depends on how they are designed, used, and governed. Collaboration should not be understood simply as the transfer of tasks from people to machines; it requires a thoughtful distribution of responsibilities that recognizes the strengths and limitations of both. Social intelligence remains important because communication, cooperation, and awareness of human needs shape the quality of collaborative outcomes. AI may assist these processes, but human judgment remains essential in situations involving emotions, cultural differences, interpersonal relationships, and moral responsibility.The literature also demonstrates that trust and ethical behaviour must be actively supported rather than assumed. Users need sufficient information to evaluate AI-generated recommendations, while organizations must establish safeguards against bias, privacy violations, and unjust decisions. Meaningful human control, transparent processes, and clear accountability can help ensure that technological efficiency does not come at the expense of fairness or human dignity. In conclusion, responsible human–AI collaboration should combine technological innovation with social awareness, ethical governance, and continuing human oversight. Such an approach can help modern society benefit from AI while protecting human autonomy, trust, and collective well-being.

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