



ALGORITHMIC MANAGEMENT TRANSPARENCY MANDATES AND EMPLOYEE TRUST IN AUTOMATED DECISIONS: A STRUCTURED REVIEW AND RESEARCH AGENDA

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ABSTRACT

Between 2023 and 2026 a cluster of legal instruments converted algorithmic transparency at work from a voluntary practice into a statutory obligation. Directive (EU) 2024/2831 requires platforms to disclose automated monitoring and decision systems, to maintain human oversight, and to grant a right to explanation and human review, with national transposition due by 2 December 2026. India has moved along a parallel but narrower path through state gig-work statutes, of which the Karnataka legislation is the most developed. These mandates rest on an untested behavioural premise: that telling workers how an algorithm decides will make them regard its decisions as procedurally just and will restore their trust in automated decision-making. This paper examines that premise. Drawing together the organisational justice literature, research on algorithmic management and control, and recent experimental evidence, it develops a five-dimensional construction of algorithmic transparency practice — existence disclosure, parameter disclosure, ex post explanation, contestability, and collective disclosure — and maps each dimension against the obligations imposed by six current instruments. The review finds that the evidence supporting a direct transparency-to-trust relationship is weak, that the effect where it exists appears to run through informational and then procedural justice rather than directly, and that recent experimental work reports no improvement in informational or procedural fairness perceptions from added disclosure. Five propositions are advanced, including the proposition that compliance formalism attenuates the effect of mandated disclosure, and a research agenda is set out around the December 2026 transposition date, which offers an unusually clean natural experiment. Implications for Indian employers, for platform regulation and for human resource practice are discussed.

KEYWORDS: Algorithmic Management; Algorithmic Transparency; Procedural Justice; Employee Trust; Platform Work; Automated Decision-Making; EU Platform Work Directive; Gig Work Regulation; India

1. INTRODUCTION

Employers have been making decisions about people by algorithm for some years. What is new is that they are now being required by law to say so. Directive (EU) 2024/2831 on improving working conditions in platform work obliges digital labour platforms to inform workers about automated monitoring systems and automated decision-making systems that significantly affect their working conditions, to keep those systems under human oversight, and to give workers a right to an explanation of, and human review of, significant automated decisions. Member states must give effect to these provisions by 2 December 2026. The EU Artificial Intelligence Act classifies systems used in recruitment, task allocation, promotion and termination as high-risk, with obligations phasing in over 2026 to 2028. In India, the Karnataka Platform Based Gig Workers (Social Security and Welfare) legislation requires aggregators to disclose the main parameters used in allocating and assessing work, the grounds on which work is denied, and the operation of the rating system.

Each of these instruments rests on the same behavioural assumption, and none of them states it. The assumption is that disclosure produces understanding, that understanding produces a perception of fair process, and that a perception of fair process restores trust in decisions that a machine has made. This is a chain of psychological effects, not a chain of legal ones, and the burden of the present paper is that we do not know whether it holds. The regulatory turn has run ahead of the evidence base.

That gap matters for human resource management for three reasons. First, the obligations fall on employers and aggregators, who must design disclosure regimes without knowing which features of disclosure actually change how workers feel about being managed by algorithm. Second, the instruments differ sharply in what they require, so firms operating across jurisdictions will implement different regimes and, in doing so, will generate variation that researchers can exploit. Third, the transposition deadline of 2 December 2026 is a dated, exogenous shock to disclosure practice across an entire economic bloc, and it is the kind of event that labour and organisational researchers rarely get.

This paper asks three questions. What does algorithmic transparency consist of, as a practice that an employer can actually adopt? What does the existing evidence say about the relationship between transparency practice and employee trust in automated



decisions, and through what mechanism does any such relationship operate? And what should be studied in the period immediately surrounding the mandates coming into force?

The contribution is threefold. The paper offers a five-dimensional construction of algorithmic transparency practice that separates what the current instruments treat as a single obligation. It maps that construction against six regulatory instruments across two jurisdictions, showing that most instruments cover only the shallower dimensions. And it advances five propositions, including the proposition that mandated disclosure may attenuate rather than strengthen the transparency-to-justice relationship where firms respond with compliance formalism. In doing so, it connects the strategic human resource management literature on practice design to a regulatory development that will reshape the informational environment of work.

2. FROM VOLUNTARY DISCLOSURE TO MANDATED TRANSPARENCY

Algorithmic transparency was, until recently, a matter of corporate discretion, professional ethics or platform reputation management. It is becoming a matter of statutory compliance. This section sets out the instruments that have effected that change, since the design of any research on the subject depends on knowing precisely what is being mandated. Figure 1 places the instruments in sequence.

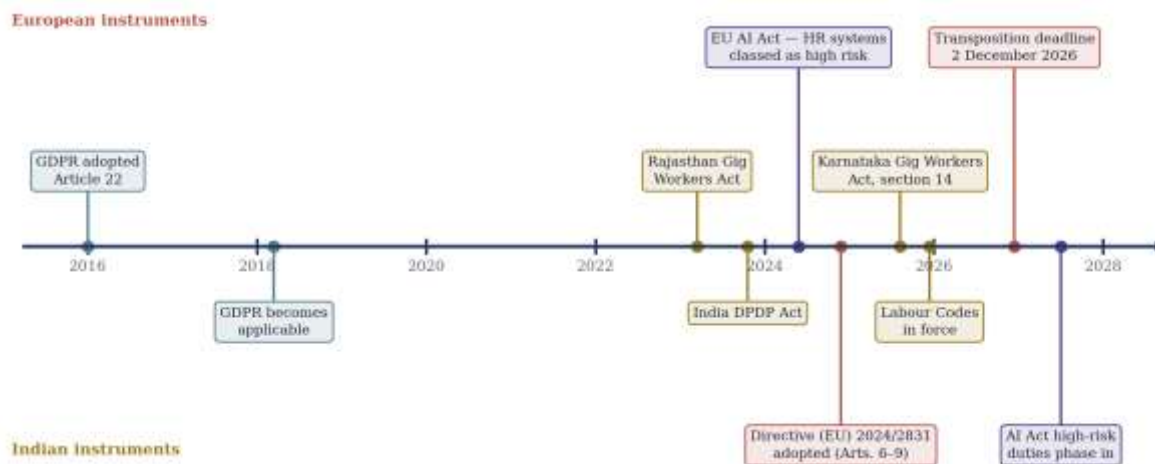


Figure 1. The regulatory sequence: European and Indian instruments governing algorithmic transparency at work, 2016–2028.

2.1 The European instruments

The General Data Protection Regulation supplied the first general constraint. Article 22 gives data subjects a right not to be subject to decisions based solely on automated processing that produce legal or similarly significant effects, subject to exceptions, and where an exception applies, a right to obtain human intervention, to express a point of view and to contest the decision. Its practical reach in employment has proved narrower than expected, principally because the word "solely" permits an organisation to insert nominal human involvement and thereby escape the article altogether.

Directive (EU) 2024/2831 addresses that weakness directly and is, for present purposes, the most consequential instrument. Article 6 requires platforms to inform platform workers about automated monitoring systems and about automated decision-making systems used to take or support decisions that significantly affect working conditions, in a documented form accessible to workers, their representatives and labour authorities; the same article restricts the processing of certain categories of data, including data on emotional or psychological state, private conversations, and data collected outside working time. Article 7 requires human oversight of such systems, including of their effects on health and safety. Article 8 requires human review of significant decisions and establishes a right to an explanation. Article 9 provides for information and consultation of workers' representatives, with platforms above a size threshold funding expert assistance. Member states must transpose these provisions by 2 December 2026.

Regulation (EU) 2024/1689, the Artificial Intelligence Act, approaches the same territory from the direction of product regulation rather than labour law. Systems used for recruitment and selection, for the allocation of tasks, and for decisions on promotion and termination are treated as high-risk, attracting obligations on documentation, logging, human oversight and information provision to deployers, with compliance duties phasing in across 2026 to 2028. Its addressee, however, is generally the provider and deployer rather than the worker, and its transparency obligations run principally up the supply chain rather than down to the individual affected.

2.2 The Indian instruments

India has no general algorithmic-management statute, but it has moved earlier and faster than is usually recognised at the level of platform work. The Rajasthan Platform Based Gig Workers (Registration and Welfare) Act, 2023 established a registration and



welfare-fee architecture with limited transparency content. The Karnataka Platform Based Gig Workers (Social Security and Welfare) legislation goes considerably further. It requires aggregators to disclose the personal data they process about a worker and the purposes of that processing, and, on request, the main parameters used in allocating and assessing work, the grounds for denial of work, and the operation of the rating system. It also imposes notice requirements before termination.

Three features of the Indian position are analytically important. The definition of automated decision-making tracks the GDPR formula of decisions taken "solely by automated means without human intervention", and therefore inherits the same avoidance problem. There is no counterpart to the European restrictions on processing sensitive categories such as emotional state or off-duty data. And the transparency obligation is largely ex ante and parameter-focused: it tells a worker what the system generally considers, not why a particular adverse decision was taken about them. Commentators have noted that enforcement machinery and appeal rights remain the weaker part of the framework.

The Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 supplies a general data-protection layer but contains no dedicated automated-decision provision equivalent to Article 22, and the four Labour Codes, in force from November 2025, recognise gig and platform workers for social-security purposes without addressing algorithmic management as such.

2.3 What the mandates require, and what they assume

Table 1 sets the instruments side by side. Read together, they show a regulatory field that is converging on the idea of transparency while diverging sharply on its content. The European Directive is the only instrument that reaches all five of the dimensions developed in the next section; the Indian instruments concentrate on the two shallowest.

Table 1. Algorithmic transparency obligations under current instruments

Instrument	Jurisdiction	Core transparency obligation	Principal limitation
GDPR, Article 22 (2016/2018)	EU	Right not to be subject to solely automated decisions with significant effect; where permitted, right to human intervention, to express a view and to contest.	The word "solely" permits nominal human involvement to disapply the article.
Directive (EU) 2024/2831, Arts. 6–9	EU	Information on automated monitoring and decision systems; restrictions on processing emotional, private and off-duty data; human oversight; human review and right to explanation of significant decisions; information and consultation of representatives.	Applies to platform work; effectiveness depends on national transposition by 2 December 2026.
Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 (AI Act)	EU	Employment-related systems classed high-risk; documentation, logging, human oversight and information duties, phasing in 2026–2028.	Obligations run principally to deployers and providers rather than to the affected worker.
Rajasthan Platform Based Gig Workers Act, 2023	India (state)	Registration, welfare fee and grievance architecture; limited disclosure content.	Little express algorithmic-transparency obligation.
Karnataka Platform Based Gig Workers (Social Security and Welfare) legislation, s. 14	India (state)	Disclosure of personal data processed and purposes; on request, the main parameters for allocating and assessing work, grounds for denial of work and the rating system; notice before termination.	Ex ante and parameter-focused; no right to explanation of a specific adverse decision; enforcement and appeal rights weak.
Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023	India	General data-protection duties of notice and purpose limitation.	No dedicated automated-decision provision.

What every instrument shares is the unstated behavioural premise identified at the outset. None of them requires an employer to establish that a worker understood the disclosure, or that the disclosure changed anything the worker could do. The obligation is discharged by the act of disclosing. Whether that act produces the perceptual outcome the legislature intended is an empirical question, and it is the question this paper takes up.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Algorithmic management as a control regime

Algorithmic management denotes the use of software to direct, evaluate and discipline workers with limited human intermediation. Kellogg, Valentine and Christin (2020) characterise it as a new contested terrain of control, operating through mechanisms of restricting and recommending what workers do, recording and rating what they have done, and replacing and



rewarding them accordingly. Möhlmann and colleagues (2021) show, in the context of online labour platforms, that the same system simultaneously performs matching and control, and that workers experience the two as inseparable. Duggan, Sherman, Carbery and McDonnell (2020) locate the phenomenon squarely within human resource management, arguing that app-work displaces the HR function into software and thereby removes the relational buffer through which employment decisions have historically been explained.

That last point is the one on which the present paper turns. Where a supervisor makes a decision, the account of the decision is produced in the interaction; where a system makes it, no account is produced unless one is engineered. Transparency obligations are, in effect, an attempt to legislate back into existence an explanatory practice that automation removed.

3.2 Organisational justice as the mechanism

Organisational justice theory offers the most direct account of why that explanatory practice should matter. In the four-factor structure established by Colquitt (2001), procedural justice concerns the fairness of the process by which an outcome is reached, and informational justice concerns the adequacy and candour of the explanations given about that process. Leventhal's criteria — consistency, bias suppression, accuracy, correctability, representativeness and ethicality — describe what a process must exhibit to be regarded as fair, and it is notable how closely the obligations in Articles 6 to 9 of the Directive track them: consistency and accuracy through parameter disclosure, correctability through human review, representativeness through consultation of representatives.

The theoretical expectation is therefore a sequential one. Disclosure is an informational-justice intervention. It should raise perceived informational justice, which should in turn raise perceived procedural justice, because a process whose basis is known can be evaluated against fairness criteria at all. Perceived procedural justice should then support trust, understood here as willingness to accept vulnerability to the decision-making agent. Recent work has extended justice reasoning to artificial agents specifically: Bankins and colleagues (2024) synthesise the multilevel evidence on artificial intelligence in organisations, and studies contrasting human and algorithmic decision agents in human resource contexts find that workers apply recognisably similar justice criteria to both while weighting them differently.

3.3 Trust in automated decision agents

Trust in automation is not the same construct as trust in a manager. It has a dispositional component that varies across individuals, a learned component that responds to observed reliability, and a situational component that depends on the stakes of the decision. This matters for the transparency argument because a disclosure regime that raises understanding may not raise trust if the thing understood is unwelcome. A worker who learns precisely how a rating system penalises declined jobs has more information and may, quite rationally, trust the system less. Transparency reveals; it does not reassure.

3.4 Five dimensions of algorithmic transparency practice

The literature and the instruments both treat transparency as though it were one thing. It is not. This paper distinguishes five dimensions, ordered by the depth of the informational commitment each requires, and Table 2 sets them out with their regulatory anchors and their expected justice effects.

Table 2. Five dimensions of algorithmic transparency practice

Dim.	Practice	What the worker learns	Expected justice effect and regulatory anchor
T1	Existence disclosure	That an automated monitoring or decision system is in use, and for what class of decision.	Minimal effect on procedural justice; necessary but not sufficient. Directive Art. 6; AI Act; Karnataka s. 14(1)(iv).
T2	Parameter disclosure	Which factors the system generally takes into account, and how work is allocated and assessed.	Raises informational justice; supports consistency and accuracy judgements. Directive Art. 6; Karnataka s. 14(1)(v), 14(2).
T3	Ex post explanation	Why this particular decision was taken about this worker.	Strongest expected effect on procedural justice; supplies the material for an evaluation of the specific process. Directive Art. 8.
T4	Contestability and human review	That the decision can be challenged and reconsidered by a person, and how.	Supplies correctability; expected direct effect on procedural justice. Directive Art. 8; GDPR Art. 22(3).
T5	Collective disclosure	That representatives hold system-level information and analytical support.	Operates through voice and representativeness rather than individual cognition. Directive Art. 9.



The distinction is consequential. Existence disclosure (T1) tells a worker that an automated system is in use. Parameter disclosure (T2) tells them what the system generally takes into account. Ex post explanation (T3) tells them why a particular decision about them was taken. Contestability (T4) gives them a route to challenge it and have a person look again. Collective disclosure (T5) gives their representatives, who may possess analytical capacity the individual lacks, a view of the system as a whole. Only the third and fourth dimensions supply what justice theory would regard as the raw material of a procedural-justice judgement about a specific decision, and only the fourth supplies correctability. Figure 2 shows how unevenly the current instruments cover these dimensions.

Coverage of the five transparency dimensions across current instruments

GDPR Art. 22	partial	partial	partial	express	—
EU AI Act	express	partial	partial	partial	partial
Directive (EU) 2024/2831	express	express	express	express	express
Rajasthan Act 2023	partial	—	—	partial	—
Karnataka Act (s. 14)	express	express	—	partial	—
India DPDP Act 2023	partial	partial	—	partial	—
	T1 Existence	T2 Parameter	T3 Ex post explanation	T4 Contestability	T5 Collective disclosure

Figure 2. Coverage of the five transparency dimensions across six current regulatory instruments.

4. METHOD

This paper is a structured integrative review rather than an exhaustive systematic review. The integrative form is appropriate where the object is to reconceptualise a construct and generate propositions across a literature that is dispersed across disciplines and not yet settled enough for effect-size synthesis, which is the position of the transparency-and-trust literature at present.

Sources were identified in Scopus, Web of Science and, for legal instruments, in the Official Journal of the European Union and the Karnataka and Rajasthan state gazettes. The search combined terms for the practice (algorithmic transparency, algorithmic management, automated decision-making, explainability, algorithmic disclosure) with terms for the outcome (trust, procedural justice, organisational justice, fairness perception, legitimacy) and with terms for the setting (work, employment, workforce, platform, gig, human resource). The window ran from 2015, the year in which algorithmic management entered the management literature in a sustained way, to mid-2026. Table 3 records the protocol.

Table 3. Review protocol and coding scheme

Element	Specification
Sources	Scopus; Web of Science; Official Journal of the European Union; Karnataka and Rajasthan state gazettes.
Window	2015 to mid-2026.
Practice terms	algorithmic transparency; algorithmic management; automated decision-making; explainability; algorithmic disclosure; explanation.
Outcome terms	trust; procedural justice; organisational justice; fairness perception; legitimacy; acceptance.
Setting terms	work; employment; workforce; employee; platform; gig; human resource.
Inclusion	Workplace or platform-work setting; disclosure or explanation treated as antecedent; perceptual outcome in the trust, fairness or justice family; peer-reviewed or authoritative legal text.
Exclusion	Purely technical interpretability research; consumer-facing recommender studies; studies of algorithmic decision-making without a worker-perception outcome; secondary commentary used as authority for legal content.
Coding: dimension	T1 existence; T2 parameter; T3 ex post explanation; T4 contestability; T5 collective disclosure.
Coding: outcome	Informational justice; procedural justice; distributive justice; trust; acceptance; intention.
Coding: setting	Platform work; conventional employment; mixed or simulated.
Coding: design	Experiment; survey; qualitative; conceptual; legal analysis.



Studies were retained where they examined a workplace or platform-work setting, treated some form of disclosure or explanation as an antecedent, and reported a perceptual outcome in the trust, fairness or justice family. Purely technical work on model interpretability, consumer-facing recommender studies and studies of algorithmic decision-making with no worker-perception outcome were excluded. Regulatory instruments were read in the original text; secondary legal commentary was used only to identify interpretive difficulties, not as authority for the content of provisions.

Retained studies were coded on four attributes: the transparency dimension manipulated or measured, using the T1 to T5 scheme in Table 2; the outcome construct; the employment setting, distinguishing platform work from conventional employment; and the design, distinguishing experimental, survey and qualitative work. The coding scheme is reproduced in Table 3 so that it can be applied by others to an expanded corpus.

Two limitations of the method should be stated at the outset. First, an integrative review does not licence claims about the distribution of effect sizes in a population of studies, and none are made here. Second, the field is moving quickly enough that the most consequential empirical work on mandated transparency has not yet been done, because the mandates have not yet taken effect. The propositions in Section 6 are framed so that this work can be carried out.

5. FINDINGS

5.1 The evidence on transparency and fairness perceptions is weaker than the mandates assume

The most direct recent test is instructive. Mirbabaie, Langer, Rieskamp and Hofeditz (2026) ran a four-condition between-subjects experiment with 234 digital labour platform workers on a purpose-built platform simulating algorithmic task allocation, varying the type of transparency provided. Providing information about the functioning and procedures of the algorithmic management system improved neither informational fairness perceptions nor combined fairness perceptions. The only dimension affected was distributive fairness. Technology affinity and pre-existing trust in algorithmic systems predicted fairness perceptions more strongly than the transparency manipulation did, and did so independently of the level of transparency provided. The authors name the assumption their results falsify the transparency fallacy.

That result should be read carefully rather than generalised. It concerns a simulated platform, a single episode of allocation, and disclosure of a kind that maps onto the second of the five dimensions rather than the third or fourth. It does not establish that transparency never matters. What it does establish is that the causal step the mandates take for granted — disclosure raises perceived fairness of process — cannot be assumed at the shallower dimensions of disclosure, and that individual dispositions may swamp the intervention.

The wider literature is consistent with a conditional rather than a general effect. Studies of algorithmic compensation in gig work find that transparency can moderate the relationship between algorithmic control and procedural justice perceptions without eliminating the underlying grievance. Work on feature-importance disclosure finds that showing which inputs drove a decision can reduce the incidence of biased decisions and shift perceptions, which is an effect at the third dimension rather than the second. Reviews of algorithmic decision-making in organisations report persistent tensions between the efficiency rationale for automation and the legitimacy conditions of the employment relationship, tensions that disclosure alone does not resolve.

5.2 Where an effect exists, it appears to be mediated rather than direct

Taken together, the retained studies point away from a direct path from disclosure to trust. Where positive effects on trust are reported, they are typically accompanied by movement in justice perceptions, and where justice perceptions do not move, trust does not move either. This is what justice theory predicts, and it has a practical corollary that the instruments do not reflect: an employer can comply fully with a disclosure obligation and produce no change in trust, because compliance operates on the disclosure and not on the perception.

5.3 Depth, comprehensibility and actionability are the boundary conditions

Three conditions recur across the studies in which disclosure does appear to work. The disclosure must reach the decision rather than the system: a worker told how the allocation model works in general is not thereby told why they were passed over on Tuesday. It must be comprehensible to its audience, which is a constraint the instruments barely address; the Directive's requirement of documented form accessible to workers is a formal rather than a cognitive standard. And it must be actionable: information that a worker can do nothing with is unlikely to alter their judgement of the fairness of the process, whereas information coupled with a route to human review is a different proposition entirely.

There is a fourth condition that receives less attention: employment status. Much of the empirical work is conducted with platform workers who are formally independent contractors, for whom the relational baseline is thin and exit is the principal remedy. Whether the same disclosure produces the same perceptual movement among employees with grievance procedures, notice rights and union representation is not established. Since the European Directive couples transparency obligations with a rebuttable presumption of employment, and since Indian law is moving in the same direction, this is not a peripheral question.

5.4 The compliance–comprehension gap

A pattern emerges from reading the instruments alongside the behavioural evidence, and it is set out schematically in Figure 3. As each instrument deepens what must be disclosed, the volume of disclosure grows. Worker comprehension, however, is bounded by attention, by the technical complexity of the systems and by the terms in which disclosure is drafted, which under a compliance obligation will tend towards the legally defensive. Beyond a point, additional disclosure adds volume without adding understanding, and may reduce it by burying the material fact in the compliant document. The gap between what has been disclosed and what has been understood is where mandated transparency fails on its own terms.

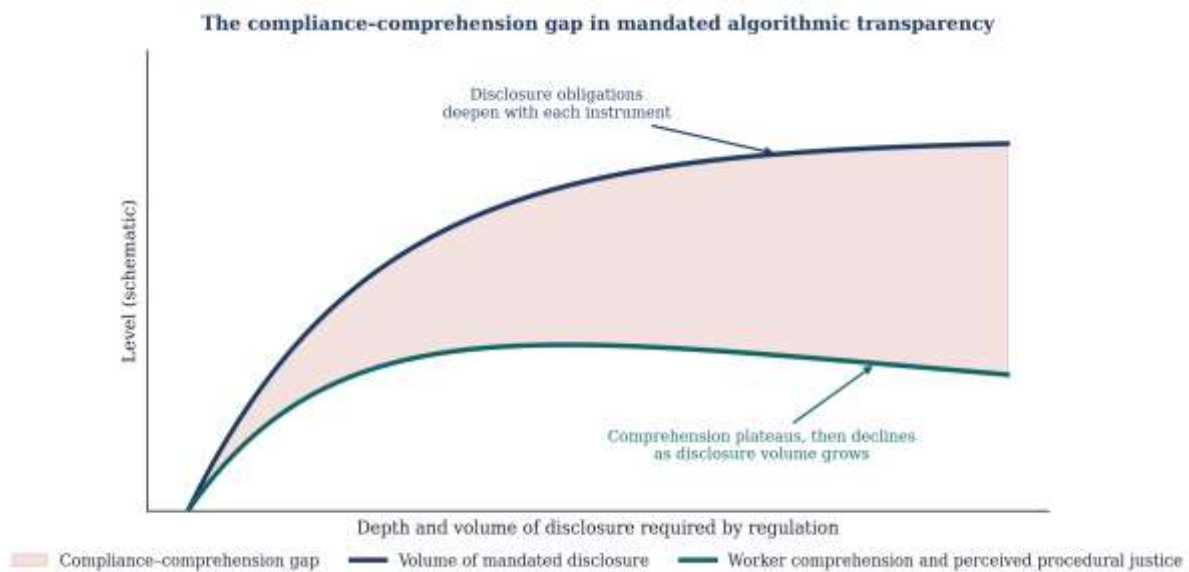


Figure 3. The compliance–comprehension gap: schematic representation of disclosure volume against worker comprehension as mandated obligations deepen.

This is a familiar dynamic in other disclosure regimes. Consumer credit, privacy notices and financial product disclosure have each produced a literature on the limits of mandated information provision, and the lesson from those fields is that disclosure design, not disclosure quantity, determines whether the intervention works. There is no reason to expect algorithmic management to behave differently, and some reason to expect it to behave worse, since the underlying systems are less stable and less explicable than a credit agreement.

6. PROPOSITIONS

The framework in Figure 4 consolidates the review into a testable structure, and five propositions follow from it.

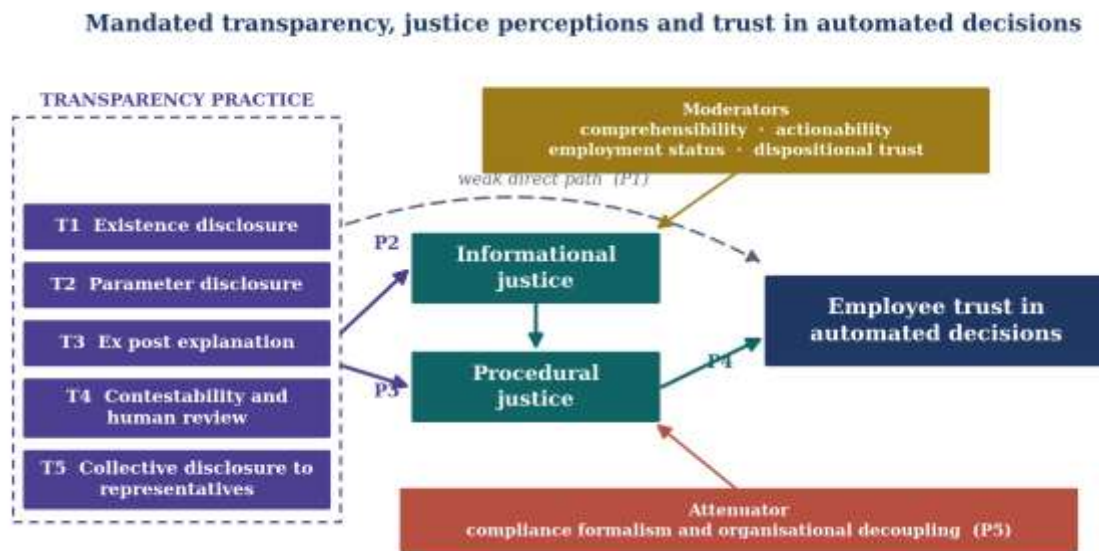


Figure 4. Conceptual framework: transparency dimensions, justice mechanisms, moderators and the trust outcome.

Proposition 1. Existence disclosure alone (T1) has no significant direct effect on employee trust in automated decisions. The worker learns that a system is deciding, but learns nothing that permits evaluation of how it decides.

Proposition 2. Parameter disclosure and ex post explanation (T2 and T3) raise perceived informational justice, and this effect is stronger for ex post explanation of a specific decision than for ex ante disclosure of general parameters.

Proposition 3. Contestability and human review (T4) raise perceived procedural justice directly, independently of the informational-justice path, because they supply correctability in Leventhal's sense.

Proposition 4. The relationship between transparency practice and employee trust in automated decisions is mediated serially by informational justice and then procedural justice, and is moderated by the comprehensibility and actionability of the disclosure and by the worker's dispositional trust in automated systems.

Proposition 5. Where transparency is adopted in response to a legal mandate rather than a managerial decision, the relationship between disclosure and perceived procedural justice is attenuated by compliance formalism: disclosures drafted for defensibility are longer, more technical and less actionable, and organisations decouple the formal disclosure from the operational reality of how decisions are taken.

The fifth proposition is the one with the sharpest practical edge, and it is testable in a way the others are not, because the transposition of the Directive creates firms that disclose because they must alongside firms that were already disclosing because they chose to. Table 4 summarises the propositions with their theoretical anchors and suggested tests.

Table 4. Propositions, anchors and suggested tests

No.	Proposition	Theoretical anchor	Suggested test
P1	Existence disclosure alone has no significant direct effect on trust in automated decisions.	Informational justice requires content, not notice.	Vignette experiment contrasting T1 with T2 and T3 conditions.
P2	Parameter disclosure and ex post explanation raise informational justice, with the stronger effect for ex post explanation.	Colquitt (2001); explanation adequacy.	Within-subject experiment varying disclosure depth for the same decision.
P3	Contestability and human review raise procedural justice independently of the informational path.	Leventhal's correctability criterion.	Mediation model with T4 as a separate exogenous path.
P4	Transparency affects trust serially through informational and procedural justice, moderated by comprehensibility, actionability and dispositional trust.	Serial mediation in justice theory; trust in automation.	PLS-SEM with measured moderators in a field sample.
P5	Mandate-driven disclosure is attenuated by compliance formalism and decoupling.	Institutional decoupling; disclosure-regime literature.	Difference-in-differences around 2 December 2026, with a disclosure-comprehensibility interaction.



7. DISCUSSION

7.1 Implications for theory

The principal theoretical implication is that algorithmic transparency should be treated as a multi-dimensional practice construct rather than a binary condition. Studies that report null effects for transparency and studies that report positive effects may well be studying different dimensions, and until measurement separates them the literature will continue to produce apparently contradictory results. The five-dimensional scheme offered here is a starting point, not a validated instrument, and the first item on the research agenda is to build and validate one.

A second implication concerns the strategic human resource management literature. Transparency in algorithmic management is a practice that will shortly be adopted by every affected firm because the law requires it, which removes the variation on which practice-performance research usually depends. What will remain is variation in how the practice is designed. This is the condition under which the resource-based logic becomes more interesting rather than less: when everyone must disclose, the advantage lies with those who disclose in a way that actually produces understanding, and the design capability becomes the scarce factor. This connects the present subject to work on the reconfiguration of human resource practice under artificial intelligence, including the author's own treatment of platform workforce management and of AI-augmented human resource practice design.

7.2 Implications for practice

For employers and aggregators the review suggests four design commitments that go beyond the letter of the obligations. Disclose at the level of the decision rather than the system, since a general parameter statement will not carry the perceptual load. Test comprehension rather than assume it, using the same techniques applied to safety communication. Pair every disclosure with an actionable route, because information without recourse is unlikely to move procedural-justice judgements. And separate the compliance document from the worker-facing explanation, since a single document drafted to satisfy a regulator will satisfy no one else.

7.3 Implications for India

India occupies an unusual position. Its platform workforce is among the largest in the world and is growing, its state-level statutes have moved earlier than most national frameworks outside Europe, and its enforcement architecture is the weakest element of the package. The Karnataka provisions reach the first two transparency dimensions but not the third; a worker may learn the parameters of the allocation system without ever learning why they were deactivated. The narrow definition of automated decision-making, drawn from the same formula that has limited Article 22, invites the insertion of nominal human involvement.

There is also a comparative research opportunity that Indian scholars are well placed to take. The European and Indian regimes will differ from December 2026 in precisely the dimensions this paper distinguishes: ex post explanation and contestability. Comparative work on Indian platform workers under the Karnataka regime and European platform workers under the transposed Directive would isolate the marginal contribution of those two dimensions to procedural justice and trust, which is an inference no single-jurisdiction study can support.

8. LIMITATIONS AND RESEARCH AGENDA

The paper has three limitations. It is an integrative rather than exhaustive review, and does not support claims about the distribution of effects across the literature. It reasons about the effects of mandates that have not yet taken effect, which means its central propositions concerning compliance formalism are anticipatory. And it relies for its sharpest empirical anchor on a small number of recent experimental studies conducted in simulated platform environments, whose external validity to conventional employment is untested.

The agenda that follows from these limitations has four clusters, shown in Figure 5.

Research agenda: four testable clusters arising from the review

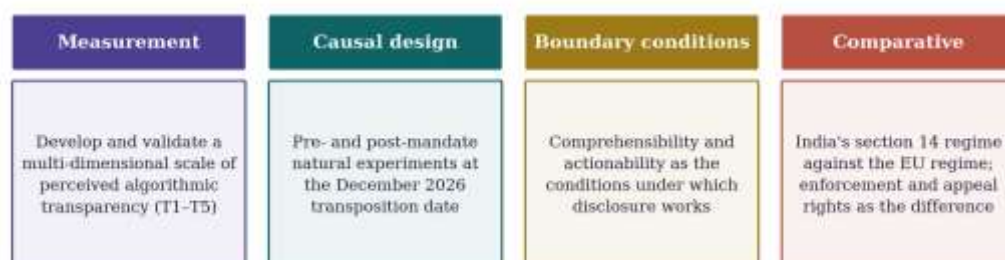


Figure 5. Research agenda arising from the review.



The measurement cluster is prior to the others: a validated multi-dimensional scale of perceived algorithmic transparency, distinguishing T1 to T5, is the instrument the field currently lacks. The causal cluster is time-limited and should be planned now, because a pre- and post-mandate design around 2 December 2026 requires baseline data collected before that date. The boundary-condition cluster asks under what conditions disclosure works, with comprehensibility and actionability as the leading candidates, and calls for designs that manipulate the form of disclosure while holding its content constant. The comparative cluster exploits the India–EU divergence described above.

A concrete design for the causal cluster would sample platform workers in one or more member states before and after transposition, with a comparison group in a jurisdiction not subject to the Directive, measuring the five transparency dimensions, informational and procedural justice, and trust in automated decisions at both points. A difference-in-differences estimator would identify the effect of the mandate itself, and interaction with a measure of disclosure comprehensibility would test Proposition 5 directly.

9. CONCLUSION

The law has decided that workers should be told how algorithms decide about them. That is a defensible decision on grounds of dignity and accountability quite apart from its behavioural effects. But the instruments are drafted as though the behavioural effects were established, and they are not. The available evidence suggests that shallow disclosure does not move fairness perceptions, that where transparency works it works through justice perceptions rather than directly on trust, and that the conditions under which it works — depth, comprehensibility, actionability — are precisely the conditions the mandates do not specify.

For human resource management this is an opportunity rather than a difficulty. The obligation to disclose is fixed; the design of disclosure is not, and the design is where the effect lies. The period around December 2026 will supply the cleanest evidence the field is likely to get on whether mandated transparency does what it was enacted to do. The research should be designed before the mandate arrives, not after.

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