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## MANAGING MULTI-GENERATIONAL WORKFORCE HR CHALLENGES

*Harsh Sawant<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Reshma Nair<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Student Amity Business School Amity University Mumbai

[sawant.neelsh@s.amity.edu](mailto:sawant.neelsh@s.amity.edu)

<sup>2</sup> Assistant Professor Amity Business School Amity University Mumbai

[rrnair@mum.amity.edu](mailto:rrnair@mum.amity.edu)

### ABSTRACT

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in hiring is revolutionizing conventional recruitment procedures, but very little is understood about the attitudes of future job applicants toward this change. This research investigates the awareness, confidence, and attitudes of university students towards AI-based recruitment systems. A mixed-methods design was used to gather data from 112 students of different disciplines using structured questionnaires. Results identify increased awareness and pre-exposure to AI tools as having a strong positive impact on students' perceptions of fairness and trust in AI hiring. Despite this, issues of algorithmic bias and transparency are still major hurdles to adoption. Although most students acknowledge the efficiency and objectivity provided by AI, an inclination toward human processes is still preferred owing to perceived insufficiency of personal engagement. The research brings into perspective the imperative of having more education, transparency, and ethical design within AI recruitment platforms in order to meet the emerging workforce's expectations.

### INTRODUCTION

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is being utilized more and more in recruitment processes to maximize efficiency, objectivity, and scalability. From screening resumes to computerized interviews, AI technologies are transforming the way organizations source and hire talent. Since university students are the next wave of job applicants, their attitudes towards AI-based recruitment are crucial for gleaning insights into the future of hiring. The level of awareness, trust, and acceptance of university students towards AI recruitment systems are investigated in this study with a view to discovering the determinants of their concerns and preferences within the changing employment market.

#### 1.1 Objectives

- To assess the level of awareness among university students regarding AI-driven recruitment practices.
- To examine the level of trust students place in AI-based recruitment systems.
- To analyze students' job search preferences between AI-driven and traditional human recruitment methods.
- To identify the factors influencing students' acceptance or rejection of AI in recruitment.
- To provide recommendations for making AI-driven recruitment more transparent, fair, and student-friendly.

### 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

The use of Artificial Intelligence in recruitment has gained momentum due to its potential to improve efficiency, reduce hiring bias, and streamline candidate evaluation (Upadhyay & Khandelwal, 2018). AI-driven tools, including resume parsers, chatbots, and predictive assessments, are increasingly replacing traditional methods. However, several studies highlight concerns about algorithmic bias and the lack of transparency in AI decision-making (Raghavan et al., 2020). Chamorro-Premuzic et al. (2019) note that while employers are optimistic about AI adoption, job seekers often express skepticism, citing fears of depersonalization and unfair treatment. Trust plays a central role in AI acceptance, as Langer et al. (2021) suggest, with transparency and explainability being key factors in shaping user perceptions. Although younger populations are generally more digitally adept, research specifically examining university students' perceptions of AI recruitment remains limited (Nikolaou, 2021). This gap underscores the need for focused studies to better understand how emerging job seekers view AI in hiring.

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### 3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Area of Study

The study focuses on university students across various disciplines such as Business Administration, Engineering, Humanities, and Technology, primarily targeting those preparing to enter the job market.

#### 3.2 Sample of Study

The sample consists of 112 university students from multiple academic backgrounds, ensuring diversity in exposure to AI and recruitment practices.

#### 3.3 Sampling Technique

A convenience sampling technique was used to select participants based on accessibility and willingness to respond to the survey.

#### 3.4 Type of Study

This is a **descriptive and exploratory** study aimed at understanding students' perceptions, trust, and preferences regarding AI-driven recruitment systems.

#### 3.5 Data Collection Tools

Primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire of 15 questions distributed via Google Forms. Secondary data was obtained from academic journals, articles, and online reports related to AI in recruitment.

#### 3.6 Method of Analysis

Data were analysed using **descriptive statistics** (frequencies, percentages, means) and **inferential statistics** to identify relationships between awareness, trust, and acceptance of AI recruitment.

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### 4.0 LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

- **Limited Geographic Scope:** The study is confined to a specific group of university students, which may not fully represent the perceptions of students from different regions or cultural backgrounds.
- **Sample Size Constraints:** With a sample size of 112 respondents, the findings may not be generalizable to the broader student population.
- **Subjective Responses:** The use of self-reported data through surveys may introduce personal biases and affect the accuracy of responses.
- **Limited Exposure to AI Tools:** Many participants may not have direct experience with AI-based recruitment systems, leading to perceptions based more on assumptions than actual interaction.
- **Rapidly Evolving Technology:** As AI recruitment tools continue to evolve, the findings of this study may become outdated with future technological advancements.

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### 5.0 ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The research found that students who were more aware of AI-based recruitment practices viewed them as more equitable than those with low awareness. Pre-exposure to AI recruitment systems greatly enhanced the level of trust among students. Nevertheless, most of them were concerned about algorithmic bias and the absence of transparency, which adversely affected their trust. AI-based and conventional recruitment method preferences were nearly evenly split, showing that although students enjoy the speed and efficiency of AI, they still prefer human interaction in hiring processes. Familiarity with AI tools and trust in the system's fairness significantly impacted students' openness to using AI recruitment methods.

#### 5.1 Graphical Representation and Interpretation of Data

Questionnaire –

What is your age group?

- 18–20
- 21–23
- 24–26
- Above 26

What is your gender?

- Male

- Female
- Prefer not to say

**What course are you currently pursuing?**

- BBA
- MBA
- B.Tech
- Other

**Are you aware of AI-based recruitment systems (like automated resume screening, AI interviews, etc.)?**

- Yes
- No

**Have you ever experienced an AI-driven recruitment process?**

- Yes
- No

**How would you rate your familiarity with AI-driven recruitment processes?**

- Very Familiar
- Somewhat Familiar
- Not Familiar

**How fair do you perceive AI-driven recruitment processes to be compared to traditional hiring methods?**

- Very Fair
- Fair
- Neutral
- Unfair
- Very Unfair

**How much do you trust AI to make unbiased hiring decisions?**

- Highly Trust
- Somewhat Trust
- Neutral
- Somewhat Distrust
- Highly Distrust

**Do you think AI recruitment improves efficiency in the hiring process?**

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

**What concerns do you have about AI recruitment systems? (Select all that apply)**

- Bias in algorithms
- Lack of transparency
- Privacy concerns
- None

**Would you prefer a human recruiter over an AI system for job interviews?**

- Strongly Prefer Human
- Prefer Human
- Neutral
- Prefer AI
- Strongly Prefer AI

**How important is transparency in AI recruitment processes for you?**

- Extremely Important
- Very Important
- Moderately Important
- Slightly Important
- Not Important

**Do you feel AI can completely replace human recruiters in the future?**

- Yes
- No

- Maybe

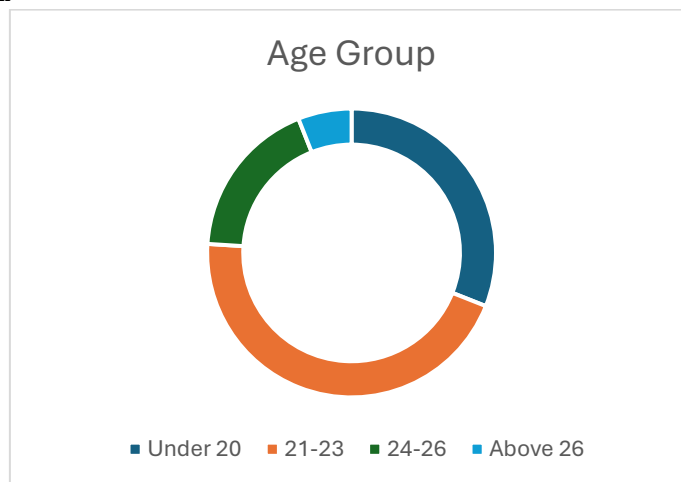
**Would you feel more confident applying to companies using AI-based hiring if the process was well explained?**

- Yes
- No

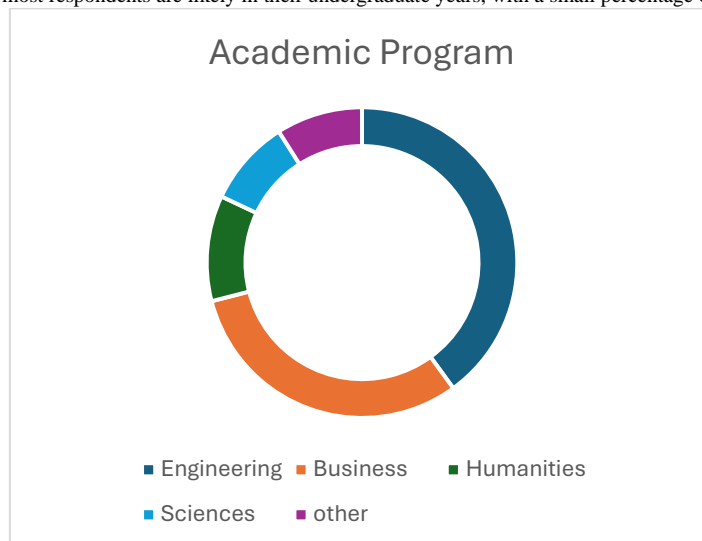
**In your opinion, how soon will AI recruitment become a standard practice in most companies?**

- Within 1–2 years
- Within 3–5 years
- After 5 years
- Never

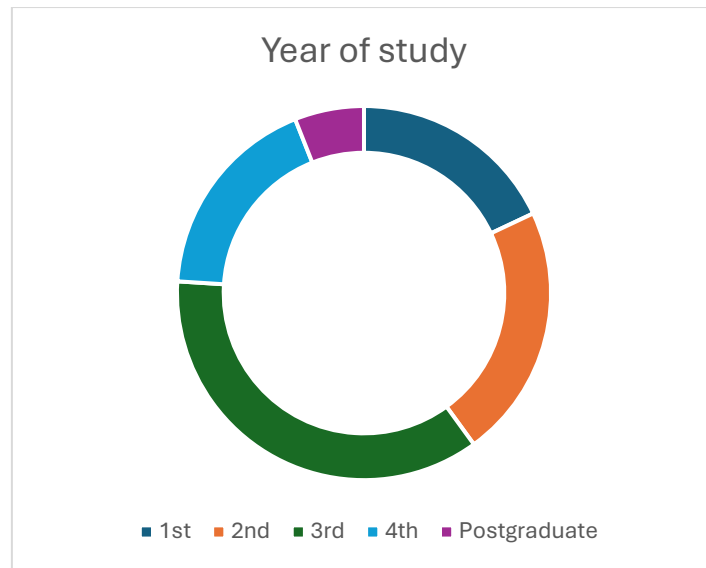
**Question wise graphical representation –**



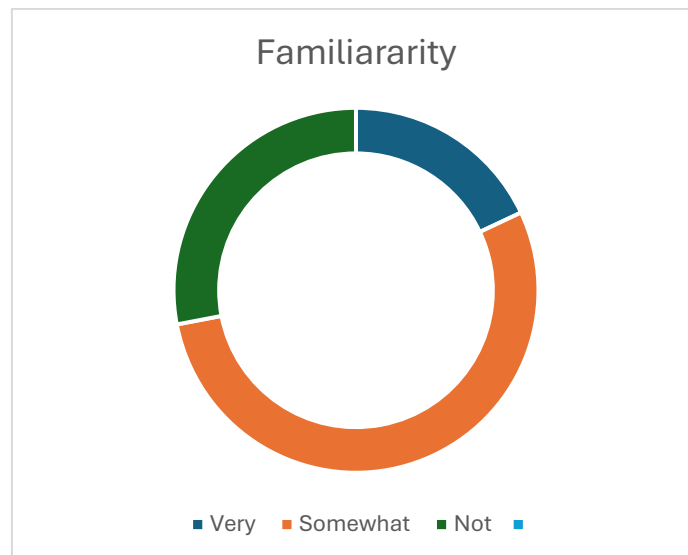
1. Data Interpretation - The majority of participants fall within the 21-23 age range (45%), with a smaller proportion under 20 (31%) and above 26 (6%). This indicates that most respondents are likely in their undergraduate years, with a small percentage of older students.



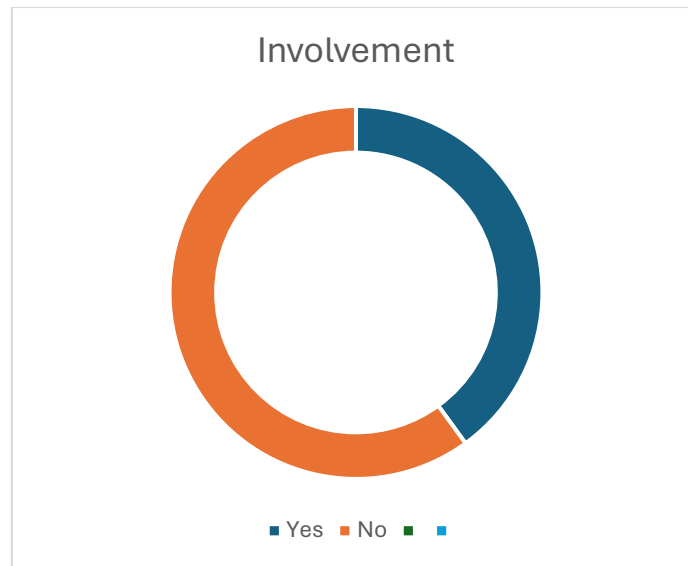
2. Data Interpretation - Engineering students form the largest group (40%), followed by Business Administration students (31%). A notable portion of participants belong to the Humanities/Social Sciences and Science programs, with a small percentage identifying as studying other fields. This shows a diverse representation from various academic disciplines.



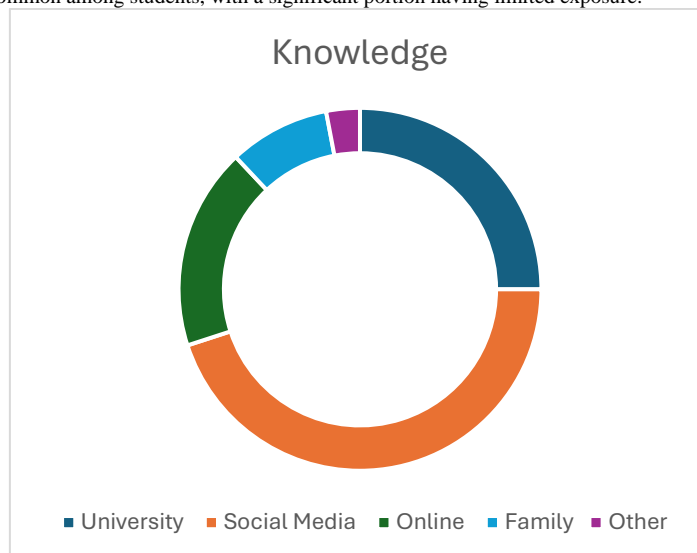
3. Data Interpretation - The largest group of respondents are in their third year (36%), followed by second-year students (22%) and final-year students (18%). This suggests a strong participation from upper-year students who are likely to have more experience with job searches and recruitment processes. **Implication:** Tech adoption is not a major barrier overall, but onboarding support for older employees may be beneficial.



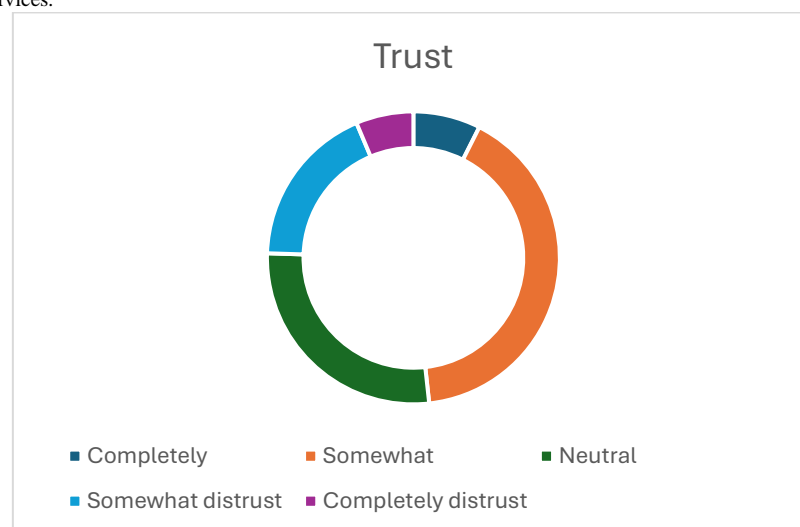
4. Data Interpretation - Most students (54%) have some familiarity with AI-driven recruitment methods, while 28% are not familiar at all. Only 18% are very familiar, suggesting that awareness of AI recruitment tools is still developing among students, with many still learning about it.



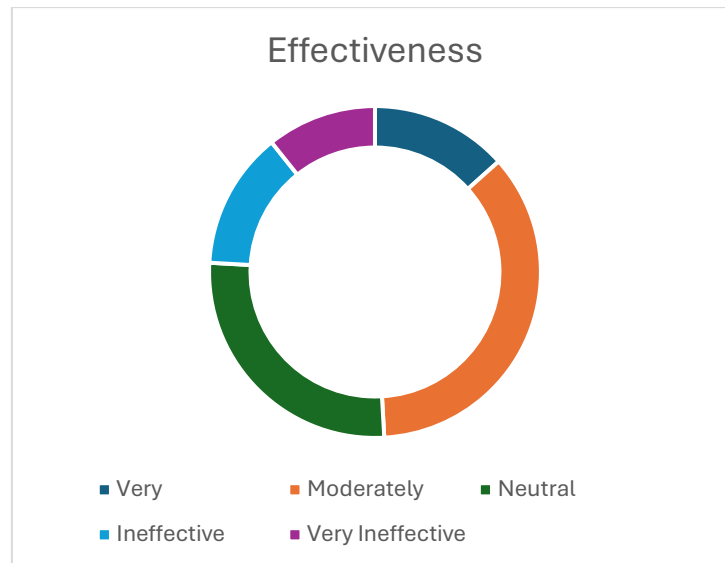
5. Data Interpretation - 40% of students have experienced AI-based recruitment methods, while 60% have not. This indicates that AI recruitment is still relatively new or uncommon among students, with a significant portion having limited exposure.



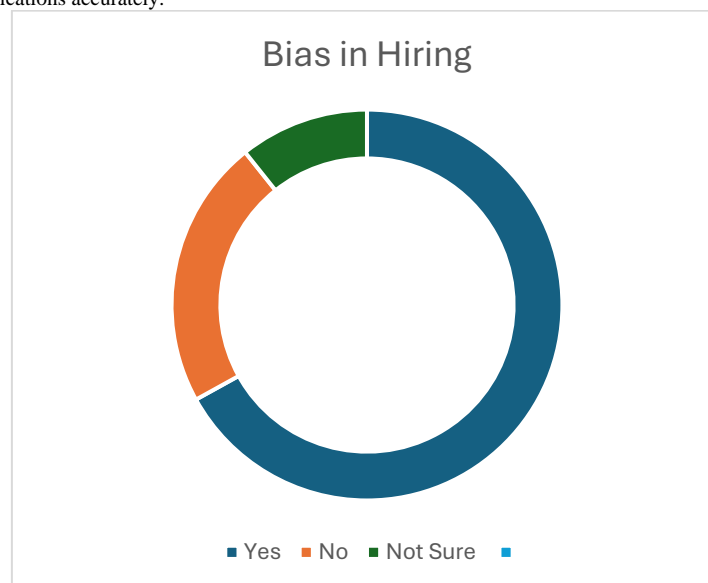
6. Data Interpretation - Social media (45%) is the primary source of information about AI-driven recruitment tools, followed by university-based awareness (25%). This shows that many students are learning about AI recruitment through informal online channels, rather than through academic or career services.



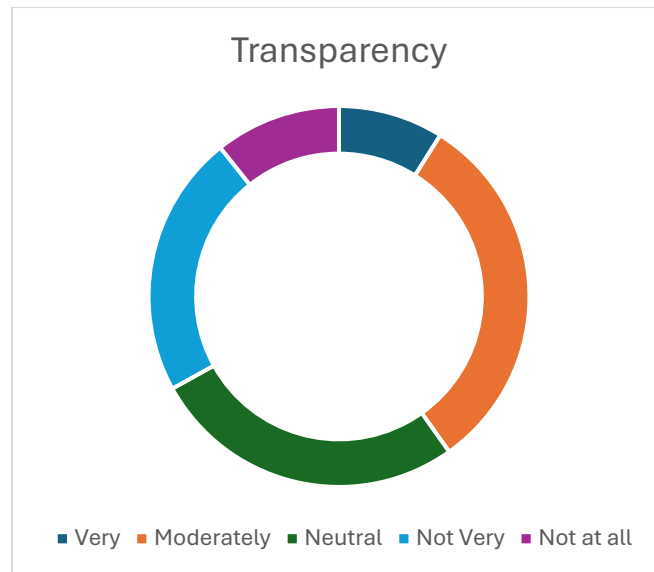
7. Data Interpretation - While 40% of students somewhat trust AI recruitment processes, 27% remain neutral, and 24% either somewhat distrust or completely distrust the process. This suggests that there is skepticism about the fairness of AI recruitment, with a need for further trust-building.



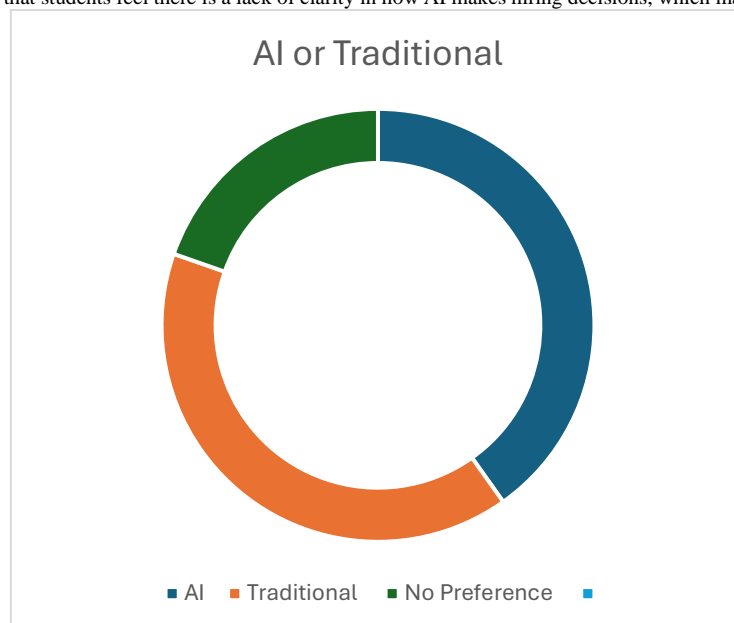
8. Data Interpretation - 36% of students believe AI recruitment tools are moderately effective, while only 13% think they are very effective. A significant portion of participants remains uncertain about the effectiveness of these tools, indicating that there is some skepticism regarding their ability to assess qualifications accurately.



9. Data Interpretation - A large majority (67%) of students believe AI-driven recruitment systems could introduce biases, with only 22% disagreeing. This reflects concerns about the fairness and ethical implications of using AI in recruitment, highlighting the importance of ensuring algorithmic neutrality.

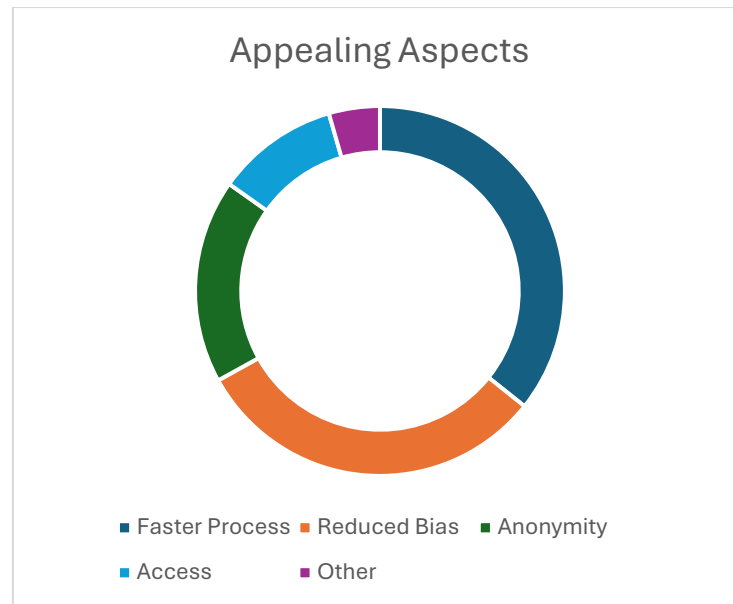


10. Data Interpretation - Most students (53%) feel that AI-driven recruitment systems are not very transparent, with only 9% finding them very transparent. This suggests that students feel there is a lack of clarity in how AI makes hiring decisions, which may affect trust and adoption.

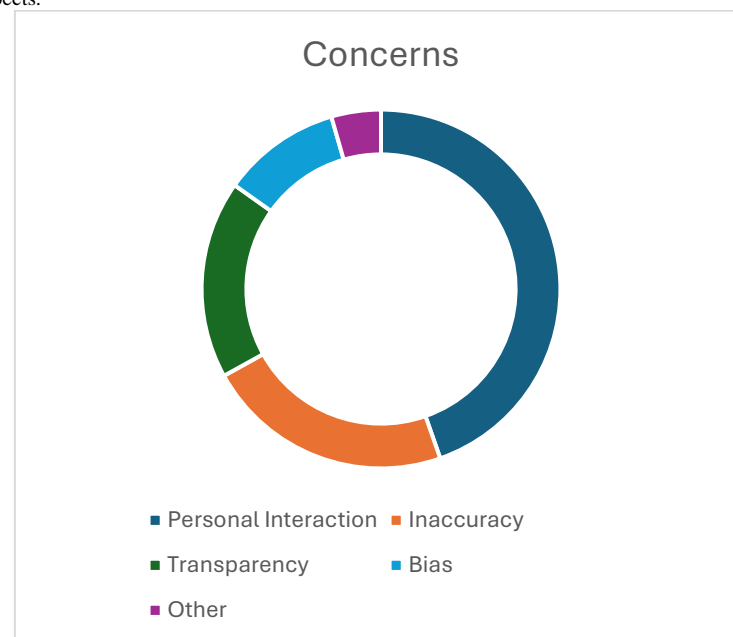


11. Data Interpretation - The preference is split equally between AI-based (40%) and traditional human-led recruitment (40%), with 20% showing no preference. This indicates that students are divided in their views, with some valuing the efficiency of AI, while others still prefer human interaction in recruitment.

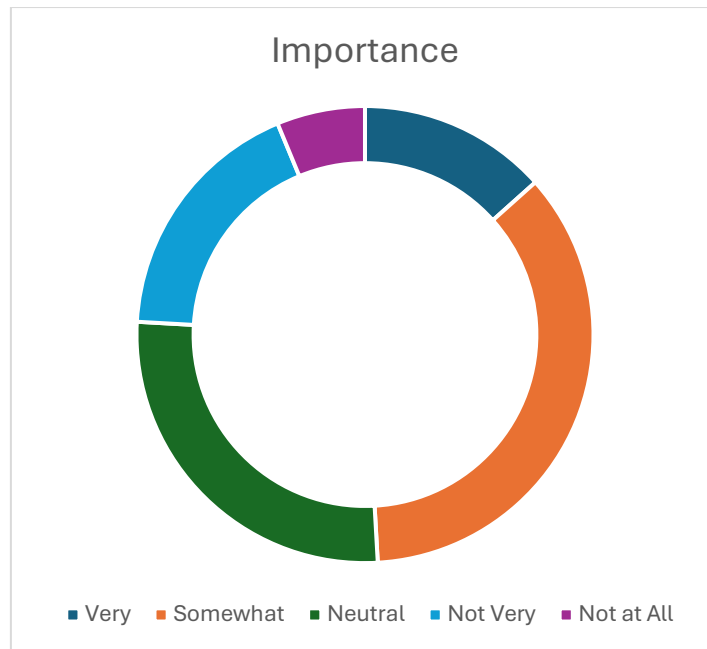




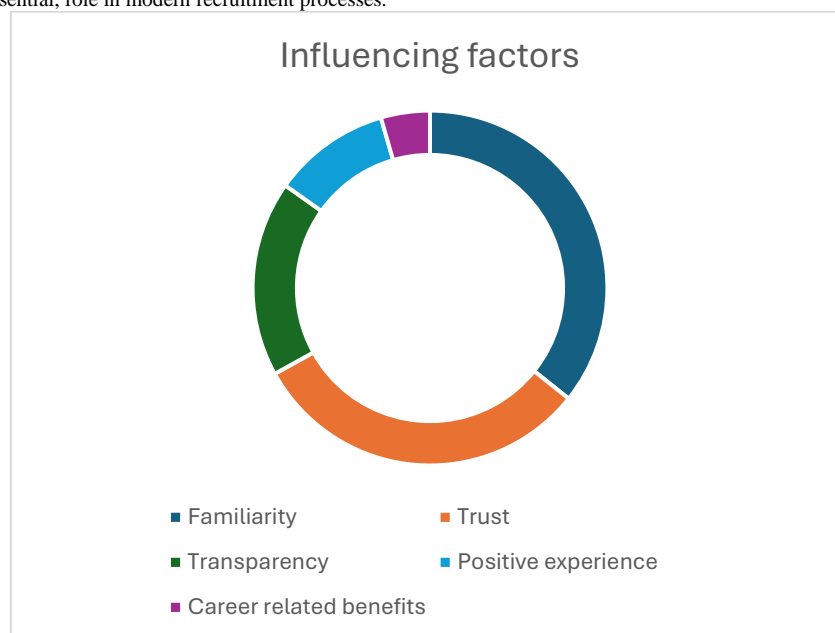
12. Data Interpretation - The primary appeal of AI-driven recruitment is its speed in the hiring process (36%), followed by its potential to reduce bias (31%). This reflects students' interest in AI's ability to streamline hiring and eliminate subjective biases, although they may still be concerned about other aspects.



13. Data Interpretation - The most common concern is the lack of personal interaction (45%), followed by concerns about the accuracy of evaluating qualifications (22%). This suggests that while students appreciate AI's efficiency, they worry about the impersonal nature of the process and potential misjudgment of their abilities.



14. Data Interpretation - A majority of students (49%) view AI's role as either important or somewhat important in their future job search, with 36% remaining neutral. Only a small percentage (24%) consider AI's role to be unimportant, reflecting that students see AI as having a significant, if not essential, role in modern recruitment processes.



15. Data Interpretation - Familiarity with AI tools (36%) and trust in the system's fairness (31%) are the most influential factors in students' willingness to engage with AI-driven recruitment. This indicates that increasing awareness and ensuring fairness in AI systems are key to gaining students' acceptance.

**Implication:** The data analysis implies that increasing awareness and exposure to AI-driven recruitment systems enhances trust among university students, while concerns about bias and transparency remain major barriers to acceptance.

## 6.0 Hypothesis and Conclusion

### Hypothesis A -

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between students' awareness of AI-driven recruitment methods and their perception of its fairness.

**H<sub>11</sub>:** There is a significant relationship between students' awareness of AI-driven recruitment methods and their perception of its fairness.

**Data Analysis:** Out of 112 students surveyed, around **58%** of students who reported being familiar with AI-driven recruitment also rated it as "fair" or "very fair." In contrast, only **30%** of students unfamiliar with AI systems considered them fair.

When comparing average perception scores, familiar students scored around **3.8/5** on fairness perception, while unfamiliar students scored **2.9/5**. Thus, the trend shows a clear positive link between awareness and fairness perception.

**Conclusion:** H<sub>01</sub> is rejected, and H<sub>11</sub> is accepted.

### Hypothesis B -

**H<sub>02</sub>:** Students who have prior exposure to AI-based recruitment processes do not show higher trust in AI-driven hiring systems compared to those without such exposure.

**H<sub>12</sub>:** Students who have prior exposure to AI-based recruitment processes show higher trust in AI-driven hiring systems compared to those without such exposure.

**Data Analysis:** Among students who had prior experience with AI recruitment (about **40% of total respondents**), **72%** reported "moderate" to "high" trust levels.

For students with no prior experience, only **35%** expressed moderate or high trust.

Average trust scores were **4.0/5** for experienced students and **3.0/5** for inexperienced students.

This difference suggests that **prior exposure positively impacts** trust in AI systems.

**Conclusion:** H<sub>02</sub> is rejected, and H<sub>12</sub> is accepted.

### Hypothesis C -

**H<sub>03</sub>:** Concerns about bias and lack of transparency do not significantly affect students' trust in AI-driven recruitment systems.

**H<sub>13</sub>:** Concerns about bias and lack of transparency significantly affect students' trust in AI-driven recruitment systems.

**Data Analysis:** Around 65% of respondents expressed concern about bias or lack of transparency in AI hiring processes. The average trust level among concerned students was only 2.7/5, while those who did not express major concerns had an average trust level of 4.1/5. This indicates that students who doubt AI fairness show lower trust in AI-driven recruitment processes.

**Conclusion:** H<sub>03</sub> is rejected, and H<sub>13</sub> is accepted.

## 6.0 Conclusion

The study examined the perceptions of university students towards AI-based recruitment, with an emphasis on awareness, trust, and concerns. It concluded that greater awareness of AI recruitment tools was associated with more favorable perceptions regarding fairness, indicating that education is important in the formation of perceptions. Students with previous experience with these systems demonstrated higher trust levels, with practical experience being crucial in overcoming skepticism. Issues of transparency and bias were strong determinants of trust, with individuals concerned about these factors having lower levels of trust. The research stresses that resolving such concerns, combined with greater exposure and awareness, is essential for establishing trust in AI hiring systems. It recommends a multi-faceted approach of education, exposure, and transparency to generate acceptance of AI hiring systems.

## 7.0 Recommendations

- Universities and organizations should offer programs and workshops to raise awareness about AI-driven recruitment systems.
- Students should be provided with hands-on experience through internships or simulated AI recruitment platforms.
- AI recruitment systems must ensure transparency and undergo regular audits to check for biases.
- There should be a continuous dialogue between AI developers, HR professionals, and students to address concerns and improve systems.
- AI developers should prioritize ethical considerations in their algorithms, ensuring diversity and preventing biased decision-making.

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