

Recruitment Effectiveness in Human Resource Services: Evaluating Processes, Strategies, And Outcomes

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Abstract

Recruitment effectiveness has emerged as a critical organisational capability that directly shapes workforce quality, productivity, and long-term competitive advantage. This study examines the effectiveness of recruitment and selection processes within the Indian human resource (HR) services sector, exploring dimensions including candidate experience, sourcing channel efficacy, recruiter competence, bias perception, job description alignment, and onboarding satisfaction. Employing a descriptive cross-sectional research design, primary data were collected from 120 respondents through a structured questionnaire administered via convenience sampling. Statistical analyses—comprising simple percentage analysis, Chi-square tests, Pearson correlation, and one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)—were applied to examine relationships among demographic variables and recruitment outcomes. Findings reveal that 60.8% of respondents express overall positive satisfaction with the recruitment process; however, 65.8% perceive the existence of bias, representing a significant systemic concern. A very strong positive correlation ($r = .911$, $p < .001$) was found between professional experience and recruitment satisfaction. Chi-square analysis established a statistically significant association between educational qualification and hiring process satisfaction ($\chi^2 = 328.8$, $df = 16$, $p < .001$), while ANOVA confirmed systematic differences in experience levels across age groups ($F = 176.932$, $p < .001$). The study contributes theoretically by integrating candidate-centric and process-oriented perspectives of recruitment effectiveness, and practically by offering actionable recommendations for bias mitigation, sourcing diversification, and analytics-driven process improvement. These findings have broad implications for HR practitioners, talent acquisition specialists, and organisational decision-makers seeking to transform recruitment into a strategic competitive function.

Keywords: *recruitment effectiveness, candidate experience, sourcing channels, bias in hiring, HR analytics, talent acquisition, India*

1. Introduction

In the contemporary knowledge economy, the capacity to attract, evaluate, and retain high-calibre talent has become a defining determinant of sustained organisational performance. Recruitment effectiveness—broadly defined as the degree to which an organisation's hiring process successfully identifies and secures qualified candidates who align with both role requirements and organisational culture—has transitioned from an operational administrative concern to a front-line strategic imperative (Morrissey & Nankervis, 2024). In markets characterised by acute skill scarcity, demographic flux, and intensifying inter-firm competition for talent, the

quality of the recruitment function can confer or erode competitive advantage at a pace that rivals product innovation or capital investment.

The academic literature has progressively refined its conception of recruitment effectiveness beyond the narrow metric of vacancy-fill rate. Scholars now argue for a multi-dimensional construct encompassing sourcing channel productivity, candidate experience quality, selection system validity, recruiter behavioural competence, employer brand strength, and the downstream organisational outcomes—including new-hire performance, retention, and engagement—that stem from hiring decisions (Barber, 2023; Becker, 2024; Schuler, 2022). Despite this conceptual richness, empirical research conducted within the Indian HR services context remains comparatively sparse, with extant studies concentrating disproportionately on manufacturing or IT-sector organisations (Heneman, 2022).

The HR services sector itself occupies a distinctive analytical position: as organisations that recruit on behalf of client firms, HR service providers must simultaneously manage their own internal recruitment effectiveness and that of the recruitment products they deliver to clients. This dual exposure renders the sector a particularly illuminating setting within which to examine the mechanisms and outcomes of recruitment practice. The sector has also witnessed rapid technological transformation, with Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS), AI-powered shortlisting engines, and video-interview platforms reshaping both recruiter behaviour and candidate expectations (Howardson, 2021; Richardson, 2025).

Within this context, the present study investigates recruitment effectiveness across seven interrelated dimensions: process efficiency (time-to-fill), sourcing channel utilisation, candidate experience, recruiter competence, bias in selection, job description accuracy, and onboarding quality. Three statistical techniques—Chi-square association testing, Pearson correlation, and one-way ANOVA—are deployed to examine the influence of respondents' demographic characteristics on their perceptions of recruitment effectiveness. The study thereby contributes both theoretically, through the integration of process- and candidate-centric perspectives, and practically, through actionable guidance for HR practitioners.

1.1 Problem Statement

Despite increased organisational awareness of the strategic value of human capital, a critical gap persists between recruitment policy intent and practice reality. Many organisations continue to rely on anecdotal assessments and informal heuristics rather than systematic, analytics-driven evaluation frameworks (Becker, 2024). Specific structural deficiencies documented in extant research include: absence of standardised interview protocols; limited deployment of recruitment analytics; inadequate candidate communication during the hiring journey; and persistent misalignment between job descriptions and actual role expectations (Braddy et al., 2020; Schuler, 2022). Of particular concern is the continued influence of conscious and unconscious bias on selection decisions, which undermines diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) objectives and exposes organisations to reputational and legal risk (Johnson, 2025; Mustapha et al., 2023).

In the Indian HR services sector specifically, rapid sectoral growth and intensifying talent competition have exposed significant variability in recruitment maturity levels across organisations. This study seeks to diagnose these challenges empirically by examining the perceptions of candidates and employees who have recently experienced recruitment processes, thereby generating evidence-based insights for practitioner intervention.

1.2 Research Objectives

The study pursues the following objectives: (i) to analyse the effectiveness of the recruitment and selection process in terms of time, quality, and candidate satisfaction; (ii) to examine the role of sourcing channels in attracting qualified candidates; (iii) to evaluate candidate experience and satisfaction at each stage of the recruitment process; (iv) to assess the impact of recruiter competence on overall recruitment effectiveness; (v) to analyse the extent of bias in recruitment procedures and its impact on outcomes; (vi) to examine the relationship between demographic factors—age, educational qualification, and professional experience—and perceptions of recruitment effectiveness; and (vii) to provide evidence-based recommendations for improving recruitment effectiveness.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Conceptualising Recruitment Effectiveness

Heneman (2022) describes an effective recruitment programme as one that attracts a sufficiently large pool of qualified applicants, successfully navigates them through screening, and converts offers into acceptances—identifying five sequential stages: planning, strategy development, candidate search, screening, and evaluation and control. Barber (2023) adds organisational-level nuance by emphasising three foundational decisions: defining the target candidate population, selecting optimal applicant sources, and designing compelling attraction strategies. More recently, Morrissey and Nankervis (2024) contextualise recruitment and selection within the broader human resource planning architecture, arguing that effective hiring is the product of clearly defined roles, structured assessment criteria, competitive remuneration, and well-articulated career pathways.

The theoretical landscape has been further enriched by competency-based and talent management perspectives. Schuler (2022) advocates forward-looking recruitment that considers not merely present vacancy requirements but the long-term career trajectory of candidates within the organisation—a shift from transactional hiring towards talent stewardship. Badiuddin Ahmed (2023) operationalises this perspective by demonstrating that organisations achieving strong alignment between employer strategies and individual career aspirations record markedly superior recruitment and retention outcomes.

2.2 Sourcing Channels and Employer Branding

The proliferation of digital recruitment channels has transformed how organisations access talent pools. Braddy et al. (2020) demonstrated empirically that the usability and visual appeal of organisational recruitment websites significantly enhance perceived employer attractiveness, underscoring the strategic value of digital employer brand investments. Howardson (2021) extended this insight by showing that candidates' pre-use technology expectations exert a stronger influence on organisational attractiveness perceptions than objective technological features—a finding with immediate implications for ATS design and candidate communication strategies.

Campus recruitment and institutional partnerships represent a complementary sourcing strategy of particular relevance to growing economies. Mustapha et al. (2023) documented the retention advantages conferred by employee referral programmes, attributing higher referral-hire retention to enhanced pre-hire cultural familiarity and stronger intra-organisational social networks. Becker (2024) articulates the emerging imperative for talent acquisition leaders to develop technology roadmaps that integrate seamlessly with broader HR architectures, reporting measurably superior time-to-fill and candidate quality outcomes in organisations where talent acquisition teams influence technology selection decisions.

2.3 Bias, Diversity, and Fairness in Selection

A substantive strand of literature addresses the persistence of bias as a structural threat to recruitment effectiveness. Johnson (2025) proposed data envelopment analysis (DEA) as a rigorous, multi-criteria shortlisting tool that treats each applicant as a decision-making unit, thereby enabling objective, bias-minimised screening. Cebeci (2020) similarly advocated for Fuzzy Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) decision support in selection system design, demonstrating improved alignment between candidate competencies and role requirements under structured, criteria-based evaluation frameworks. Ma (2021) introduced a cross-cultural dimension, showing that the effectiveness of recruitment practices is moderated by cultural values, with strategies successful in Western contexts requiring adaptation for Asian and other cultural settings.

2.4 Recruiter Competence and Candidate Experience

The interpersonal dimension of recruitment—recruiter behaviour and the experiential quality of candidate interactions—has received growing scholarly attention. Goeldner (2021) demonstrated a direct and positive relationship between thorough competency assessment during recruitment and subsequent new-hire engagement and performance. Richardson (2025) conceptualises the recruitment manager role as requiring a synthesis of interpersonal acuity, talent pool intelligence, compliance expertise, and systematic methodology design—a demanding profile with significant implications for recruiter training and development programmes. Martins

(2022), focusing on expatriate recruitment, identified trust, organisational knowledge, and technical competence as primary selection criteria for international roles, illustrating how the competence requirements evaluated during recruitment vary substantially with role complexity and geographic scope.

2.5 Research Gap

Notwithstanding the breadth of extant scholarship, empirical studies that simultaneously examine multiple dimensions of recruitment effectiveness—spanning process efficiency, sourcing strategy, candidate experience, bias, and recruiter behaviour—within a single organisational context remain limited. The Indian HR services sector, characterised by rapid growth and heightened talent competition, represents a particularly underexplored empirical setting. The present study addresses this gap by providing a holistic, multi-dimensional analysis grounded in primary survey data.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The study adopts a descriptive cross-sectional research design appropriate for capturing the perceptions of a defined population at a single point in time (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). This design enables systematic description of the current state of recruitment effectiveness perceptions without experimental manipulation, consistent with the study's exploratory-diagnostic orientation.

3.2 Setting and Participants

The study was conducted within an HR services firm headquartered in Bangalore, Karnataka, India—a sector characterised by high recruitment intensity and significant candidate-volume throughput. Participants comprised 120 individuals (candidates and employees) who had undergone the organisation's recruitment process within the preceding 24 months. Convenience sampling was employed given access constraints; the final sample comprised 72 female (60.0%) and 48 male (40.0%) respondents, with ages ranging from below 25 years to above 55 years. Data collection was conducted over a three-month period using a structured, researcher-administered questionnaire.

3.3 Instrument

The primary data collection instrument comprised a 25-item structured questionnaire encompassing demographic items and Likert-type and categorical response items spanning seven recruitment effectiveness dimensions: process duration, onboarding satisfaction, bias perception, overall satisfaction, regulatory compliance, sourcing channels, job clarity, employer brand drivers, motivation mechanisms, recruitment basis, recruitment methods, hiring process satisfaction, recommendation intent, recruiter helpfulness, application experience, job description alignment, CV review satisfaction, recruiter career understanding, and expected recruitment benefits. Content validity was established through expert review by three HR practitioners; the instrument was pre-tested on 15 respondents prior to full deployment.

3.4 Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) were computed for all items. Three inferential techniques were applied: (i) Pearson Chi-square analysis to examine the association between educational qualification (ordinal) and hiring process satisfaction; (ii) Pearson product-moment correlation (supplemented by Kendall's tau-b and Spearman's rho for robustness) to assess the relationship between professional experience and overall recruitment satisfaction; and (iii) one-way ANOVA to examine differences in experience levels across age groups. All analyses were conducted using SPSS v26.0; the significance threshold was set at $\alpha = .05$.

4. Findings

4.1 Sample Profile

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the 120 respondents. The sample is predominantly female (60.0%) and early-to-mid career, with the 26–35 years age cohort constituting the largest group (35.0%).

Postgraduate qualification holders are the modal educational category (37.5%), and the majority of respondents reported 1–3 years of professional experience (35.0%).

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents ($N = 120$)

Demographic Variable	Category	n	%
Gender	Male	48	40.0
	Female	72	60.0
Age (years)	Below 25	31	25.8
	26–35	42	35.0
	36–45	17	14.2
	46–55	17	14.2
	Above 55	13	10.8
	Education	ITI / Vocational	25
	Under Graduate	23	19.2
	Post Graduate	45	37.5
	Diploma	21	17.5
	Others	6	5.0
Experience (years)	Below 1	23	19.2
	1–3	42	35.0
	3–5	38	31.7
	5–7	11	9.2
	Above 7	6	5.0

Note. Source: Primary data collection (2024).

4.2 Recruitment Process Efficiency

A substantial proportion of respondents (32.5%) reported that the recruitment process required approximately one month to complete, with a further 25.0% reporting durations exceeding one month (Table 2). Only 22.5% experienced a recruitment cycle of less than one week. These findings suggest moderate time-to-fill performance relative to best-practice benchmarks, wherein the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) reports industry median time-to-fill figures of 36 days for professional roles.

Table 2: *Perceived Duration of the Recruitment and Selection Procedure*

Duration	Respondents (n)	Percentage (%)
Less than a week	27	22.5
Two weeks	24	20.0
One month	39	32.5
More than one month	18	15.0
More than two months	12	10.0
Total	120	100.0

Note. Source: Primary data.

4.3 Candidate Experience Dimensions

Table 3 synthesises satisfaction ratings across four candidate experience touchpoints. Onboarding and induction received predominantly positive ratings (74.1% excellent or good), while the initial application experience displayed a near-uniform distribution across excellent (27.5%), good (29.2%), and average (28.3%) categories—indicating that while no dominant dissatisfaction exists, no distinctive positive differentiation is achieved either. CV review satisfaction is strong (62.5% positive), and hiring process satisfaction stands at 50.9% positive, with a notably high neutral response rate (26.7%) signalling an underexploited conversion opportunity.

Table 3: *Candidate Satisfaction Across Recruitment Touchpoints*

Touchpoint	Positive (%)	Neutral (%)	Negative (%)
Onboarding / Induction	74.1	11.7	14.1
CV / Resume Review	62.5	26.7	10.8
Hiring & Selection Process	50.9	26.7	22.5
Initial Application Experience	56.7	28.3	15.0

Note. Positive = Excellent/Good or Highly Satisfied/Satisfied; Negative = Poor/Very Poor or Dissatisfied/Highly Dissatisfied.

4.4 Sourcing Channels and Recruitment Basis

College placement cells constitute the dominant sourcing channel (35.8%), followed closely by technical institutes such as NIIT (32.5%). Placement consultancies account for 17.5% and university research partnerships for 8.3% (Table 4). This concentration in institutional and campus channels reflects a strategic emphasis on fresh talent acquisition, though it simultaneously constrains access to experienced professional pools and limits geographic and demographic diversity.

With respect to the primary basis for recruitment decisions, experience dominates (33.3%), followed by skills-based assessment (28.3%). The relatively high skills component suggests growing recognition, consistent with competency-based HR frameworks, that demonstrated capability may outperform tenure as a predictor of future performance.

Table 4: Primary Talent Sourcing Channels

Sourcing Channel	n	%
College Placement Cell	43	35.8
Technical Institutes (e.g., NIIT)	39	32.5
Placement Consultancies	21	17.5
University Researchers	10	8.3
Others	7	5.8
Total	120	100.0

Note. Source: Primary data.

4.5 Bias Perception and Regulatory Compliance

A majority of respondents (65.8%) perceived the existence of bias in the recruitment and selection process (Table 5). This finding constitutes one of the most significant results of the study, as bias perception undermines not only candidate experience quality but also DEI outcomes, employer brand integrity, and the legal defensibility of selection decisions. The 34.2% who perceived no bias may reflect either genuinely positive experiences or limited awareness of subtler forms of discriminatory influence.

Conversely, a strong majority (75.0%) confirmed that the organisation adheres to applicable state and central government recruitment regulations, indicating reasonable governance standards. The 11.7% who were unable to confirm compliance awareness represents a communication gap that warrants attention, as candidate transparency regarding regulatory adherence can strengthen employer brand credibility.

Table 5: Bias Perception and Regulatory Compliance

Variable	Response	n	%
Perceived Bias in Recruitment	Yes – Bias Present	79	65.8
	No – No Bias Perceived	41	34.2
Government Norm Compliance	Yes – Compliant	90	75.0
	No – Not Compliant	16	13.3
	Don't Know	14	11.7

Note. Source: Primary data.

4.6 Recruiter Competence and Career Alignment

Recruiter helpfulness was rated positively (extremely or moderately helpful) by 55.0% of respondents, with 30.0% rating their recruiter as extremely helpful. A further 18.3% expressed a neutral position, indicating neither strong satisfaction nor dissatisfaction with recruiter support—a potentially trainable segment (Table 6). Regarding career goal understanding, 60.0% of respondents felt their career aspirations were very well or moderately well understood—a finding consistent with Goeldner's (2021) argument that empathetic, career-aware recruitment interactions produce superior engagement outcomes.

Table 6: *Recruiter Helpfulness and Career Goal Understanding*

Variable	Rating	n	%
Recruiter Helpfulness	Extremely Helpful	36	30.0
	Moderately Helpful	30	25.0
	Neutral	22	18.3
	Slightly Helpful	20	16.7
	Not Helpful	12	10.0
Career Goal Understanding	Very Well	37	30.8
	Moderately Well	35	29.2
	Somewhat Well	32	26.7
	Not Well	9	7.5
	Not Sure	7	5.8

Note. Source: Primary data.

4.7 Employer Brand Drivers and Recommendation Intent

Good working environment (32.5%) and career development opportunities (30.8%) are identified as the most influential employer brand contributors—a finding that aligns with self-determination theory, wherein autonomy, growth, and environmental quality are fundamental drivers of workplace motivation and attractiveness. Salary increment, notably, ranks fourth (10.8%), suggesting that non-financial employer brand dimensions dominate candidate decision-making in this sample.

Willingness to recommend the organisation to others—a proxy for net promoter sentiment among candidates—stands at 53.3% positive (definitely or probably would recommend), with 24.2% neutral and 22.5% unlikely to recommend. This moderate net promoter position offers a feasible improvement target through enhanced candidate experience investments.

5. Hypotheses

Three formal hypotheses were derived from the research objectives and the theoretical framework reviewed in Section 2. Each hypothesis is presented as a directional alternative hypothesis (H_1) alongside its corresponding null hypothesis (H_0). The statistical tests used to evaluate each hypothesis are specified, and results are reported in Section 6.

Hypothesis 1 — Educational Qualification and Hiring Process Satisfaction

H_{01} : There is no significant association between the educational qualification of respondents and their satisfaction with the recruiting and hiring process.

H_{11} : There is a significant association between the educational qualification of respondents and their satisfaction with the recruiting and hiring process.

Statistical test: Pearson Chi-square analysis. Significance level: $\alpha = .05$.

Rationale: Expectation-disconfirmation theory suggests that candidates with higher educational attainment bring more refined quality expectations to recruitment interactions. Accordingly, educational qualification is hypothesised to moderate satisfaction outcomes.

Hypothesis 2 — Professional Experience and Overall Recruitment Satisfaction

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between the professional experience of respondents and their overall satisfaction with the recruitment process.

H₁₂: There is a significant positive relationship between the professional experience of respondents and their overall satisfaction with the recruitment process.

Statistical test: Pearson product-moment correlation (with Kendall's tau-b and Spearman's rho for robustness). Significance level: $\alpha = .05$.

Rationale: Signalling theory posits that experienced candidates may receive more personalised, senior-oriented recruiter engagement, and/or bring more calibrated expectations, both of which are anticipated to yield higher satisfaction scores.

Hypothesis 3 — Age Group and Professional Experience Level

H₀₃: There is no significant difference in professional experience levels across age groups of respondents.

H₁₃: There is a significant difference in professional experience levels across age groups of respondents.

Statistical test: One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) with Student-Newman-Keuls (SNK) post-hoc comparison. Significance level: $\alpha = .05$.

Rationale: Human capital theory predicts a positive relationship between chronological age and accumulated work experience. Confirmation of this relationship validates the demographic representativeness of the sample and informs the design of age-cohort-differentiated recruitment strategies.

Table 7: Summary of Hypotheses, Tests, and Directional Predictions

Hypothesis	Variables	Statistical Test	Predicted Direction
H ₁	Education → Hiring Satisfaction	Chi-square	Significant association
H ₂	Experience → Recruitment Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	Positive ($r > 0$)
H ₃	Age Group → Experience Level	One-Way ANOVA	Significant difference

Note. All hypotheses tested at $\alpha = .05$. Results reported in Section 6.

6. Statistical Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

6.1 Hypothesis 1 — Chi-Square Analysis: Educational Qualification and Hiring Satisfaction

A Chi-square test of independence was conducted to evaluate H_{11} , which posited a significant association between respondents' highest educational qualification (five categories) and their satisfaction with the hiring and selection process (five levels).

Table 8: *Chi-Square Tests: Educational Qualification × Hiring Process Satisfaction*

Test	Value	df	p (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	328.800	16	.000
Likelihood Ratio	280.558	16	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	106.407	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	120	—	—

Note. N = 120. Pearson Chi-Square = 328.800, df = 16, $p < .001$. Note: 56% of cells have expected counts < 5 ; results should be interpreted with appropriate caution and cross-validated with a larger sample.

Table 9: *Symmetric Measures*

Measure	Value	p
Gamma (Ordinal × Ordinal)	1.000	.000
Cohen's Kappa	0.784	.000
N of Valid Cases	120	—

Note. ** Significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

The Pearson Chi-square statistic of 328.800 (df = 16, $p < .001$) is statistically highly significant, leading to rejection of the null hypothesis. The gamma coefficient of 1.000 indicates a perfect ordinal association: higher educational attainment is associated with progressively more differentiated satisfaction profiles. Specifically, the cross-tabulation reveals that ITI/vocational candidates were predominantly satisfied or very satisfied, while postgraduate and higher-qualification holders exhibited greater variance in satisfaction—consistent with elevated expectations regarding process quality, structured assessment, and professional engagement among more educated candidates. These findings extend Braddy et al.'s (2020) employer attractiveness research by demonstrating that education-mediated expectations operate as a moderating variable in satisfaction formation.

6.2 Hypothesis 2 — Correlation Analysis: Professional Experience and Recruitment Satisfaction

Table 10: *Correlation Matrix: Experience Level and Overall Recruitment Satisfaction*

Variable	Experience	Satisfaction
Experience — Pearson r	1.000	.911**
Sig. (2-tailed)	—	.000
Satisfaction — Pearson r	.911**	1.000

Variable	Experience	Satisfaction
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	—
N	120	120

Note. ** Correlation significant at the .01 level (2-tailed). Kendall's tau-b = .862 ($p < .001$); Spearman's rho = .912 ($p < .001$).

The Pearson correlation coefficient of $r = .911$ ($p < .001$) indicates an extremely strong positive relationship between professional experience and overall recruitment satisfaction—one of the most robust correlational findings in this domain. Non-parametric replication via Kendall's tau-b (.862) and Spearman's rho (.912) confirms the strength and monotonicity of this association, substantially reducing concerns about distributional assumptions. The practical interpretation suggests two non-mutually exclusive mechanisms: more experienced candidates may enter the recruitment process with more calibrated, realistic expectations, and/or they may receive qualitatively different—more personalised and senior-oriented—recruiter engagement, producing higher satisfaction. This finding carries direct implications for experience-stratified recruitment design.

6.3 Hypothesis 3 — One-Way ANOVA: Age Group and Experience Level

Table 11: Descriptive Statistics: Experience Level by Age Group

Age Group	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Below 25 years	31	1.26	0.445	1	2
26–35 years	42	2.19	0.397	2	3
36–45 years	17	3.00	0.000	3	3
46–55 years	17	3.24	0.437	3	4
Above 55 years	13	4.46	0.519	4	5
Total	120	2.46	1.060	1	5

Note. Experience coded 1 = Below 1 year through 5 = Above 7 years.

Table 12: ANOVA Table: Age Group Differences in Experience Level

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	115.090	4	28.773	176.932	.000
Within Groups	18.701	115	0.163	—	—
Total	133.792	119	—	—	—

Note. $F(4,115) = 176.932$, $p < .001$. Levene's test for homogeneity: $F = 13.899$, $p < .001$ (heterogeneity of variance noted; results interpreted with appropriate caution). Post-hoc SNK analysis confirms distinct experience subsets for each age group, except marginal overlap between 36–45 and 46–55 cohorts.

The one-way ANOVA yields $F(4, 115) = 176.932$ ($p < .001$), confirming highly significant mean experience differences across the five age groups. The linear trend component ($F = 657.474$, $p < .001$) demonstrates that experience increases monotonically with age—an expected demographic relationship whose confirmation validates the representativeness of the sample and the instrument's construct sensitivity. Student-Newman-Keuls

post-hoc analysis places each age group in a distinct homogeneous subset (excepting marginal overlap between 36–45 and 46–55 brackets), confirming that recruitment communications and process design should be meaningfully differentiated across age-experience cohorts to maximise relevance and conversion.

7. Discussion

7.1 Theoretical Implications

The present study makes several contributions to the theoretical understanding of recruitment effectiveness. First, the finding that educational qualification significantly moderates satisfaction with the hiring process ($\chi^2 = 328.800$, $p < .001$) enriches expectation-disconfirmation theory as applied to recruitment: more educated candidates arrive with higher baseline quality expectations regarding process structure, assessment rigour, and professional communication, and are accordingly more sensitive to process deficiencies. This suggests that the concept of 'recruitment effectiveness' is not a uniform construct but a contextually moderated one whose meaning—and measurement—should be calibrated to candidate characteristics.

Second, the near-unity correlation between professional experience and recruitment satisfaction ($r = .911$) offers empirical grounding for practitioner intuitions about experience-differentiated recruitment quality. This association may be theorised through signalling theory: organisations that invest in more personalised, senior-appropriate recruitment interactions signal organisational respect for candidate expertise, which is then reciprocated through higher satisfaction and stronger offer acceptance propensity. This mechanism warrants experimental verification in future research.

Third, the pervasive perception of bias (65.8%) documented in this study constitutes a significant empirical contribution, corroborating and extending Johnson's (2025) and Cebeci's (2020) arguments for structured, criteria-based selection tools. The finding that nearly two-thirds of candidates perceive bias—irrespective of whether specific discriminatory incidents occurred—suggests that the absence of transparent process architecture itself generates bias suspicion, with consequent damage to employer brand equity and candidate conversion rates.

7.2 Practical Implications

The study's findings carry substantial implications for HR practitioners. The concentration of sourcing through campus channels (68.3% combined for placement cells and technical institutes) renders the organisation vulnerable to talent pool homogeneity and geographic concentration risks. A deliberate digital diversification strategy—encompassing LinkedIn talent solutions, niche job boards, alumni networks, and structured employee referral programmes—would broaden access to experienced and geographically diverse candidates. Mustapha et al.'s (2023) evidence on the retention benefits of referral programmes provides additional incentive for investment in this channel.

The near-uniform distribution of initial application experience ratings (excellent 27.5%, good 29.2%, average 28.3%) represents a significant brand differentiation opportunity. Organisations investing in mobile-optimised application interfaces, real-time status communication, and structured timeline transparency can shift this distribution markedly toward the positive end—and at relatively modest marginal cost.

The 28.3% of candidates reporting only partial job description–interview alignment underscores a structural accuracy deficit. Regular job description audits—conducted collaboratively by HR and line management, updated at defined intervals, and supplemented by incumbent validation—represent a high-impact, low-cost intervention. Accurate job descriptions reduce post-hire expectation misalignment, early attrition, and the reputational costs of candidate disappointment.

8. Conclusion

This study provides a comprehensive empirical analysis of recruitment effectiveness within the Indian HR services sector, integrating process-efficiency, candidate-experience, and statistical-relational perspectives. The principal findings establish that while the organisation demonstrates commendable strengths in regulatory compliance, onboarding quality, and broad satisfaction levels, two systemic vulnerabilities demand urgent strategic

intervention: the pervasive perception of bias (65.8%) and the moderate time-to-fill performance that fails to distinguish the organisation in a competitive talent market.

The statistical analyses provide robust quantitative foundations for practitioner action. H₁₁ was supported: the strong association between educational qualification and satisfaction ($\chi^2 = 328.800$, $df = 16$, $p < .001$) mandates education-segmented recruitment communication strategies. H₁₂ was supported: the near-unity correlation between experience and satisfaction ($r = .911$, $p < .001$) affirms the commercial logic of experience-differentiated recruitment engagement. H₁₃ was supported: the ANOVA confirmation of age-experience systematicity ($F = 176.932$, $p < .001$) validates age-cohort-specific recruitment journey design.

Collectively, these findings support a transition from transactional, volume-focused recruitment operations toward a strategic, analytics-enabled recruitment function that creates measurable value at every candidate touchpoint. The right recruitment approach does not merely fill positions—it constructs the human infrastructure upon which sustained organisational success depends. Future research should extend this analysis longitudinally to examine how recruitment perceptions predict downstream outcomes including new-hire performance, engagement, and retention, and should employ larger, stratified samples to improve generalisation and statistical power.

9. Limitations and Future Research Directions

Several limitations constrain the interpretive scope of this study. First, the convenience sampling approach limits statistical generalisability to broader HR services sector populations; future research should employ probability sampling with larger, stratified samples. Second, the cross-sectional design precludes causal inference; longitudinal designs linking recruitment perceptions to new-hire performance metrics would substantially strengthen the evidence base. Third, the concentration of cells with low expected counts in the Chi-square analysis (56% of cells < 5) means that the association finding, while highly significant, should be cross-validated. Fourth, self-report bias may inflate satisfaction measures; future studies should triangulate candidate perceptions with recruiter assessments and organisational performance data. Finally, the single-organisation setting limits external validity; multi-site, multi-sector replication is recommended.

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