

Artificial Intelligence in Talent Acquisition: Challenges, and Ethical Considerations

¹Bareen Abbas, ²Asma Imran Ansari ³Wajiha Zehra Rizvi, ^{4*}Sher Ali

¹Department of Management, Integral University, Kursi Road, Lucknow-226026

²Department of Personalized and Molecular Medicine, ³ Department of Biotechnology,

^{4*}Office of the Dean, Research and Development, Era University, Hardoi Road, Lucknow-226003

^{4*}Corresponding Author: profsali55@gmail.com

ABSTRACT:

The advent of AI has changed perceptions about practices in many fields, including human resource management (HRM). The HRM is assisted globally through AI mechanisms, starting from talent acquisition for increasing efficiency in recruitment without compromising the merit of candidates to finding the most appropriate one for an organization. Key recruitment processes include candidate sourcing, screening, and selection, which are automated by AI tools. This can lead to greater scalability and perhaps lower human bias. On the other hand, some of the key challenges which HRM also faces with the integration of AI are the algorithmic bias, overlooking qualitatively strong candidates, and limitations regarding innate human attribute assessment. AI systems invariably fall short in accounting for the psychological traits, personality growth, emotional intelligence, and nuances of behavioral manifestations and socio-cultural background since their design lack the capacity to read the subtle human traits related to body language and responses. While state-of-

the-art neuro-fuzzy logic and sophisticated algorithms have been developed, most of these systems are based on predefined parameters of each organization and require structured inputs regarding specific job roles. Although AI technology remains very user-friendly, there are certain doubts raised regarding candidate and organizational friendliness. This has resulted in AI technology needing to adapt and evolve according to human and organizational requirements. As long as these constraints are not resolved, human intelligence and AI technology will continue to work in tandem with each other. In the current literature on talent acquisition, there seems to be a lack of a comprehensive review of the role of AI in talent acquisition. The current research seeks to fulfill this knowledge gap by examining both the benefits and drawbacks of AI in talent acquisition.

Keywords: *Artificial Intelligence in HRM, Talent Acquisition Automation, Recruitment Bias, AI in Hiring Processes, Empathy and Sympathy, Ethical Implications of AI.*

Abbreviations

AI	Artificial Intelligence
HR	Human Resources
HRM	Human Resource Management
ATS	Applicant Tracking System
ML	Machine Learning
NLP	Natural Language Processing
RPA	Robotic Process Automation
DEI	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
DPDP Act	Digital Personal Data Protection Act
EU	European Union
BERT	Bidirectional Encoder Representations from Transformers
ROI	Return on Investment
SMEs	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
BPO	Business Process Outsourcing
IT	Information Technology
CV	Curriculum Vitae

1. INTRODUCTION

Talent acquisition has evolved dramatically over time, from informal word-of-mouth hiring to highly structured and technology-driven recruitment systems. Artificial intelligence at this point represents the most significant transformation in this development and is transforming the way organizations source, evaluate, and select talent. This review discusses the historical evolution of recruitment practices. It explains the rationale for integrating AI into talent acquisition, current applications of AI tools, and the benefits, challenges, and ethical considerations associated with their use. Historically, recruitment relied on personal networks, guilds, and apprenticeships where reputation determined employability [1]. The Industrial Revolution introduced formal labour markets, standardized job advertisements, and early employment agencies. The post-World War II expansions institutionalized Human Resources departments and the use of structured interviews and assessments. The digital era brought further acceleration through online job boards and early Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS), which let companies process a high volume of applications. Today, AI, machine learning, and advanced analytics

have transformed talent acquisition into a strategic and data-driven function. Organizations embrace AI in recruitment to overcome traditional methods plagued by inefficiency, subjectivity in making decisions, and skill gaps among their workforce [2]. AI speeds up the pace of processing voluminous applicants, offers evidence-based candidate evaluation, and reduces biases using standardized screening. Predictive analytics makes talent forecasting and quality of hire more precise, while automation powered by AI scales better and improves candidate experience. AI applications currently used in recruitment include parsing, automated sourcing, predictive analytics, video-interview analysis, chatbot-based screening, skills-based matching, and offer optimization. These tools improve operational efficiency, reduce hiring costs, enhance diversity outcomes, and provide valuable predictive insights for workforce planning. Today, many organizations depend on AI to automate hiring processes from start to finish and take strategic decisions. Despite these advantages, there are considerable challenges in the integration of AI. Algorithmic bias can come from historical or unrepresentative training data. Fairness, validity, and discriminatory outcome concerns arise with video-based assessments. Data privacy, transparency, and explainability remain significant concerns, especially in high-stakes hiring decisions. There are complications with implementation, system integrations, and regulatory uncertainty that further complicate adoptions [3].

Ethical and regulatory considerations are increasingly central. The EU's AI Act classifies the majority of recruitment tools as high-risk systems, with strenuous testing, documentation, and transparency, including human oversight. Ethical frameworks stress the need for fairness, accountability, data protection, monitoring for bias, and explanation rights for candidates. Effective governance structures and continuous auditing are crucial to ensure ethical and responsible AI deployment in hiring [4]. In all likelihood, human-AI collaboration, skills-based hiring models, predictive workforce planning, and an entirely integrated AI-driven recruitment ecosystem are what will define the future of talent acquisition. Such organizations that can strategically adopt AI in ways that maintain strong ethical and regulatory compliance will enjoy major competitive advantages. AI will be instrumental in reshaping the face of talent acquisition as it renews recruitment to become more efficient, truly data-driven, and much fairer.

2. AI Technologies Transforming Talent Acquisition

The recruitment landscape is undergoing a fundamental transformation through artificial intelligence, with multiple interconnected technologies working to streamline and enhance hiring processes. These technologies span from intelligent data analysis to sophisticated behavioral evaluation, each addressing specific challenges in modern talent acquisition [5].

2.1 Machine Learning for Predictive Analytics and Candidate Matching

Modern candidate job matching systems are powered by machine learning core technology. Advanced applicant tracking systems process thousands of resumes within seconds using natural language processing, replacing the need for manual screening over several weeks. Large-scale historical candidate-position pairs are used to train ML models, which yield calibrated scores that effectively combine signals on skill relevance, career trajectory, and past performance [6]. Unlike traditional keyword-based systems, neural networks evaluate job requirements and candidate qualifications with semantic understanding, weighing competencies within industry- and role-specific contexts. Organizations using AI-driven matching are seeing 60% faster hiring cycles, 30% lower cost-per-hire, and over 50% greater recruiter capacity by virtue of a reduced administrative load. Predictive analytics further enhance new-hire quality by detecting performance patterns that are hidden from human judgment. In fact, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) observed reduced turnover rates after integrating predictive models that improved cultural fit assessments [2].

2.2 Natural Language Processing for Resume Parsing and Interview Analysis

NLP has two chief roles that aid in recruitment: parsing resumes and evaluating interviews. Contemporary models of NLP, especially deep learning frameworks like BERT, extract skills, qualifications, and experience from context with very high accuracy, beating the conventional keyword matching. Techniques such as named entity recognition have been converting unstructured resume text to structured data, while classification models achieve a precision of more than 85% in job-role matching. NLP-based sentiment analysis in interviews interprets responses, tones, and linguistic patterns of candidates to identify confidence, engagement, and emotional cues. Systems that use automatic speech recognition convert the audio to text, analyse semantics, and detect hesitation markers or stress indicators to enhance interview evaluations [7].

2.3 Computer Vision for Video Interview Analysis

Video interviews are recorded for facial expressions, micro-gestures, and body language, from which computer vision infers behavioural and emotional indicators. For expression classification with very high precision, algorithms track facial landmarks, detecting and extracting appearance-based and geometric features. Temporal modelling supports the propagation of probabilities frame by frame, hence the detection of micro-expressions lasting parts of a second. These modern platforms integrate visual cues with speech and text data to provide multimodal assessment for holistic candidate profiles. This, however, raises concerns over validity, fairness, and appropriateness in high-stakes hiring [8].

2.4 Chatbots and Virtual Assistants for Initial Screening and Engagement

AI-powered chatbots presently lead the candidate touchpoints and are conducting screening 24/7, answering frequently asked questions, gathering qualification information, and even scheduling interviews. The functionality of these chatbots relies on natural language understanding for handling queries of all types, adapting to styles of communication, and maintaining conversational continuity. These systems significantly reduce delays in early-stage screening and scheduling. Candidate acceptance has improved with more conversational NLP models, and analytics dashboards allow recruiters to monitor drop-off rates and optimize candidate engagement [9].

2.5 Robotic Process Automation for Administrative Task Automation

Robotic Process Automation automates the most routine administrative tasks that take up a major part of an HR workload. RPA systems facilitate job posting across job platforms, preliminary resume shortlisting, interview slot scheduling, sending rejection letters, and onboarding processes. Research shows RPA can reduce process time by 50-70% while delivering near-perfect accuracy, significantly improving HR operational capacity [10].

2.6 Predictive Hiring Algorithms for Performance and Retention Forecasting

Predictive hiring algorithms estimate job performance and turnover risk based on variables like qualifications, personality traits, cultural alignment, and historical outcomes. These models synthesize resume data, interview metrics, attrition history, engagement scores,

and workforce analytics in an effort to pinpoint exactly which candidates are likely to have the most success and stay with the organization. Companies using predictive modelling have managed to reduce turnover by identifying, well in advance, the risk of employees resigning and targeting interventions. The models are continually refined through supervised learning, leading to improvements in predictive reliability over time [10].

2.7 Voice Analytics: Detecting Tone, Stress, and Emotional Indicators

Voice analytics evaluates prosodic features such as pitch, rhythm, hesitation, and stress patterns to make inferences about emotional states during interviews. While useful for probing interest or nervousness, voice analytics remains one of the most ethically contested uses of AI in hiring. The technology comes from clinical research domains, but recruitment use focuses on emotional inference rather than validated health markers. The concerns include uncertain accuracy, demographic bias (related to gender, age, accent, and ethnicity), and risks of misinterpretation. All these limitations make transparency, informed consent, and cautious implementation indispensable [11].

3. HUMAN-AI COLLABORATION MODELS IN TALENT ACQUISITION

Human-AI collaboration models in talent acquisition are all about creating a synergistic partnership where AI enhances human judgment rather than replaces it. These hybrid frameworks of hiring rely on AI for scalable data processing, pattern detection, and initial screening, while human recruiters provide contextual understanding, intuition, and ethical oversight in the final selection. Maintaining these complementary roles helps organizations balance efficiency with empathy and fairness [12].

3.1 Key approaches to collaboration

3.1.1 AI and HR Co-decision (Augmented Intelligence)

AI provides insights on skill matching, candidate ranking, and predictive indicators that human recruiters interpret and put into context. Humans are still the final decision-makers, using AI data-driven insights to enhance fairness, accuracy, and strategic alignment [13].

3.1.2 AI for Initial Screening, HR for Final Judgment

AI systems do resume parsing, candidate sourcing, and preliminary evaluations to reduce the workload of recruiters. Human interviewers then assess deeper attributes, such as soft skills, cultural fit, and leadership qualities, thus preserving human sensitivity for high-stakes hiring decisions [14].

3.1.3 AI as Second Opinion for Cross-Validation

AI can cross-check human decisions to identify overlooked candidates, detect inconsistencies, or highlight potential bias. This dual-validation model enhances the reliability of decisions and advances the cause of fairness. AI for Data Extraction, HR for Interpretation: AI tools extract structured information from unstructured resumes, application materials, and interviews. Human recruiters interpret this data's meaning, adding contextual and qualitative understanding that AI systems cannot replicate [15]. Human Override Mechanisms: Most organizations create policies that allow recruiters to override recommendations proposed by AI, where outputs seem inappropriate, biased, or misaligned with their organizational values. This ensures that the ethical accountability and final authority are human-driven. This collaborative model enhances efficiency and fairness by marrying the ability of AI to quickly process large candidate pools with human strengths in empathy, contextual reasoning, and nuanced evaluation [16]. Companies using these kinds of approaches are reporting improved time-to-hire, better candidate quality, stronger diversity metrics, and higher candidate satisfaction. Making these models work requires transparent AI systems whose outputs can be explained, ongoing training of HR teams on how to responsibly interpret AI insights, and strong governance structures that monitor bias, privacy, and accountability. These models ultimately position AI as a supportive tool, empowering human recruiters while preserving the important interpersonal and ethical dimensions in talent acquisition [17].

4. INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC AI APPLICATIONS

AI adoption in talent acquisition is highly variable across industries, shaped by very different hiring requirements and operating contexts.

4.1 IT/Tech Sector: This industry is leading in the adoption of AI technology, with heavy use of ATS integration that uses machine learning for ranking resumes and matching candidates to jobs. Specialized AI-driven coding simulators and skill

assessments fully automate technical evaluation and accelerate the identification of top developers and engineers [2].

4.2 Health Care: AI helps in credential verification, which ensures that candidate qualification/certification checks are accurate and up-to-date. Predictive analytics at hospitals and clinics forecast patient loads and staff availability to optimally schedule employees and achieve better workforce allocation while meeting regulatory requirements [18].

4.3 Manufacturing: AI primarily supports skill matching for technical positions requiring special certification, machinery operation expertise, or maintenance capabilities. Automated matching improves speed and precision in filling specialized positions, reduces downtime, and ensures safer workplaces [19].

4.4 Education: AI-powered screening uses academic history, publications, and research metrics to judge prospective faculty and researchers. Natural Language Processing helps parse CVs and grant proposals, while AI-powered interviewing tools rate communicative skills and teaching potential [20].

4.5 Retail & BPO: AI is in wide application for the high-volume hiring that characterizes these industries. Chatbots engage candidates 24/7 for initial screening, answer frequent questions, and schedule interviews, while automated testing platforms assess basic skills and personality fit. This supports rapid scaling with cost efficiency and enhanced candidate experience [2].

5. ETHICAL ISSUES AND GOVERNANCE CHALLENGES

These ethical and governance challenges in AI-driven talent acquisition span algorithmic bias, data privacy, transparency, fairness, and the unsettled dynamics of AI-human collaboration in recruitment systems. AI models frequently learn from historically biased datasets, amplifying societal biases related to gender, caste, socioeconomic background, or institutional prestige; a notable example is Amazon's AI recruiting tool, which systematically penalized women-associated terms because of male-dominated training data. These issues are furthered by the "black-box" nature of proprietary algorithms, obscuring decision logic and complicating accountability for both recruiters and rejected candidates [21]. Privacy concerns are equally critical as AI systems increasingly process sensitive personal and biometric data resumes, video interviews, voice recordings, facial expressions, and tone triggering compliance obligations under regulations such as the GDPR and India's DPDP Act,

requiring informed consent, secure data handling, and restrictions on automated profiling. Biases further extend to non-traditional inputs, including accent, communication style, and visual background in video interviews, thus disadvantageous to candidates from particular regional, cultural, or socio-economic contexts [21]. The tension between fairness and efficiency also presents governance dilemmas, as systems optimized for cost and speed may inadvertently prioritize the quickest match over the most equitable, with attendant risks of reinforcing systemic discrimination. Besides, there are issues of digital divide that place candidates from rural or low-technology environments at a disadvantage due to limited digital literacy or access to stable internet and video-interview infrastructure [1].

Beyond these issues of ethical concern, important blanks in the literature suggest a deep need for further investigation into how AI can be effectively integrated into human decision-making in recruitment. Most current research emphasizes AI as an independent automation tool, used either to filter resumes, schedule talent, or preliminarily screen candidates, while empirical evidence of recruitment models assisted by AI, in which human judgment and AI insights are combined meaningfully, remains scant [12]. For example, in a review of thirty-one studies on AI in recruitment, existing literature has little quantitative evaluation of how AI affects key recruitment outcomes such as candidate quality, diversity, organizational commitment, or long-term performance. Though some scholars posit that AI enhances the efficiency of recruitment [22], few examine whether these systems appropriately consider the candidate attributes traditionally evaluated by a human, such as cultural fit, interpersonal compatibility, emotional intelligence, and psychological traits, which are complexly heterogeneous. Because AI is designed to operate on predefined rules and statistical patterns, humans draw upon contextual reasoning and experience-based judgment; true collaboration between the two is conceptually underdeveloped and empirically untested. These ensuing challenges require continuous auditing of biases, transparent disclosure of AI, strong data governance mechanisms, human agency, and the development of regulatory frameworks that balance innovation with fair hiring.

6. AI'S DUAL EFFECT ON DIVERSITY

AI has a two-faced effect on the principles of DEI in talent acquisition by offering tools to level out human biases, while it simultaneously runs the risk of perpetuating systemic inequalities found in its training data.

6.1 Positive Effects

AI removes immediate human biases through standardized, objective evaluation criteria, like anonymized resume screening devoid of identifiers such as name, gender, and institutions. This will ensure fairness, concentrating on skills and qualifications. Several studies document that socioeconomic and gender diversity increases in tech jobs when AI handles early-stage filtering. Predictive analytics can source underrepresented candidates in advance, thus extending talent pools from elite institutions and highlighting disparities in hiring funnels for targeted interventions [23].

6.2 Negative Effects

Conversely, AI perpetuates historical inequalities when it is trained on biased datasets reflective of past discriminatory practices against candidates coming from elite institutions or of a particular demographic. Unless this is intervened upon, algorithms amplify such patterns, sometimes ranking privileged profiles higher by default and excluding non-traditional candidates [24].

7. DEI-CENTRIC STRATEGIES

Organizations can apply diversity-trained datasets created to balance representation across the different demographics, with regular bias auditing cycles using metrics like demographic parity and equal opportunity. Ethical AI committees oversee model development while candidate feedback mechanisms allow for reporting of perceived biases to iteratively refine systems. Tools like inclusive language detection in job descriptions and blind recruitment algorithms further embed DEI principles [25].

7.1 The Perception of the Candidates

One major aspect of recruitment is the candidates, and probability of the potential neglect of holistic candidate attributes. While AI does a great job in treating, simplifying and analyzing quantifiable data, it may not be able to provide reassurance to the candidate that his/her candidature will be judged fairly and that the salary will be fixed as per the expertise of the candidate. The less human interaction, the more doubts, the more doubts, the more questions, the more questions, the more frustration, the more frustration, the more dissatisfaction. Ultimately, both candidate and job giver must feel happy, convinced and satisfied. Can this be aligned using AI is the concern and question.

While AI excels at processing large datasets and identifying candidates based on quantifiable criteria (e.g., years of experience, educational qualifications), it may overlook softer, more qualitative traits that are crucial for long-term success in a role, such as creativity, leadership potential, and emotional intelligence. AI must be able to judge the skills required in a candidate for a high level of interpersonal relationship. In a team work in an organization, interpersonal relationships are key to the success and satisfaction. Some studies have raised concerns about AI's inability to assess these non-quantifiable qualities effectively, leading to a narrower view of candidate capabilities [26]. This highlights the need for a balanced approach that combines AI's efficiency with human intuition and judgment. Human intuition, sense of judgment and so-called gut feeling has to be in line with AI algorithms. This is possible when AI thinks beyond its programming, logic and logistics.

7.2 Adoption of AI in HR and Contemporary Challenges

Finally, the existing literature on the adoption and consequences of AI for HR processes is characterized by a temporal lag, considering that many studies were published before the strong acceleration of AI tools in the last few years. With the COVID-19 pandemic accelerating digital transformation across industries, AI adoption in HR was bound to rise, but there is still limited contemporary research addressing how organizations are responding to this shift. Grasping the current trends of AI adoption, along with the barriers and facilitators of implementation, represents a rather urgent need if one is to develop a more complete view of the future of HRM [27].

Table 1. Perceptions of AI-assisted hiring, summarizing reported benefits (speed, fairness, efficiency) and concerns (bias, transparency, stress) from recent studies.

S.N.	Perception	Positive Evidence	Negative Evidence	Reference
1.	Speed/Transparency	78% faster hiring	Black-box fears (76%)	[28]
2.	Fairness	Bias reduction (71%)	Authenticity doubts	[29]
3.	Stress	Interactive filtering	Video anxiety	[30]

7.3 Organizational Readiness for AI Adoption

Organizational readiness to make talent acquisition successful with AI integration involves people, processes, technology, and governance. Organizations

that focus on assessing these factors see 3x higher adoption success rates and 40% better returns on investment in AI initiatives.

Table 2. Organizational factors affecting successful AI adoption in HR.

S.N.	Factor	Description	Impact on Success	Reference
1.	Digital Literacy of HR Staff	HR teams need AI fluency to interpret outputs and avoid misuse; low literacy causes 62% resistance.	Training boosts adoption by 45%	[31]
2.	Management Support	Executive buy-in secures resources and aligns AI with strategy; lacking support stalls 70% of projects.	Strong leadership correlates with 2x faster rollout	[32]
3.	Change Management & Training	Structured programs address fears like job loss, with ongoing upskilling reducing resistance by 50%.	Essential for sustained use	[33]
4.	Infrastructure Quality	Robust data systems and cloud integration enable seamless AI deployment; poor infra causes 55% failures.	Foundation for scalability	[34]
5.	Existing HR Maturity	Digitally mature HR functions adopt AI 4x faster; legacy processes hinder integration.	Maturity audits predict outcomes	[34]
6.	Ethical Governance & Compliance Teams	Dedicated oversight prevents bias and ensures regulatory alignment, building trust.	Mitigates 80% of ethical risks	[35]

7.4 Implementation Roadmap

For this, organizations should start with readiness audits that score infrastructure, skills, and culture using Likert scales. From there, organizations can begin to prioritize closing leadership and training gaps that offer the quickest improvements. AI adoption should be started with small, supervised pilot projects that track key metrics such as adoption rates and bias scores. Scaling iteratively, continuous feedback loops, and periodic ethical reviews will ensure that deployment is responsible and effective [36].

8. CONTEXT-SPECIFIC INSIGHTS AND THE INDIAN SCENARIO

In India, the debate on AI-enabled recruitment is still in its infancy, despite the overall digital transformation that has been sweeping across industries. While demographic diversity and a large, fast-changing labor market provide unique opportunities for AI adoption, empirical studies into these dynamics have remained scarce. Available work indicates this gap, but again fails to interrogate various reasons why Indian organizations lag behind in producing localized evidence. An important critical issue is that many Indian firms adopt AI tools developed in Western contexts, often without assessing their suitability for India's multilingual, socioeconomically stratified talent ecosystem. This raises concerns regarding algorithmic fairness, workforce inclusivity, and the replicability of global findings within the Indian setting [37].

8.1 Setting the Stage: 2.1 Early Automation in HR Recruitment

The early literature by Gupta et al. (2018) chronicled the movement from manual, paper-based recruitment to technology-assisted workflows. Though these studies discuss time and cost reductions, most such literature views automation as an a priori good, with little consideration given to how rigid rule-based screening via early tools-for example, keyword-based filters-may inadvertently screen out qualified applicants. Most of this literature also assumes sector-agnostic adoption; however, India's organizational ecosystem varies from highly digitized IT firms to small enterprises with minimal HR infrastructure in place. Without comparisons across sectors, this makes their findings hard to generalize. Consequently, while formative, they provide an incomplete look at the complex transition that finally led to AI-driven systems [38].

8.2 AI's Efficiency Payoff and Enhanced Candidate Experience

Yadav et al. (2025) show that AI enhances recruiter productivity and candidate communication. However, most of the research reporting such benefits depends on self-reported perceptions rather than longitudinal performance metrics, making it difficult to determine whether efficiency gains translate to better hiring outcomes-such as reduced turnover or enhanced job-role fit. Similarly, candidate satisfaction with chatbots or automated updates may reflect novelty rather than sustained value. Critical evaluation also shows that many organizations prioritize efficiency enhancements over deeper structural improvements in hiring equity. A very pertinent question therefore remains: Are AI tools enhancing recruitment holistically or simply accelerating existing practices-biased or otherwise [39].

8.3 Challenges: Bias, Soft-Skill Blind Spots, and Data Limitations

The literature positions algorithmic bias as a central concern, mostly referencing well-known global cases such as Amazon's flawed model. However, these examples eclipse more systemic issues: Indian firms frequently operate with incomplete, inconsistent, and non-digitized HR data-which presents an even greater risk. AI tools trained on such datasets may not only replicate past inequities but also amplify regional, linguistic, or educational biases. Works like Kaur et.al. (2023), Jain and Goyal (2014) correctly emphasize the challenge of assessing soft skills but do not consider how this gets further complicated by cultural nuances, such as hierarchical styles of communication or collectivist organizational norms, in automated assessments. The assumption that AI can be applied universally fails to take this deeply embedded contextual difference into consideration [40,41].

8.4 Trust, Adoption Patterns, and Cultural Dimensions

Comparative studies from Bahrain and Sweden [42,43] indicate that organizations are still wary of letting AI make final hiring decisions. Yet these studies rarely examine whether such wariness is due to concerns about equity-or cultural discomfort with diminished human authority. For instance, in countries like India where hiring is often based on relational assessments, networks, and judgments culturally ingrained, total reliance on algorithmic decisions might be seen as socially inappropriate or risky for the organization.

These differences suggest that adoption is the product of technological decisions and cultural negotiation. Critically, these works also do not analyze whether over-dependence on human “final say” would inadvertently reintroduce bias which early-stage AI sought to eliminate.

2.5 Pandemic-Driven Acceleration and the Rise of Hybrid Hiring Models

While the pandemic acted as a catalyst for rapid AI adoption, much of the literature treats this shift as universally positive. A critical gap exists regarding post-pandemic assessments as to whether such hybrid models have improved hiring quality or simply entrenched a two-tier system in which AI filters large volumes but human evaluators engage only with a narrowed pool—possibly missing out on diverse or unconventional profiles. This digital adoption during COVID-19 favored those organizations that were already technologically predisposed, furthering the chasm between larger metropolitan firms and their smaller or more rural counterparts [42,43]

9. FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

The gaps that future research needs to address in AI-driven talent acquisition concern long-term outcomes, model performance, cultural variability, organizational scalability, benchmarking standards, and ethical governance. Long-term effects on employee retention require deeper investigation, as the current insights into AI-driven reductions in attrition need multi-year longitudinal studies to confirm outcomes beyond early quality-of-hire metrics. Comparisons in job performance outcomes need to be made to confirm whether AI-selected candidates continue to outperform traditionally hired employees in productivity, promotion rates, and peer evaluations over several years. Cross-cultural differences in the acceptance of AI also need study, given that regional variations—such as higher adoption in the Asia-Pacific versus ethics-focused scrutiny in the EU—point to the need for

localized validation of AI hiring tools. Research should go further to explore the effects on small versus large organizations, quantifying the differences in ROI, scalability, and resource constraints that shape different adoption pathways for SMEs and enterprises. In turn, another key area involves benchmarking the accuracy of AI models by developing standardized metrics that can compare ATS systems, NLP parsers, and predictive algorithms across diverse datasets based on precision, recall, and fairness indicators. Finally, the advancement of ethical AI audit frameworks is merited, requiring robust protocols for bias detection, transparency reporting, and regulatory compliance that are updated alongside increasingly autonomous and agentic AI systems.

10. CONCLUDING REMARK

Thus far, manpower management used to be done by experienced professionals. With the advent of AI, this process is likely to be changed if not fully replaced. The ideal scenario for AI based talent acquisition will be that the best candidates are recognized and their innate potential is allowed to unfold in normal and even most challenging conditions. If a candidate is recruited by AI and the other one by an experienced HR manager, of the two candidates, which one will prove to be more productive, articulate and successful in running the show. The other aspect is the performances during crises and emergencies. If AI is able to perceive the level of threat and prepare and provide a clear guideline much in advance that would be wonderful. If AI starts predicting the company's future prospects timely, accurately and systematically, that would surely replace human managers. Will an AI system discourage office romance to ensure better productivity or will it encourage the young co-workers to relax, chill and be more productive will be another aspect of AI based HR management.

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