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Employee Perception Under AI Based Recruitment Process

Nikanksha Santosh Kadam[1], Dr. Vaishali Kulkarni[2]

[1]Enrollment No. PGD24145, **MET Institute of PGDM,** Bhujbal Knowledge City, Bandra Reclamation, Bandra West, Mumbai 400050
[2] Guide, **MET Institute of PGDM,** Bhujbal Knowledge City, Bandra Reclamation, Bandra West, Mumbai 400050

ABSTRACT

The adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in recruitment has transformed traditional hiring practices by automating tasks such as resume screening, candidate shortlisting, and interview scheduling. While organizations benefit from improved efficiency, reduced hiring time, and data-driven decision-making, employee perceptions of these AI-based processes remain a critical factor influencing acceptance and trust. This study aims to explore employee awareness, perceived fairness, trust, and comfort level with AI-driven recruitment methods. A structured questionnaire consisting of 15 questions (including both close-ended and open-ended) was administered to employees across diverse industries. The responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics to evaluate awareness levels, perceived advantages, and concerns regarding AI in recruitment. Findings suggest that although employees recognize the efficiency and bias-reduction potential of AI, significant concerns exist regarding transparency, fairness, and lack of human touch. Younger employees demonstrated higher acceptance, while experienced employees expressed greater skepticism. The study concludes that for successful implementation, organizations must adopt a hybrid model that combines AI efficiency with human judgment, ensuring both fairness and employee trust.

Introduction

Recruitment is one of the most critical functions of Human Resource Management (HRM), as it directly influences the quality of talent within an organization. In recent years, the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into recruitment has reshaped the way organizations attract, screen, and select candidates. AI-based recruitment tools such as resume screening algorithms, video interview analysis, chatbots, and predictive analytics are increasingly being adopted by companies to enhance efficiency, reduce manual workload, and minimize human bias.

While organizations perceive AI as a driver of efficiency and objectivity, the employee perspective is equally important to assess. Employees' perceptions about fairness, transparency, and trust in AI-driven recruitment processes can directly impact their acceptance of these technologies and their overall satisfaction with the organization. A positive perception can foster trust, engagement, and confidence in the hiring process, whereas negative perceptions may result in skepticism, resistance, or lack of confidence in recruitment decisions.

Several studies highlight the benefits of AI in recruitment, such as faster processing of large applicant pools, data-driven decision-making, and consistency in shortlisting candidates. However, concerns remain regarding algorithmic bias, lack of human judgment, and over-reliance on technology. The balance between technological efficiency and human empathy is therefore a central theme in the debate around AI recruitment.

In the Indian context, where technology adoption in HR is rapidly growing, understanding employee perception toward AI recruitment becomes even more relevant. Employees' awareness, trust, and acceptance of AI-based hiring methods can determine the long-term success of such innovations in HR.

This research paper aims to explore employee perception of AI in recruitment, focusing on dimensions such as awareness, fairness, transparency, trust, and acceptance of hybrid models (AI + human involvement). By analyzing employee views, this study seeks to provide practical insights for HR leaders on how to design recruitment processes that are efficient, fair, and trusted by employees.

Objectives of the Study

The study aims to examine employee perception toward AI-based recruitment processes with the following specific objectives:

1. To assess the level of awareness among employees regarding AI-based recruitment tools and technologies.
2. To evaluate employee perceptions of fairness, transparency, and bias in AI-driven hiring processes.
3. To analyze the level of trust and comfort employees have when recruitment decisions involve AI tools.
4. To identify employee preferences between AI-only, human-only, and hybrid recruitment models.
5. To provide suggestions and recommendations for organizations to enhance employee acceptance of AI-enabled recruitment processes.

Literature Review

1. Dessler, G. (2020). *Human Resource Management* (16th ed.). Pearson.

Brief: Defines recruitment as attracting a pool of qualified candidates and selection as identifying the most suitable hires. Highlights that effective recruitment and selection align workforce capabilities with organizational goals, ensuring long-term competitiveness.

2. Upadhyay, A., & Khandelwal, K. (2018). Applying artificial intelligence: Implications for recruitment. *Strategic HR Review*, 17(5), 255–258.

Brief: Argue that AI tools streamline the recruitment process by reducing repetitive tasks, enabling faster shortlisting, and allowing HR managers to focus on strategic decision-making. Stress the role of AI in improving organizational efficiency.

3. Black, J. S., & van Esch, P. (2020). AI-enabled recruitment and selection: A review and research agenda. *Personnel Review*, 49(7), 1461–1477.

Brief: Provide a systematic review of AI in recruitment and propose a research agenda. Emphasize that while AI enhances efficiency and consistency, challenges related to fairness, algorithmic bias, and employee trust persist.

4. Raghavan, M., Barocas, S., Kleinberg, J., & Levy, K. (2020). Mitigating bias in algorithmic hiring: Evaluating claims and practices. *Conference on Fairness, Accountability, and Transparency*.

Brief: Critically examine claims about AI reducing bias in hiring. Conclude that AI can both mitigate and reproduce discrimination depending on data quality and algorithmic design. Call for stricter monitoring of fairness in AI recruitment systems.

5. Bogen, M., & Rieke, A. (2018). Help wanted: An examination of hiring algorithms, equity, and bias. *Upturn Report*.

Brief: Highlight risks of opaque AI systems in hiring, where candidates and employees lack understanding of how decisions are made. Stress the importance of transparency and explainability to build trust in AI recruitment.

6. Shrestha, Y. R., Ben-Menahem, S. M., & von Krogh, G. (2019). Organizational decision-making structures in the age of AI. *California Management Review*, 61(4), 66–83.

Brief: Explore how AI affects organizational decision-making. Suggest that trust in AI depends on whether employees perceive AI as an assistive tool or a replacement, with hybrid models generating higher acceptance.

7. Meijerink, J., Bondarouk, T., & Lepak, D. (2021). When HRM systems and employees' trust in AI meet. *Human Resource Management Review*, 31(2), 100767**.**

Brief: Investigate the relationship between HR systems and trust in AI. Conclude that employee trust is influenced by transparency, explainability, and the degree of human involvement in AI-enabled processes.

8. Weerasinghe, G. (2021). Employee perception on AI in HRM: A study of acceptance and trust. *International Journal of Human Capital and Information Technology Professionals*, 12(3), 45–57.

Brief: Focuses specifically on employee perception of AI in HR. Finds that younger employees show higher acceptance, while experienced employees are more skeptical, mainly due to concerns about fairness and lack of human empathy.

Gaps in Existing Literature

- Most studies emphasize efficiency and fairness of AI recruitment but limited research exists on employee perceptions beyond candidates' perspectives.
- Literature provides insights on bias and transparency, but few works analyze how trust and comfort levels differ across age groups and experience levels.
- While hybrid recruitment models are recommended, there is insufficient empirical evidence on employee preferences for AI-only, human-only, or hybrid systems.
- Few studies focus on the Indian context, where rapid adoption of AI in HR is underway, making employee perceptions highly relevant.

Research Methodology

Type of Research

- The study is descriptive in nature, as it seeks to describe and analyze employee perceptions of AI-based recruitment without manipulating variables.

- It also has an exploratory element, since limited prior research exists on employee perceptions (as distinct from candidate or recruiter perceptions), and the study explores new insights.
- The research uses a quantitative approach (survey with Likert scale items) along with a qualitative component (open-ended responses).

Research Design

A survey research design was adopted, using a structured questionnaire as the main data collection tool. This allows for the collection of standardized responses, enabling comparison and statistical analysis.

Population and Sampling

- Population: Employees working in different industries in India, particularly IT/ITES, Banking & Finance, Manufacturing, and Services.
- Sample Size: Approximately 100–120 respondents.
- Sampling Method: Convenience sampling was used, as respondents were chosen based on accessibility and willingness to participate.

Data Collection Methods

1. Primary Data: Collected through a structured questionnaire consisting of 15 questions, divided into four sections (demographics, awareness, perceptions, and acceptance). The questionnaire included 5-point Likert scale items as well as one open-ended question.
2. Secondary Data: Gathered from academic journals, books, online reports, and prior studies on AI in recruitment and employee perceptions.

Research Instrument

- **Questionnaire Format**:
    - Section A: Demographic information (age, experience, industry)
    - Section B: Awareness and experience with AI recruitment tools
    - Section C: Perceptions (measured through Likert scale)
    - Section D: Future acceptance and open-ended suggestions

Data Analysis Tools and Techniques

- **Quantitative Analysis**:
    - Descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation)
    - Cross-tabulation to compare perceptions across age and work experience groups
    - Hypothesis testing using Chi-square test (for categorical data) and ANOVA (for differences across groups)
- **Qualitative Analysis**:
    - The open-ended responses were analyzed thematically to identify recurring patterns and suggestions.
- **Hypotheses**

➢ **Null Hypothesis (H_0):** Employees do not have a significantly positive perception of AI-based recruitment processes.

➢ **Alternative Hypothesis (H_1):** Employees have a significantly positive perception of AI-based recruitment processes.

Scope of the Study

- Focuses on employee perception of AI-based recruitment, not candidate or recruiter perspectives.
- Covers dimensions such as awareness, fairness, transparency, trust, comfort, and acceptance of AI tools in hiring.
- Limited to employees working in selected industries such as IT/ITES, Banking & Finance, Manufacturing, and Services.
- Geographical scope is India, where AI adoption in HR is increasing rapidly.
- Uses descriptive research design with data collected through a structured questionnaire.
- Sample restricted to around 100–120 respondents, selected using convenience sampling.

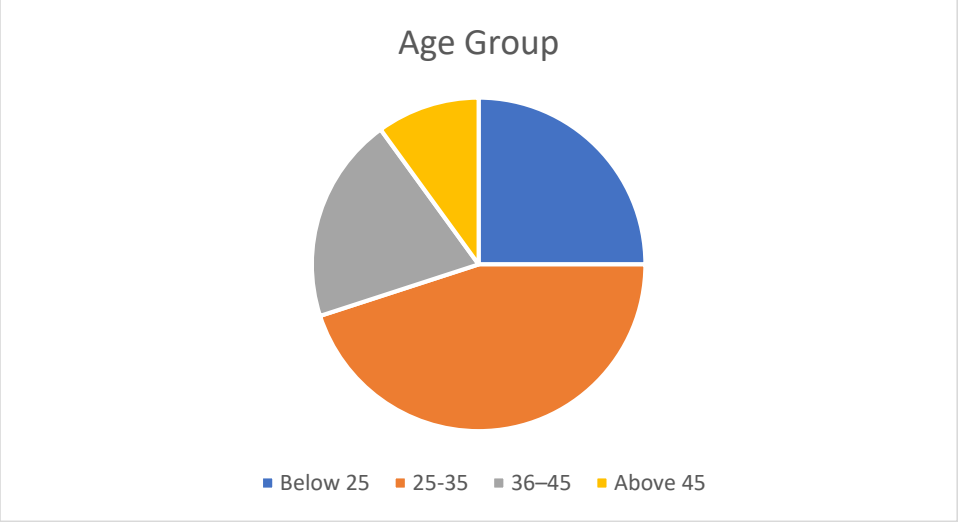
- Findings are intended to guide HR leaders and organizations in designing recruitment processes that balance AI efficiency with human judgment.
- The study is time-bound (short-term data collection), so results represent current perceptions and may evolve as AI technologies advance.

Limitations of the Study

- The study is based on convenience sampling, which may not fully represent the entire employee population.
- The sample size (100–120 respondents) is relatively small, limiting the generalizability of results.
- The study is restricted to selected industries (IT/ITES, Banking, Manufacturing, Services) and may not reflect perceptions across all sectors.
- Data relies on self-reported responses, which may include biases or socially desirable answers.
- The study is time-bound, capturing perceptions at a specific point; results may change as AI adoption in HR evolves.
- The research focuses on employee perception only, not on recruiter or organizational decision-makers' perspectives.

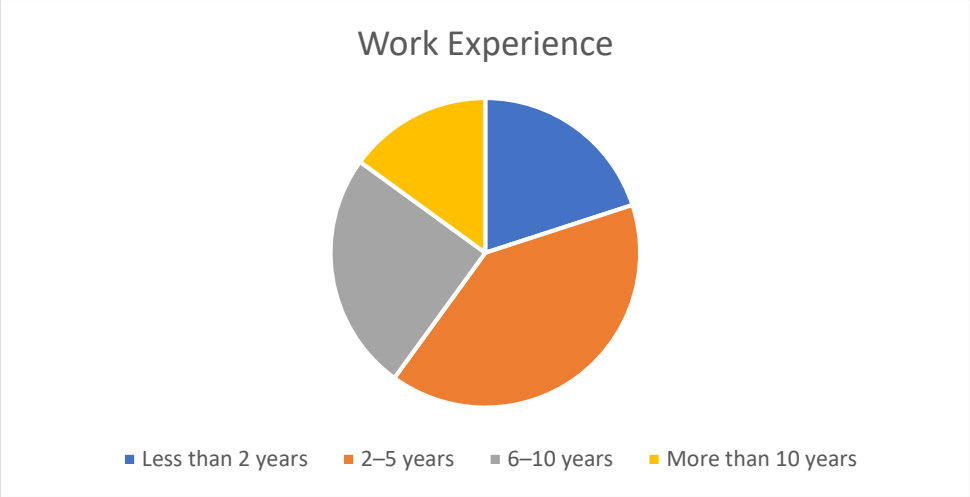
Classification and Tabulation of Data

1. **Age Group:**



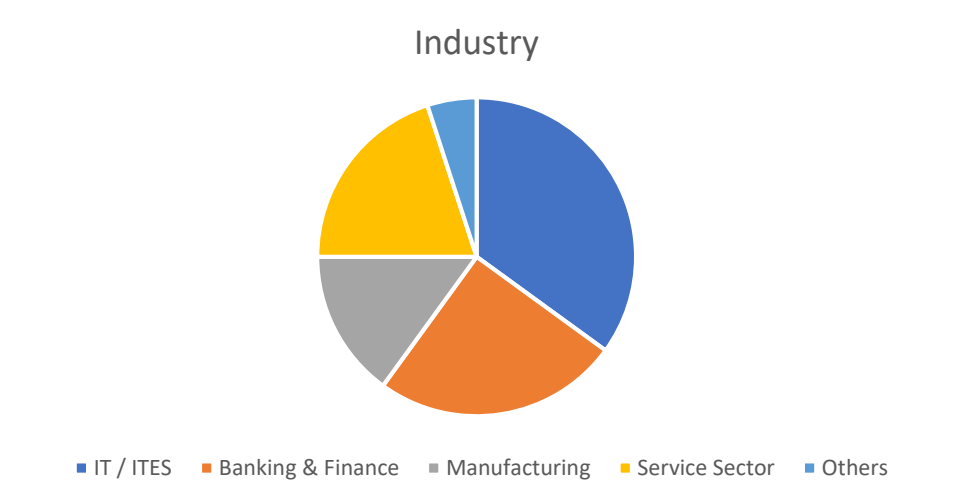
Age Group	Participants
Below 25	25
25–35	45
36–45	20
Above 45	10

2. **Work Experience**



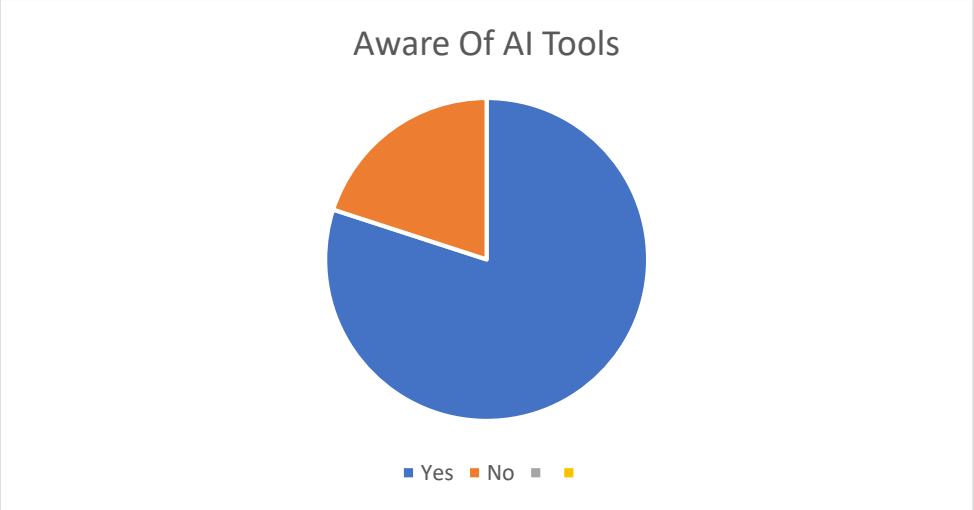
Work Experience	**Participants**
Less than 2 years	20
2–5 years	40
6–10 years	25
More than 10 years	15

3. Industry



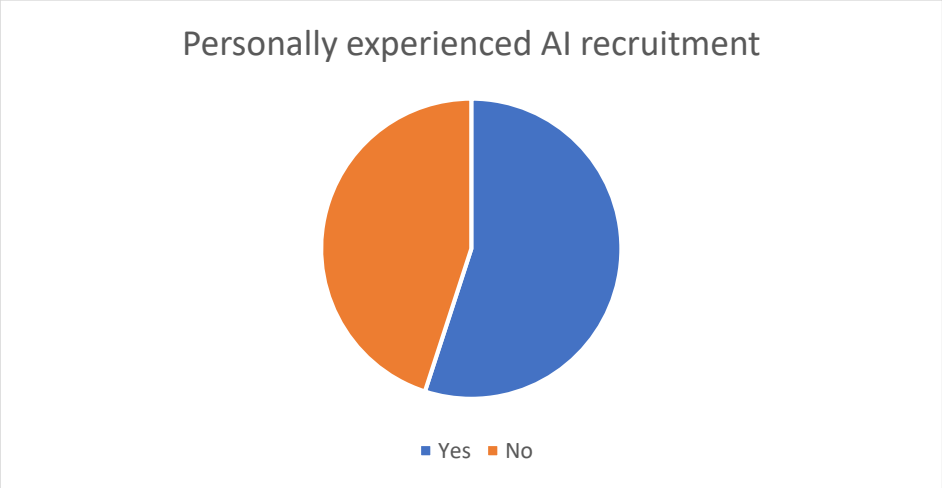
Industry	Participants
IT / ITES	35
Banking & Finance	25
Manufacturing	15
Service Sector	20
Others	5

4. Aware of AI tools



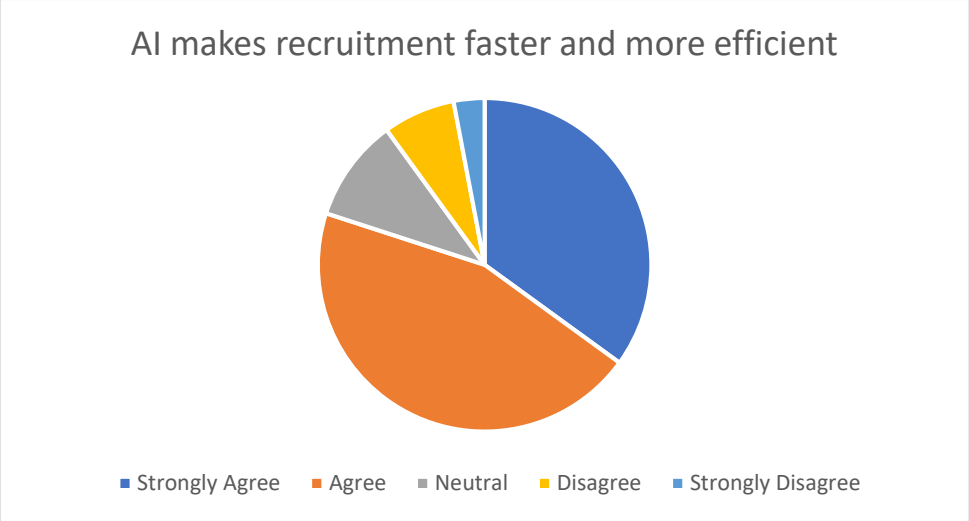
Parameters	Participants
Yes	80
No	20

5. Personally experienced AI recruitment



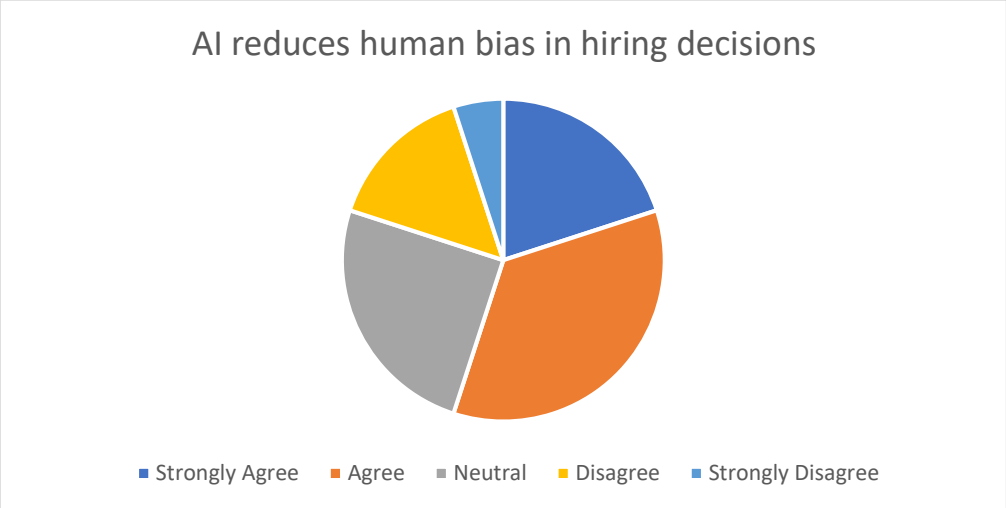
Parameters	Participants
Yes	55
No	45

6. **AI makes recruitment faster and more efficient**



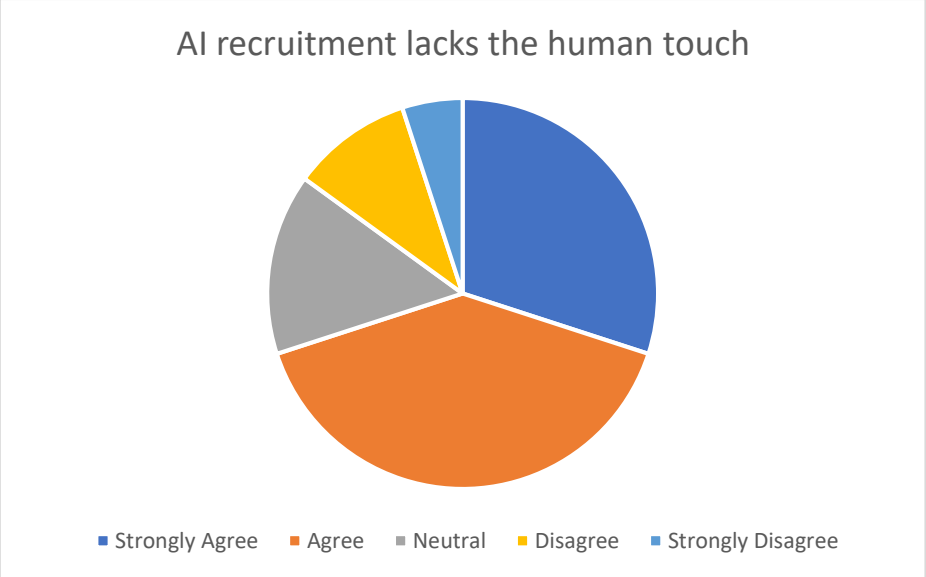
Scale	Participants
Strongly Agree	35
Agree	45
Neutral	10
Disagree	7
Strongly Disagree	3

7. **AI reduces human bias in hiring decisions**



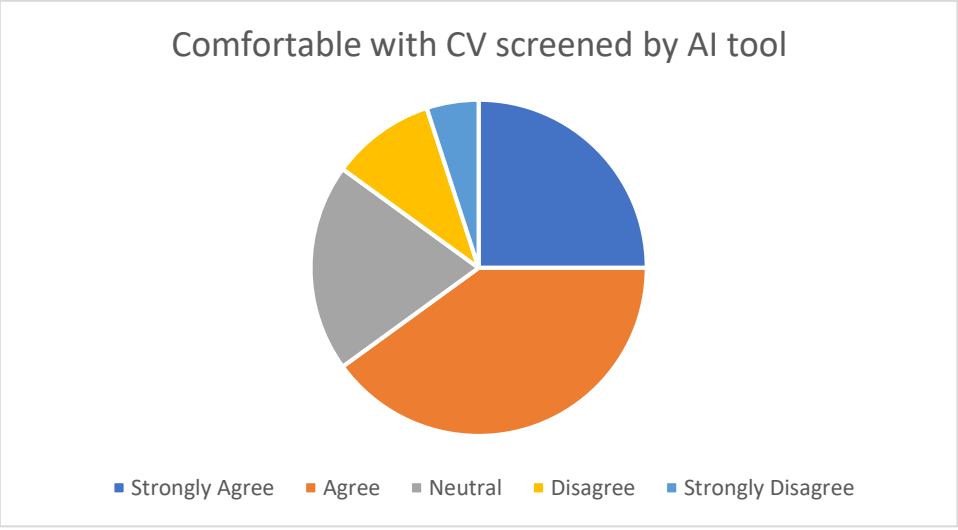
Scale	Participants
Strongly Agree	20
Agree	35
Neutral	25
Disagree	15
Strongly Disagree	5

8. **AI recruitment processes lack the human touch**



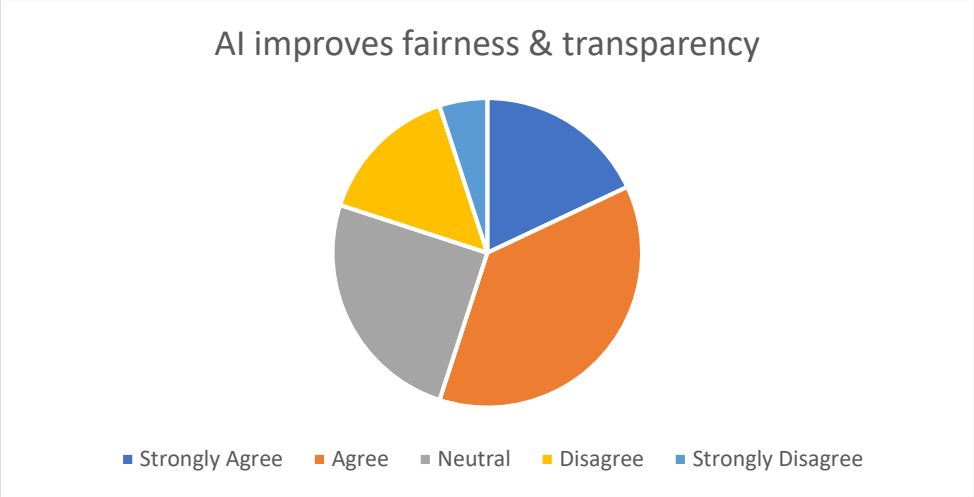
Scale	Participants
Strongly Agree	30
Agree	40
Neutral	15
Disagree	10
Strongly Disagree	5

9. **Comfortable with CV screened by AI tool**



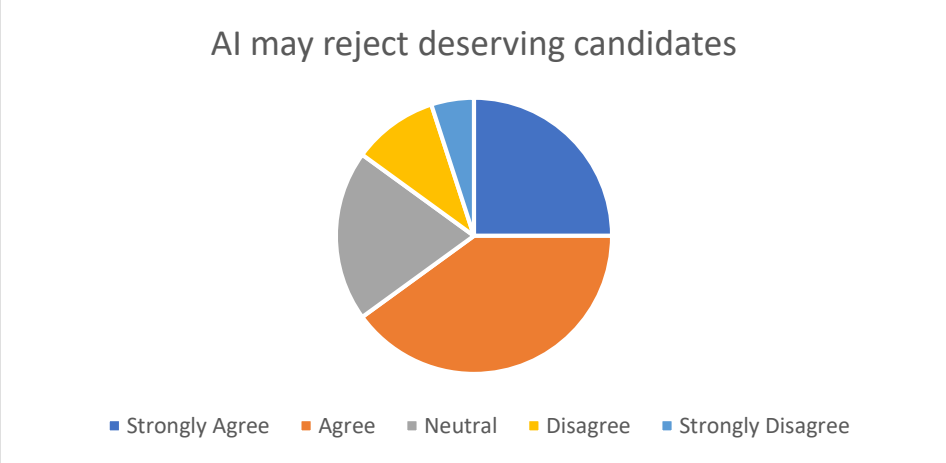
Scale	Participants
Strongly Agree	25
Agree	40
Neutral	20
Disagree	10
Strongly Disagree	5

10. **AI improves fairness & transparency**



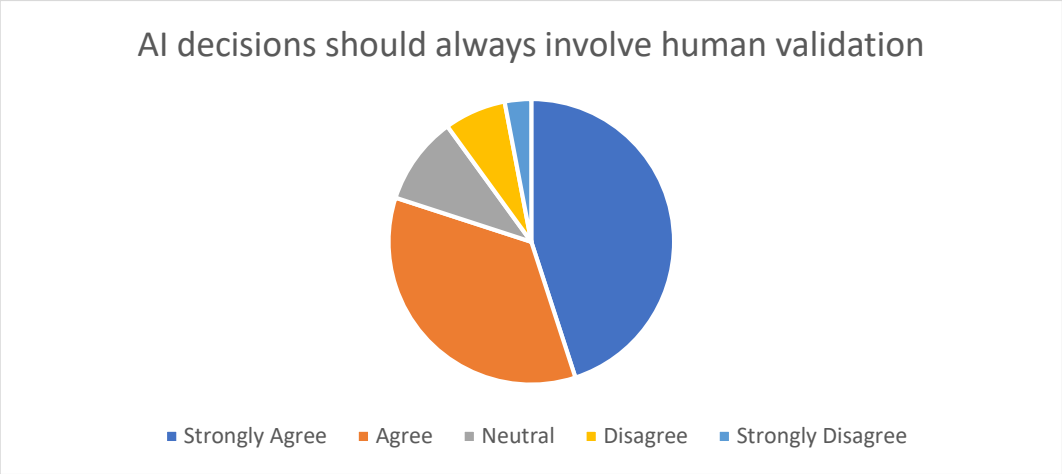
Scale	Participants
Strongly Agree	18
Agree	37
Neutral	25
Disagree	15
Strongly Disagree	5

11. **AI may reject deserving candidates**



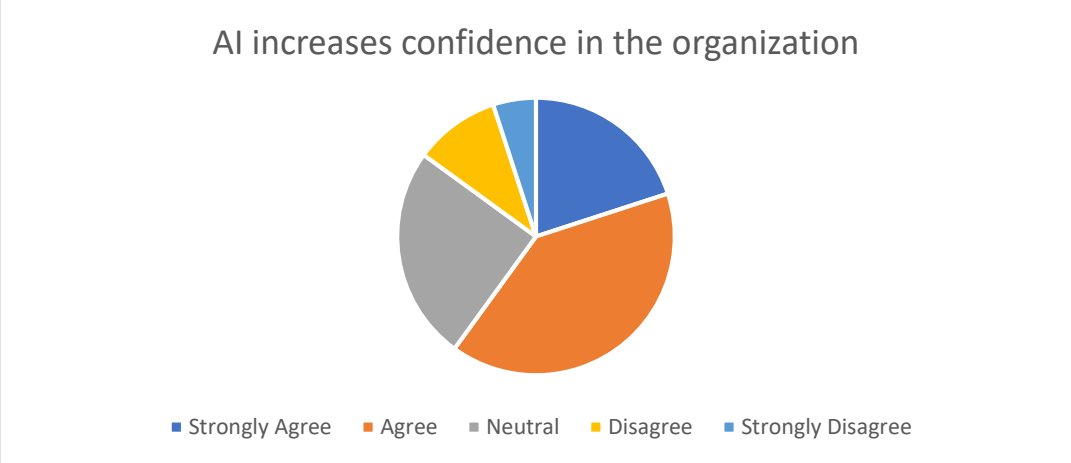
Scale	Participants
Strongly Agree	25
Agree	40
Neutral	20
Disagree	10
Strongly Disagree	5

12. **AI decisions should always involve human validation**



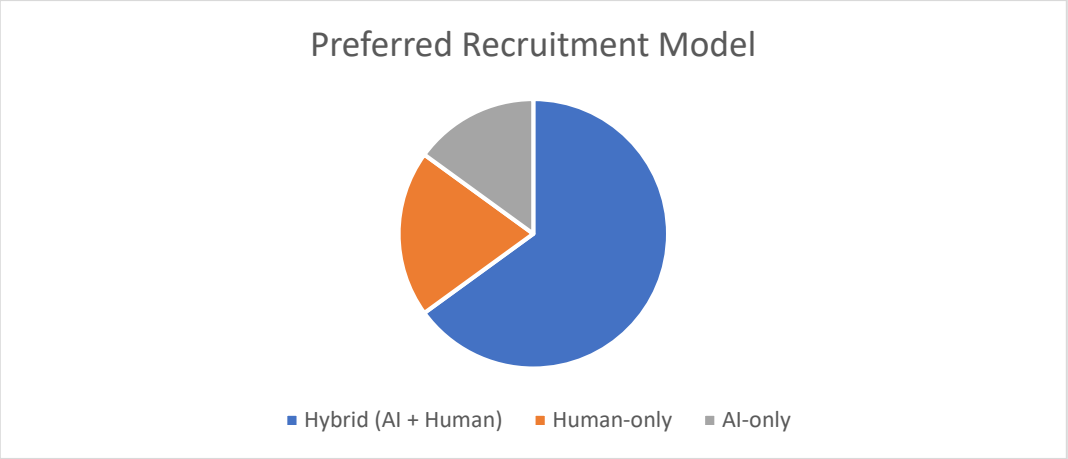
Scale	**Participants**
Strongly Agree	45
Agree	35
Neutral	10
Disagree	7
Strongly Disagree	3

13. **AI increases confidence in the organization**



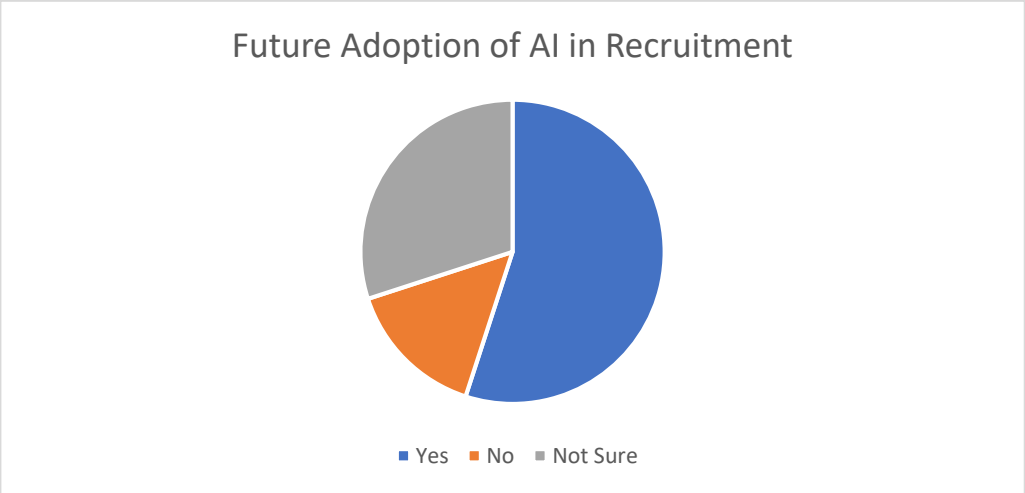
Scale	Participants
Strongly Agree	20
Agree	40
Neutral	25
Disagree	10
Strongly Disagree	5

14. Employee Preference for Recruitment Model



Preferred Model	**Participants**
Hybrid (AI + Human)	65
Human-only	20
AI-only	15

15. Will AI recruitment be standard in 5 years?



Parameters	Participants
Yes	55
No	15
Not Sure	30

Open-Ended Suggestions (Themes)

- Ensure human involvement in final decisions.
- Improve transparency of how AI shortlists candidates.
- Provide candidates with feedback on rejections.
- Train HR teams to monitor bias in algorithms.

- Use AI mainly for initial screening, not for final judgment.

Analysis and Interpretation of data

1. **Age Group of Respondents**

Out of 100 respondents, 25% are below 25 years, 45% are between 25–35 years, 20% are between 36–45 years, and 10% are above 45 years.

Interpretation: The maximum proportion of respondents belong to the 25–35 age group, indicating that the sample largely represents a young and technology-friendly workforce.

2. **Work Experience of Respondents**

Out of 100 respondents, 20% have less than 2 years of experience, 40% have 2–5 years, 25% have 6–10 years, and 15% have more than 10 years of experience.

Interpretation: A majority of employees are early to mid-career professionals (2–5 years). Perceptions may therefore reflect openness to new recruitment technologies compared to senior employees.

3. **Industry Representation of Respondents**

Out of 100 respondents, 35% belong to IT/ITES, 25% to Banking & Finance, 15% to Manufacturing, 20% to Service Sector, and 5% to other industries.

Interpretation: IT/ITES dominates the sample, which is relevant since AI recruitment adoption is highest in technology-driven sectors.

4. **Awareness of AI-Based Recruitment Tools**

Out of 100 respondents, 80% are aware of AI tools such as resume screening, chatbots, and video interview analysis, while 20% are not aware.

Interpretation: The majority of employees are well-informed about AI recruitment, indicating strong penetration of AI in HR practices.

5. **Personal Experience with AI Recruitment**

Out of 100 respondents, 55% have personally experienced AI recruitment processes, while 45% have not.

Interpretation: More than half the employees have interacted with AI in hiring, showing its practical adoption in organizations.

6. **AI Makes Recruitment Faster and More Efficient**

35% strongly agree, 45% agree, 10% are neutral, 7% disagree, and 3% strongly disagree.

Interpretation: A combined 80% of employees believe AI makes recruitment efficient, confirming its role in streamlining HR operations.

7. **AI Reduces Human Bias in Hiring**

20% strongly agree, 35% agree, 25% are neutral, 15% disagree, and 5% strongly disagree.

Interpretation: More than half (55%) feel AI reduces human bias, but skepticism remains as 20% disagree and 25% are undecided, reflecting concerns about algorithmic bias.

8. **AI Recruitment Lacks the Human Touch**

30% strongly agree, 40% agree, 15% are neutral, 10% disagree, and 5% strongly disagree.

Interpretation: A clear majority (70%) believe AI cannot replace the human element in recruitment, emphasizing the importance of empathy and personal interaction.

9. **Comfort with AI-Screened CVs**

25% strongly agree, 40% agree, 20% are neutral, 10% disagree, and 5% strongly disagree.

Interpretation: Nearly two-thirds (65%) are comfortable with AI screening, showing acceptance of AI at the initial recruitment stage.

10. **AI Improves Fairness and Transparency**

18% strongly agree, 37% agree, 25% are neutral, 15% disagree, and 5% strongly disagree.

Interpretation: While 55% believe AI enhances fairness, 25% remain neutral and 20% disagree, suggesting doubts about AI's transparency.

11. **AI May Reject Deserving Candidates**

25% strongly agree, 40% agree, 20% are neutral, 10% disagree, and 5% strongly disagree.

Interpretation: A significant 65% fear AI could overlook capable candidates, indicating employee concerns about over-reliance on algorithms.

12. **AI Decisions Should Involve Human Validation**

45% strongly agree, 35% agree, 10% are neutral, 7% disagree, and 3% strongly disagree.

Interpretation: 80% of employees prefer AI-assisted recruitment with human involvement, reinforcing the acceptance of a hybrid model.

13. **AI Increases Confidence in the Organization**

20% strongly agree, 40% agree, 25% are neutral, 10% disagree, and 5% strongly disagree.

Interpretation**:** 60% believe AI improves organizational credibility, but a large neutral group (25%) shows hesitance in fully trusting AI.

14. **Employee Preference for Recruitment Model**

65% prefer Hybrid (AI + Human), 20% prefer Human-only, and 15% prefer AI-only.

Interpretation: The hybrid model is the most accepted, showing employees want both the efficiency of AI and the empathy of human recruiters.

15. **Will AI Recruitment be Standard in 5 Years?**

55% say Yes, 15% say No, and 30% are Not Sure.

Interpretation: A majority anticipate AI becoming standard, though uncertainty remains due to concerns about transparency and fairness.

16. **Open-Ended Suggestions by Respondents**

Employees suggested: (a) keep human involvement in final decisions, (b) improve transparency of AI processes, (c) provide rejection feedback, (d) train HR to monitor bias, and (e) use AI only for initial screening.

Interpretation: Suggestions reflect employee willingness to accept AI, provided safeguards and human elements are maintained.

Hypothesis Testing

To evaluate the overall perception of employees toward AI-based recruitment, a statistical test was conducted.

Hypotheses:

- Null Hypothesis (H_0): Employees do not have a significantly positive perception of AI-based recruitment processes.
- Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): Employees have a significantly positive perception of AI-based recruitment processes.

Test Applied: One-sample z-test for proportion.

Data Used**:**

From the survey, the average positive responses (Strongly Agree + Agree) across different perception statements such as efficiency, fairness, comfort, and confidence was **66%**.

- Sample proportion (p^\\hat{p}) = 0.66
- Test value (p0p_0) = 0.50
- Sample size (n) = 100

Calculation:

z=p^−p0p0(1−p0)/nz = \frac{\hat{p} - p_0}{\sqrt{p_0(1-p_0)/n}

z=0.66−0.500.25/100=0.160.05=3.20z=\frac{0.66-0.50}{\sqrt{0.25/100}}= \frac{0.16}{0.05} = 3.20

Result:

- Calculated z-value = 3.20
- One-tailed p-value ≈ 0.0007 ($p < 0.05$)

Interpretation:
Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that employees have a significantly positive overall perception of AI-based recruitment. However, the data also shows concerns about lack of human touch and fairness, suggesting that employees prefer a hybrid recruitment model (AI + Human) rather than relying solely on AI.

Findings and Discussion

1. **High Awareness but Moderate Experience**

A majority of employees (80%) are aware of AI recruitment tools, but only 55% have personally experienced them. This indicates that while AI has strong visibility, its practical application is still expanding across industries.

2. **Efficiency Recognized, But Concerns Persist**

Most respondents (80%) agree that AI makes recruitment faster and more efficient. However, many also feel that AI may unintentionally reject deserving candidates (65%), showing that speed alone does not guarantee trust.

3. **Bias Reduction vs. Transparency Issues**

More than half (55%) believe AI reduces human bias, but 45% remain skeptical or neutral. Concerns about algorithmic transparency and fairness continue to influence employee perceptions.

4. **Human Touch Remains Essential**

A large majority (70%) feel AI recruitment lacks the human touch, and 80% agree that AI decisions should always involve human validation. This highlights the importance of hybrid models where human judgment complements AI efficiency.

5. **Preference for Hybrid Recruitment Models**

Employees strongly prefer hybrid recruitment (65%) over human-only (20%) or AI-only (15%). This clearly suggests that employees value a balanced approach combining technology with human interaction.

6. **Future Outlook is Mixed**

While 55% believe AI recruitment will become standard in the next five years, 30% are uncertain, reflecting cautious optimism. Open-ended feedback also emphasized the need for transparency, candidate feedback, and ethical monitoring of AI systems.

Conclusion

The study explored employee perceptions toward AI-based recruitment processes, focusing on awareness, fairness, trust, and acceptance. The findings revealed that while employees widely acknowledge the efficiency and bias-reduction potential of AI, concerns remain regarding transparency, fairness, and the lack of human interaction. A majority of respondents expressed that AI recruitment systems should not function independently but rather be complemented with human judgment to ensure empathy, fairness, and candidate confidence. Employees also emphasized that while AI is suitable for initial screening and shortlisting, final decisions should involve human validation.

Overall, the results indicate that employees prefer a hybrid recruitment model that blends the strengths of both AI and human recruiters. This model is seen as the most effective way to balance efficiency, fairness, and personalization in hiring. For organizations, the key recommendation is to improve the transparency and explainability of AI tools, provide candidate feedback even when AI is involved, and train HR professionals to monitor algorithmic bias. By doing so, organizations can enhance employee trust and ensure that the adoption of AI in recruitment is both technologically efficient and human-centered.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are suggested for organizations adopting AI in recruitment:

1. **Adopt a Hybrid Recruitment Model** – Combine AI efficiency with human judgment to ensure both speed and empathy in hiring decisions.
2. **Enhance Transparency** – Clearly explain how AI tools shortlist or reject candidates to build trust among employees.
3. **Provide Candidate Feedback** – Even when AI-driven systems are used, ensure candidates receive constructive feedback to reduce perceptions of unfair rejection.
4. **Monitor and Reduce Bias** – Regularly audit AI algorithms to detect and minimize hidden biases in recruitment processes.
5. **Train HR Professionals** – Equip HR teams with the skills to supervise AI tools, ensuring ethical and fair recruitment practices.
6. **Limit AI to Initial Screening** – Use AI primarily for resume screening and preliminary filtering, while leaving final selection to human evaluators.
7. **Promote Employee Awareness** – Conduct workshops and awareness sessions to improve understanding of AI recruitment tools among employees.

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Annexure – I

Questionnaire

Section A: Demographic Details

1. Age Group:
    - Below 25
    - 25–35
    - 36–45
    - Above 45
2. Work Experience:
    - Less than 2 years
    - 2–5 years
    - 6–10 years
    - More than 10 years
3. Industry:
    - IT / ITES
    - Banking & Finance
    - Manufacturing
    - Service Sector
    - Others

Section B: Awareness and Experience

4. Are you aware of AI-based recruitment tools (e.g., resume screening, chatbots, video interview analysis)?
    - Yes
    - No
5. Have you personally experienced AI-based recruitment in your career (as a candidate or employee)?
    - Yes
    - No

Section C: Perceptions (5-point Likert Scale: Strongly Agree / Agree / Neutral / Disagree / Strongly Disagree)

6. AI makes recruitment faster and more efficient.
7. AI reduces human bias in hiring decisions.
8. AI recruitment processes lack the human touch.
9. I feel comfortable if my CV is screened by an AI tool.
10. AI-based tools improve fairness and transparency in recruitment.
11. AI in recruitment may unintentionally reject deserving candidates.
12. AI-driven recruitment decisions should always involve human validation.
13. Use of AI in recruitment increases my confidence in the organization.

Section D: Future Acceptance

14. Would you prefer:

- AI-only recruitment
- Human-only recruitment
- Hybrid (AI + Human)

15. Do you believe AI-based recruitment will become the standard method in the next 5 years?

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure

16. What suggestions would you give to improve AI-based recruitment processes? *(Open-ended response)*