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The role of artificial intelligence in recruitment: Examining candidate experience as a mediator and organizational culture as a moderator in quality of hires

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Abstract

This study investigates the influence of artificial intelligence (AI) implementation on recruitment outcomes, focusing on the mediating role of candidate experience and the moderating effects of trust in AI and organizational culture. Using a quantitative research design, data were collected from human resource (HR) professionals across various industries in Indonesia. The results reveal that AI implementation positively affects candidate experience and the quality of hires, with candidate experience as a significant mediator in these relationships. Trust in AI is found to play a dual role, both directly influencing candidate experience and quality of hires and moderating the relationship between AI implementation and candidate experience. Organizational culture, particularly an innovation-oriented culture, strengthens the impact of AI implementation on candidate experience. The study contributes to the theoretical understanding of candidate experience as a higher-order construct and highlights the importance of trust and cultural alignment in AI-driven recruitment. Practical implications emphasize the need for transparent AI systems, regular feedback, and fostering an innovation-oriented culture to enhance recruitment outcomes. Limitations include the cross-sectional design and the focus on a single country, suggesting opportunities for future research to explore longitudinal effects and cross-cultural comparisons.

Introduction

Integrating artificial intelligence (AI) into recruitment processes has redefined the landscape of human resource management (HRM), offering unprecedented opportunities to enhance efficiency, precision, and fairness in hiring practices. Unlike traditional recruitment, which relies heavily on subjective decision-making, AI-driven systems leverage data analytics and machine learning algorithms to streamline hiring processes, reduce human bias, and improve candidate engagement (Albaroudi et al., 2024; Tay et al., 2024). These advancements have gained significant traction globally, with organizations adopting AI not only to address operational inefficiencies but also to meet the evolving expectations of a tech-savvy workforce (Zirar et al., 2023). Despite these advancements, the literature remains fragmented, particularly in exploring the intersection of AI with candidate experience, trust, and organizational culture and its implications for youth populations entering the workforce.

AI's adoption in recruitment has been explored extensively in Western contexts, where technological maturity has facilitated its widespread use. For example, Tangi et al. (2022) highlighted the transformative potential of AI in automating repetitive tasks, improving decision

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accuracy, and enhancing the overall recruitment experience. Similarly, Ulnicane (2022) emphasized the ethical considerations of AI in recruitment, pointing out that transparency and fairness are critical for building trust among candidates. Studies from advanced economies underscore the importance of integrating AI into strategic HR practices to foster inclusivity and efficiency (Murugesan et al., 2023; Venugopal et al., 2024). However, much of this research has yet to be contextualized in emerging markets like Indonesia, where the challenges of digital literacy, organizational readiness, and infrastructural limitations present unique dynamics.

The candidate experience, a pivotal construct in recruitment research, has been increasingly recognized as a key determinant of hiring outcomes. Positive candidate experiences not only enhance employer branding but also increase the likelihood of job offer acceptance and employee retention (Becker et al., 2010). Despite its significance, the conceptualization of candidate experience as a second-order construct—encompassing dimensions such as satisfaction, fairness, and communication effectiveness—remains underexplored in the context of AI-driven recruitment (Van Esch et al., 2021). Recent studies have begun to address this gap. For instance, Lavidas et al. (2024) examined how performance expectations and enjoyment influence students' intention to use AI technologies, offering insights into the behavioral determinants of technology acceptance. Similarly, Aravantinos et al. (2024) categorized AI's educational applications into cognitive, affective, and psychomotor outcomes, illustrating its potential to enhance user engagement and satisfaction. These findings, though focused on education, provide valuable perspectives for understanding how AI shapes candidate experiences in recruitment.

Trust in AI has emerged as a critical variable influencing the success of AI-driven recruitment. Candidates' perceptions of fairness, transparency, and algorithmic bias significantly impact their engagement with AI systems (Aysolmaz et al., 2023; Ferrara, 2023). In Western contexts, trust has been shown to mitigate skepticism toward AI, fostering positive attitudes and improving recruitment outcomes (Liehner et al., 2023; Tangi et al., 2022). However, trust dynamics can vary significantly across cultures and industries, necessitating further investigation into how trust in AI operates in different socioeconomic settings (Novozhilova et al., 2024). Roppelt et al. (2025) emphasized that trust-building measures, such as transparent algorithms and ethical guidelines, are essential for fostering acceptance of AI technologies. These insights are particularly relevant for Indonesia, where the adoption of AI in recruitment is still in its nascent stages.

Organizational culture, particularly innovation-oriented cultures, also plays a crucial role in moderating the effectiveness of AI implementation. Rani (2024) argued that organizations with a strong culture of innovation are more likely to successfully integrate AI into their HR processes, enhancing both efficiency and candidate engagement. Conversely, traditional organizational cultures may resist AI adoption, leading to suboptimal outcomes (Papagiannidis et al., 2023). This interplay between culture and technology adoption has received limited attention in the context of recruitment, despite its importance for aligning technological advancements with organizational values.

This study aims to bridge these gaps by examining the relationships between AI implementation, candidate experience, trust in AI, and organizational culture within the context of Indonesia. By integrating insights from global research, particularly studies from advanced economies, this research provides a comparative perspective that enhances its relevance to local and international audiences. Furthermore, the study conceptualizes candidate experience as a second-order construct and explores its mediating role in linking AI implementation and the quality of hires. Trust in AI and organizational culture are analyzed as moderators, offering a nuanced understanding of how these factors influence recruitment outcomes.

The contributions of this research are threefold. First, it advances the theoretical understanding of candidate experience as a holistic construct, integrating satisfaction, fairness, and communication. Second, it highlights the dual role of trust in AI as both an independent and moderating variable, addressing a critical gap in the literature. Third, it underscores the importance of organizational culture in shaping the effectiveness of AI-driven recruitment, offering actionable insights for HR practitioners. By situating these findings within the broader discourse on AI adoption, this study not only addresses theoretical gaps but also provides practical recommendations for enhancing recruitment practices in emerging markets.

Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

The rapid integration of artificial intelligence (AI) in recruitment processes has transformed human resource management (HRM) globally, and Indonesia is no exception. As organizations leverage AI to enhance recruitment efficiency, it is critical to understand the theoretical pathways through which AI affects recruitment outcomes. This study proposes a conceptual model with AI implementation, trust in AI, and organizational culture as key variables, examining their direct, indirect, and moderating effects on candidate experience and quality of hires.

AI Implementation and Candidate Experience

Artificial intelligence (AI) revolutionizes recruitment processes by enhancing candidate experience through automation, precision, and data-driven decision-making. Research indicates that AI implementation can significantly reduce biases in candidate selection and streamline recruitment workflows, leading to a more positive experience for applicants. For instance, Cascio and Boudreau (2016) found that AI can improve decision-making efficiency and reduce biases in hiring practices. Additionally Van Esch et al. (2019) reported that organizations using AI technologies have experienced a notable increase in candidate engagement and application likelihood, highlighting AI's potential to promote inclusivity in hiring practices. Furthermore, Votto et al (2021) noted that companies leveraging AI tools have reported substantial improvements in recruitment efficiency, including reductions in time-to-hire and enhancements in candidate quality.

Candidate experience itself is conceptualized as a second-order construct encompassing dimensions such as satisfaction, perceived fairness, and communication effectiveness (Haime et al., 2022). When AI enhances these elements, candidates perceive the recruitment process as more transparent and engaging. For example, the use of AI-powered chatbots can provide instant feedback and support throughout the application process, which has been shown to improve candidate satisfaction scores (Horodyski, 2023). As organizations continue to adopt AI solutions, it is crucial to balance technological advancements with human interaction to ensure candidates feel valued and respected during their recruitment journey. This integration not only fosters a more engaging experience but also strengthens employer branding and attracts top talent in an increasingly competitive job market.

H_1: AI implementation positively influences candidate experience (as a second-order construct) in recruitment processes.

Candidate Experience and Quality of Hires

Candidate experience significantly influences recruitment outcomes, serving as a critical factor in attracting and retaining top talent. A positive candidate experience encourages job seekers to accept job offers, enhances their trust in the employer, and strengthens organizational branding. Research indicates that candidates who feel respected and valued during the recruitment process are more likely to demonstrate higher commitment and performance in their roles (Rehmert, 2021). For instance, a study by Balasundaram et al. (2022) revealed that companies with strong candidate experience see an increase in the acceptance rate of job offers, underscoring the direct link between candidate experience and recruitment success. Additionally, organizations that prioritize positive candidate experiences can expect to improve their employer brand significantly; reports that companies with effective candidate engagement strategies are 3.5 times more likely to attract top-tier candidates.

This strong connection highlights the mediating role of candidate experience between AI implementation and the quality of hires. When AI tools streamline communication and enhance the overall recruitment process, candidates perceive the experience as more transparent and engaging. Haime et al. (2022) emphasize that an exceptional candidate experience not only influences immediate hiring decisions but also sets the stage for long-term employee satisfaction and retention. As organizations continue to leverage AI in their recruitment strategies, understanding and enhancing candidate experience will be crucial for achieving better hiring outcomes and fostering a positive organizational reputation.

H_2: Candidate experience positively influences the quality of hires.

AI Implementation and Quality of Hires

Artificial intelligence (AI) plays a crucial role in enhancing the speed, accuracy, and relevance of hiring decisions, directly influencing the quality of hires. By utilizing AI to match candidate skills with job requirements, organizations can better align employee competencies and job demands. Research indicates that AI significantly reduces human errors in the screening and selection processes, thereby enhancing the overall quality of hires (Chen, 2023; Sýkorová et al., 2024). For instance, a study by Huang and Rust (2018) demonstrated that AI-driven recruitment tools not only streamline the hiring process but also improve decision-making by providing data-driven insights that help identify the best-fit candidates. Furthermore, organizations leveraging AI have reported an improvement in candidate quality due to more precise matching of skills and roles (Tay et al., 2024).

The implementation of AI in recruitment processes allows companies to automate repetitive tasks while ensuring a more objective evaluation of candidates (Chen, 2023). This technological advancement minimizes biases that may arise from human judgment, as highlighted who noted that AI can enhance recruitment effectiveness by focusing on data rather than subjective impressions (Sýkorová et al., 2024). Additionally, the integration of AI tools enables recruiters to sift through large volumes of applications quickly, thereby improving efficiency and allowing for a more thorough assessment of candidate qualifications (Tay et al., 2024). As organizations increasingly adopt AI technologies in their hiring practices, understanding their impact on recruitment outcomes becomes essential for maximizing efficiency and quality in talent acquisition.
H_3: AI implementation positively influences the quality of hires.

Trust in AI and Candidate Experience

Trust in artificial intelligence (AI) is critical in recruitment as it refers to candidates' belief that AI systems operate pretty, without bias, and transparently (Rahwan et al., 2019). When candidates trust the AI systems used in recruitment, they are more likely to perceive the process as fair, transparent, and efficient (Van Esch et al., 2021). This trust is crucial in driving dimensions of candidate experience, such as satisfaction, perceived fairness, and communication effectiveness. Research indicates that candidates who have confidence in AI-driven recruitment processes report higher levels of satisfaction and engagement throughout their application journey (Novozhilova et al., 2024). Furthermore, a study by Glikson and Woolley (2020) highlights that trust in AI can mitigate concerns about algorithmic bias, thereby enhancing candidates' overall experience. Given the importance of trust in shaping candidate perceptions, we propose the following hypothesis.

H_4: Trust in AI positively influences candidate experience (as a second-order construct) in recruitment processes.

Trust in AI and Quality of Hires

Trust in artificial intelligence (AI) not only shapes candidate experience but also significantly affects the quality of hires (Glikson & Woolley, 2020). Candidates who trust AI systems are more likely to accept job offers and view the organization positively, as trust fosters confidence in the recruitment process (Xiong & Kim, 2025). When candidates believe that AI-driven tools are fair, unbiased, and transparent, they align their expectations with employer requirements, leading to a more satisfactory recruitment experience (Rahwan et al., 2019). This trust ultimately contributes to higher-quality hires better aligned with organizational goals (Li et al., 2021). Research indicates that organizations utilizing AI in their hiring processes report improved candidate engagement and satisfaction, directly correlating with enhanced job fit and retention rates (Albaroudi et al., 2024; Chen, 2023). Moreover, AI's ability to analyze vast amounts of data allows for more accurate matching of candidates' skills with job requirements, thereby reducing the likelihood of hiring mismatches. A study by Lawande found that companies leveraging AI technologies experienced a 30% reduction in hiring time while simultaneously improving the quality of hires by ensuring a better fit between candidates and organizational needs (Lawande, 2024). Additionally, as organizations increasingly adopt AI tools for recruitment, fostering trust in these systems becomes essential for maximizing candidate experience

and hiring outcomes. By prioritizing transparency and fairness in AI applications, companies can enhance their employer brand and attract top talent while ensuring that the recruitment process is perceived as equitable and efficient (Burton et al., 2020).

H_5: Trust in AI positively influences the quality of hires.

Mediating Role of Candidate Experience

Candidate experience serves as a mediator in the relationship between AI implementation and the quality of hires. The implementation of AI enhances candidates' perceptions of satisfaction, fairness, and communication, which collectively improves their experience. Research has shown that organizations utilizing AI-driven recruitment tools can achieve significant improvements in candidate satisfaction (Rožman et al., 2023). Furthermore, AI technologies streamline communication and provide personalized feedback, which motivates candidates to accept job offers and promotes higher-quality hires (Lawande, 2024). This positive candidate experience is crucial in aligning candidates' expectations with employer requirements, ultimately leading to better hiring outcomes.

Similarly, trust in AI influences candidate experience, indirectly affecting the quality of hires. When candidates trust AI systems, they are more likely to engage positively with the recruitment process, viewing it as fair and efficient (Rahwan et al., 2019). This trust fosters a sense of confidence that enhances their overall experience and increases the likelihood of accepting job offers. Therefore, we propose the following hypotheses:

H_6: Candidate experience mediates the relationship between AI implementation and the quality of hires.

H_7: Candidate experience mediates the relationship between Trust in AI and the quality of hires.

Moderating Role of Trust in AI

Trust in artificial intelligence (AI) can significantly strengthen the relationship between AI implementation and candidate experience. Candidates who possess a high level of trust in AI systems are more likely to respond positively to AI-driven recruitment processes, perceiving them as fair, efficient, and transparent. Research indicates that when candidates trust the technology, they engage more fully with the recruitment process, leading to enhanced satisfaction and a better overall experience (Glikson & Woolley, 2020). Conversely, candidates with low trust in AI may approach AI-based assessments with skepticism, questioning the fairness and accuracy of the algorithms used. This skepticism can weaken the relationship between AI implementation and candidate experience, resulting in a less favorable perception of the recruitment process (Li et al., 2021).

Moreover, studies have shown that trust in AI not only influences immediate candidate reactions but also impacts long-term perceptions of the organization's brand. For instance, organizations that prioritize transparency and demonstrate ethical use of AI are more likely to foster trust among candidates, which enhances their overall experience (Burton et al., 2020). Therefore, organizations must build and maintain trust in their AI systems to ensure that the benefits of AI implementation are fully realized in terms of positive candidate experiences.

H_8: Trust in AI positively moderates the relationship between AI implementation and candidate experience, such that the relationship is stronger when trust in AI is high.

Moderating Role of Organizational Culture

Organizational culture plays a pivotal role in shaping how artificial intelligence (AI) is implemented and perceived by candidates. Organizations with an innovation-oriented culture are more likely to embrace and optimize AI-driven recruitment processes, while those with traditional cultures may experience resistance to AI implementation. Research indicates that an innovation-oriented culture fosters a stronger link between AI implementation and candidate experience, as candidates in such environments tend to be more open to AI-driven processes (Ortega & Dpa, 2025; Zhang et al., 2023). For instance, companies like IBM have successfully integrated AI into their recruitment strategies by fostering a culture of innovation, leading to improved candidate engagement and

satisfaction (Sýkorová et al., 2024)This cultural alignment enhances the effectiveness of AI tools and promotes a more positive perception of the recruitment process among candidates.

H_9: Organizational culture moderates the relationship between AI implementation and candidate experience, such that the relationship is stronger in organizations with an innovation-oriented culture compared to a traditional culture.

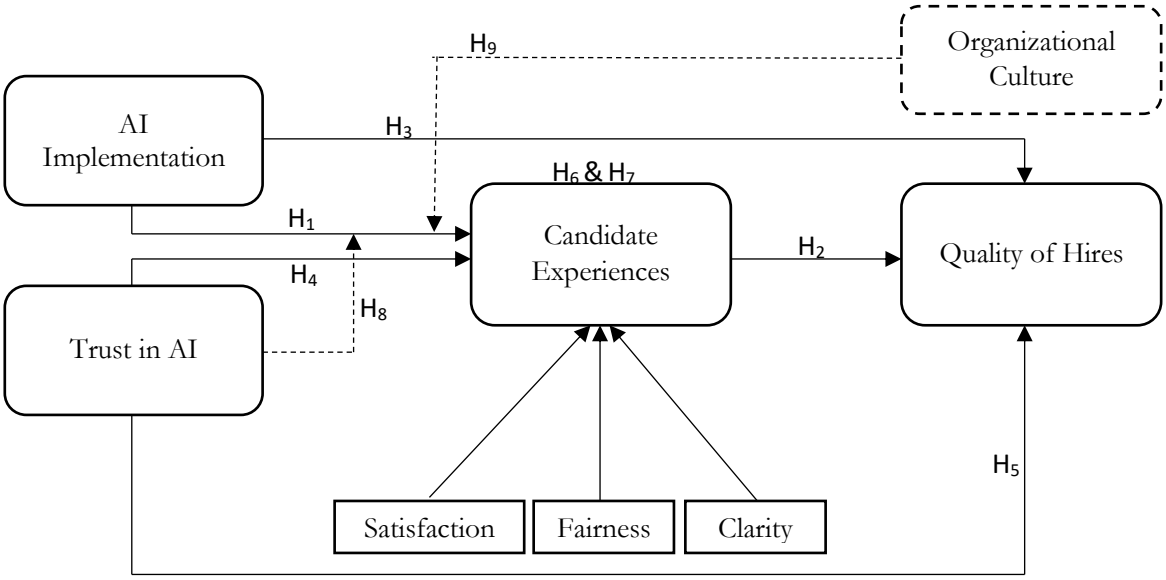

Figure 1. Research Framework

Research Methods

This study employed a quantitative research approach to examine the relationships among AI implementation, Trust in AI, organizational culture, candidate experience, and the quality of hires within the context of recruitment in Indonesia. The primary objective was to test the proposed conceptual model and associated hypotheses using empirical data collected from HR professionals across various industries in Indonesia. The quantitative approach enabled the measurement of relationships between variables and provided generalizable insights for the broader HR field (Hair et al., 2019).

The study's population included HR professionals and managers actively involved in recruitment and selection processes in Indonesian organizations. Purposive sampling was used to ensure the inclusion of respondents with direct experience and knowledge of AI-driven recruitment processes (Etikan, 2016). Data was collected using an online questionnaire distributed through email and social media platforms, targeting HR practitioners from small, medium, and large enterprises. A target of at least 300 usable responses was set to ensure sufficient statistical power and reliability of the findings.

The survey questionnaire was developed to measure the constructs outlined in the conceptual framework. Each construct was operationalized using multiple indicators drawn from prior validated scales, with slight modifications to fit the recruitment context in Indonesia. AI implementation was measured using items related to automation, data-driven decision-making, and efficiency in recruitment processes (Rožman et al., 2023; Sýkorová et al., 2024). Trust in AI was captured through items measuring perceptions of fairness, transparency, and bias in AI-driven recruitment (Jamaluddin, 2025; Novozhilova et al., 2024). Organizational culture was operationalized as innovation-oriented or traditional, focusing on the extent to which organizations supported technological adoption (Harianto et al., 2023; Hatidja et al., 2024; Syafriani et al., 2025).

The candidate experience construct was modeled as a second-order reflective construct comprising satisfaction, perceived fairness, and communication effectiveness. Reflective items for these dimensions were adapted from prior studies on recruitment and candidate experience (Balasundaram et al., 2022; Van Esch et al., 2021). By modeling candidate experience as a second-order construct, the study provided a holistic understanding of how its dimensions collectively influenced recruitment

outcomes. The quality of hires was assessed using metrics such as employee performance, job fit, and retention rates, as perceived by HR professionals (Xiong & Kim, 2025). Items for quality of hires were adapted from established recruitment literature to ensure content validity.

To address potential biases inherent in self-reported data, several measures were implemented (Koller et al., 2023). The questionnaire was carefully designed with neutral language to minimize social desirability bias. Anonymity and confidentiality were ensured throughout the data collection to encourage honest and accurate responses. Additionally, respondents were informed that their input would be used solely for research purposes. Despite these precautions, self-reported data remains a limitation of this study. Future research could address this limitation by triangulating self-reported responses with objective metrics, such as performance evaluations or retention statistics, to enhance the robustness of findings. These reflections on data limitations were integrated into the analysis and interpretation phases to account for potential biases in the results.

The data analysis used partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4.0 software. This approach was chosen for its robustness in handling reflective and second-order constructs and its suitability for complex models. The analysis included an assessment of convergent and discriminant validity, as well as reliability tests using Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE). Bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples was applied to test the significance of path coefficients.

The structural model was evaluated using goodness-of-fit (GoF) indices, including the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR), normed fit index (NFI), and chi-square/df ratio. To confirm model adequacy, an SRMR value below 0.08, an NFI above 0.90, and a chi-square/df ratio below 3.0 were used. Control variables, such as organization size, industry type, and HR professionals' experience levels, were included to account for contextual variations in the relationships among constructs.

Finally, the study adhered to ethical research standards, ensuring informed consent, voluntary participation, and anonymity. Ethical approval was obtained from an institutional review board (IRB), and respondents were informed of the research objectives and confidentiality protocols.

Results and Discussion

The demographic distribution of the study participants, as presented in Table 1, provides a comprehensive overview of the sample characteristics. The gender distribution reveals a higher proportion of male respondents (60%) than females (40%). Regarding job roles, the participants are evenly split, with 50% serving as HR managers and 50% as HR officers, ensuring balanced representation across decision-making levels. The industry distribution shows that most (55%) of respondents work in the manufacturing sector, while 45% are employed in the service sector, reflecting diversity in industrial contexts. Additionally, the participants have between 5 and 15 years of professional experience, as depicted in Table 1, indicating a sample of seasoned professionals with significant expertise in their roles. This demographic diversity enriches the study's findings by incorporating insights from professional backgrounds and industries.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

Category	Subcategory	Frequency (N=300)	Percentage (%)
Gender distribution	Male	180	60
	Female	120	40
Job role distribution	HR Manager	150	50
	HR Officer	150	50
Industry distribution	Manufacturing	165	55
	Service	135	45
Experience in years	Min Experience	-	5 yrs
	Max Experience	-	15 yrs

Source: Data processing

The descriptive statistics for the study variables, as summarized in Table 2, provide key insights into the central tendencies and variability of the data. The mean values indicate that AI implementation (M = 4.25, SD = 0.85) and candidate experience (M = 4.30, SD = 0.90) are perceived as moderately high, suggesting that participants view AI-driven recruitment processes positively. Trust in AI (M = 4.12, SD = 0.92) and organizational culture (M = 3.95, SD = 0.88) reflect mixed perceptions of fairness and the cultural adaptability of AI in recruitment. Lastly, the quality of hires (M = 4.40, SD = 0.89) indicates an optimistic evaluation of the recruitment outcomes facilitated by AI use. The range of scores (minimum = 1, maximum = 7) across all variables reflects the diversity of participant responses, contributing to the robustness of the findings.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
AI Implementation	4.25	0.85	1	7
Trust in AI	4.12	0.92	1	7
Organizational Culture	3.95	0.88	1	7
Candidate Experience	4.3	0.9	1	7
Quality of Hires	4.4	0.89	1	7

Source: Data processing

Measurement Model Evaluation

Table 3 presents the results of the convergent validity and reliability analysis for the study constructs. For AI implementation, trust in AI, organizational culture, and quality of hires, the factor loadings range from 0.75 to 0.91, exceeding the threshold of 0.70, indicating strong item reliability. The AVE values for all constructs are above the acceptable threshold of 0.50, demonstrating convergent validity, with AI implementation at 0.70, trust in AI at 0.72, organizational culture at 0.69, and quality of hires at 0.71. Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR) values for all constructs exceed 0.70, confirming internal consistency reliability. Candidate experience, modeled as a higher-order construct (HOC), does not report individual loadings or reliability metrics directly but is represented through its lower-order constructs. These results establish the reliability and validity of the measurement model, ensuring its appropriateness for subsequent structural analysis.

Table 3. Convergent Validity and Reliability

Construct	Item	Factor Loading	AVE	Cronbach's Alpha	CR
AI Implementation	AI1	0.82	0.7	0.88	0.91
	AI2	0.87			
	AI3	0.91			
Trust in AI	TAI1	0.8	0.72	0.9	0.93
	TAI2	0.85			
	TAI3	0.89			
	TAI4	0.79			
Organizational Culture	OC1	0.75	0.69	0.87	0.89
	OC2	0.8			
	OC3	0.85			
Candidate Experience (Higher-order construct)	CE1	1.00	-	-	-
Quality of Hires	QH1	0.84	0.71	0.89	0.91
	QH2	0.86			
	QH3	0.89			

Source: Data processing

Table 4 presents the discriminant validity results based on the Fornell-Larcker criterion. The diagonal values represent the square root of the AVE for each construct, which are higher than the inter-construct correlations in the corresponding rows and columns, demonstrating satisfactory

discriminant validity. For example, the square root of the AVE for AI implementation (AI) is 0.836, which is greater than its correlations with trust in AI (TAI) (0.671), organizational culture (OC) (0.620), candidate experience (CE) (0.705), and quality of hires (QH) (0.682). Similarly, candidate experience (CE) shows a square root of AVE of 1.000, which is higher than its correlations with other constructs, such as AI (0.705) and quality of hires (0.742). These results confirm that each construct is distinct from the others, supporting the validity of the measurement model.

Table 4. Discriminant Validity

Constructs	AI	TAI	OC	CE	QH
AI Implementation	0.836				
Trust in AI	0.671	0.849			
Organizational Culture	0.620	0.601	0.831		
Candidate Experience	0.705	0.721	0.632	1.000	
Quality of Hires	0.682	0.695	0.65	0.742	0.841

Source: Data processing

Table 5 validates the second-order construct, candidate experience, by examining its relationship with its first-order dimensions: satisfaction, perceived fairness, and communication effectiveness. Each first-order dimension consists of multiple items with strong loadings on the second-order construct, ranging from 0.75 to 0.88. for satisfaction, items such as S1 and S2 exhibit loadings of 0.85, while S3 and S4 load at 0.77 and 0.88, respectively, indicating consistent reliability. Similarly, perceived fairness has loadings between 0.75 (PF3) and 0.88 (PF1), confirming its robustness as a dimension of candidate experience. Communication effectiveness displays high loadings across items (0.82 to 0.83), reinforcing its contribution to the second-order construct. These results confirm that the sub-dimensions of candidate experience adequately converge to form a cohesive higher-order construct, demonstrating its validity and reliability in the model.

Table 5. Second-Order Construct Validation of Candidate Experience

1st Order Dimensions	Item Code	Loadings on 2nd Order Construct
Satisfaction	S1	0.85
	S2	0.85
	S3	0.77
	S4	0.88
Perceived Fairness	PF1	0.88
	PF2	0.76
	PF3	0.75
	PF4	0.84
Communication Effectiveness	CE1	0.82
	CE2	0.82
	CE3	0.83

Source: Data processing

Structural Model Evaluation

The results of the structural model evaluation are summarized in Table 6, which highlights the goodness-of-fit (GoF) indices used to validate the model's adequacy. The standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) value is 0.07, falling below the threshold of 0.08, indicating a good fit. Similarly, the normed fit index (NFI) exceeds the acceptable threshold of 0.90, with an observed value of 0.92, further supporting the model's fit. Finally, the chi-square/df ratio of 2.85 remains within the acceptable range of less than 3.0, signifying a strong balance between model complexity and data representation. These values collectively confirm that the model competes with the data, validating the structural and measurement models.

In addition to the GoF indices, the results of the multicollinearity check using the variance inflation factor (VIF) are also noteworthy. All constructs exhibit VIF values below the threshold

of 5, as presented in Table 7. AI implementation has a VIF of 2.5, while trust in AI and organizational culture have values of 2.2 and 1.8, respectively, reflecting low multicollinearity. Candidate experience, modeled as a higher-order construct, has the highest VIF of 3.0, but it remains within acceptable limits. Similarly, the quality of hires has a VIF of 2.7, confirming the absence of significant multicollinearity issues. These results ensure the robustness of the constructs and validate the independence of the regression analysis.

Table 6. Goodness-of-Fit (GoF)

Index	Threshold	Observed Value	Status
SRMR	<0.08	0.07	Good Fit
NFI	>0.90	0.92	Good Fit
Chi-Square/df	<3.0	2.85	Good Fit

Source: Data processing

Table 7. Multicollinearity Check

Constructs	VIF
AI Implementation	2.5
Trust in AI	2.2
Organizational Culture	1.8
Candidate Experience	3.0
Quality of Hires	2.7

Source: Data processing

Together, the GoF indices and multicollinearity results (Tables 6 and 7) provide strong evidence that the structural model is well-specified and demonstrates a robust fit with the observed data. This level of integration supports the reliability and validity of the findings, enhancing confidence in the study's conclusions.

Hypothesis Testing

The estimation results presented in Table 8 summarize the hypothesis testing outcomes, including direct effects, mediation effects, and moderation effects.

Table 8. Estimation Result

Hypothesis	Path	Coefficient	t-statistic	Significance
H1	AI → CE	0.45***	6.12	Supported
H2	CE → QH	0.38***	5.45	Supported
H3	AI → QH	0.30***	4.78	Supported
H4	TAI → CE	0.50***	7.21	Supported
H5	TAI → QH	0.42***	6.88	Supported
	Mediation Effect			
H6	AI → CE → QH	0.18***	4.58	Supported
H7	TAI → CE → QH	0.21***	5.32	Supported
	Moderation Effect			
H8	AI × TAI → CE	0.25***	3.25	Supported
H9	AI × OC → CE	0.29***	4.05	Supported

Note: *** sig. 1%
AI=AI Implementation; TAI=Trust in AI; OC=Organizational Culture; CE=Candidate Experience; QH=Quality of Hires.
Source: Data processing

AI Implementation and Candidate Experience

The findings support the hypothesis that AI implementation significantly enhances candidate experience, with a coefficient of 0.45 and a t-statistic of 6.12 (H1 supported). This result indicates

that organizations adopting AI in recruitment can positively impact how candidates perceive the recruitment process, particularly regarding satisfaction, perceived fairness, and communication effectiveness. Prior research by Vivek (2023) corroborates this, emphasizing AI's ability to streamline recruitment workflows, reduce biases, and foster transparency. In Indonesia, where recruitment processes often face inefficiencies, AI adoption represents a critical opportunity to address these issues (Silitonga & Isbah, 2023). Practical applications include using AI-powered chatbots to provide immediate responses and enhance communication, which aligns with candidates' expectations of modern hiring practices.

Candidate Experience and the Quality of Hires

Candidate experience significantly impacts the quality of hires, as evidenced by a coefficient of 0.38 and a t-statistic of 5.45 (H2 supported). This result confirms that a positive candidate experience leads to better hiring outcomes, supporting findings by Rehmert (2021), who noted that satisfied candidates are more likely to accept job offers and perform well in their roles. For organizations, this underscores the importance of fostering a recruitment process that prioritizes fairness, transparency, and effective communication (Sýkorová et al., 2024). In practice, companies in Indonesia can leverage AI to enhance these dimensions, ensuring that candidates perceive the process as engaging and professional. This, in turn, improves the quality of talent they attract and retain.

AI Implementation and the Quality of Hires

AI implementation directly influences the quality of hires, as indicated by a coefficient of 0.30 and a t-statistic of 4.78 (H3 supported). This finding aligns with Huang and Rust (2018), who highlighted that AI enhances hiring decisions by improving precision in matching candidate skills with job requirements. The adoption of AI-driven tools allows organizations to reduce human errors, eliminate biases, and streamline the selection process (Oman et al., 2024). In Indonesia, where recruitment often struggles with inefficiencies (Basalamah et al., 2020). AI provides an opportunity to optimize hiring practices, resulting in higher-quality candidates who better align with organizational needs. HR practitioners are encouraged to invest in AI solutions that support advanced data analysis and skill assessments to achieve these outcomes.

Trust in AI and Candidate Experience

The hypothesis that trust in AI positively affects candidate experience is strongly supported, with a coefficient of 0.50 and a t-statistic of 7.21 (H4 supported). Trust plays a critical role in shaping candidates' perceptions of AI-driven recruitment, particularly regarding fairness, transparency, and bias (Li et al., 2021). When candidates perceive AI systems as fair and reliable, they are more likely to engage positively with the recruitment process. This aligns with the technology acceptance model (TAM), which emphasizes trust as a key determinant of technology adoption (Davis, 1989; Rahwan et al., 2019).

In Indonesia, fostering trust in AI is especially important due to varying levels of digital literacy. Candidates unfamiliar with AI technology may view it skeptically, perceiving it as impersonal or biased. Organizations can address these concerns by ensuring transparency and explainability in their AI tools, such as providing clear explanations of how decisions are made and ensuring the system is free from bias (Budhwar et al., 2023). Additionally, timely and transparent feedback throughout the recruitment process enhances trust and improves candidate perceptions (Liehner et al., 2023).

Ultimately, building trust in AI not only enhances the candidate experience but also encourages broader AI adoption in recruitment. By prioritizing fairness and open communication, organizations can create recruitment processes that meet candidates' expectations while aligning with their goals for efficiency and inclusivity (Van Esch et al., 2019).

Trust in AI and the Quality of Hires

The results confirm that trust in AI significantly impacts the quality of hires, with a coefficient of 0.42 and a t-statistic of 6.88 (H5 supported). This finding aligns with Li et al. (2021), who

emphasized that trust in AI-driven recruitment processes fosters better alignment between candidates and organizational goals. When candidates trust AI systems, they are more likely to accept job offers and perform well in their roles, contributing to improved hiring quality (Liehner et al., 2023). Indonesian organizations must build trust by ensuring that AI tools are transparent, unbiased, and ethical. Implementing AI audits and communicating fairness measures to candidates can further enhance trust and lead to better hiring outcomes.

Mediating Role of Candidate Experience: AI Implementation on Quality of Hires

Candidate experience mediates the relationship between AI implementation and hiring quality, with an indirect effect coefficient of 0.18 and a t-statistic of 4.58 (H6 supported). This finding highlights the critical role of candidate experience in translating AI implementation's benefits into better hiring outcomes. Lo Piccolo et al. (2024) support this, emphasizing the importance of satisfaction, fairness, and communication in recruitment processes. Organizations adopting AI must optimize these dimensions of candidate experience to maximize the positive impact on hiring quality (Albaroudi et al., 2024). In practice, HR teams in Indonesia can use AI tools to provide personalized feedback and enhance communication, fostering a more engaging recruitment process.

Mediating Role of Candidate Experience: Trust in AI on Quality of Hires

The study confirms that candidate experience mediates the relationship between trust in AI and the quality of hires, with an indirect effect coefficient of 0.21 and a t-statistic of 5.32 (H7 supported). This result underscores the importance of trust as a foundational element in AI-driven recruitment processes. Candidates who trust AI perceive the process as fair and transparent, which enhances their overall experience and improves the likelihood of successful hiring outcomes (Liehner et al., 2023). Novozhilova et al. (2024) noted that trust in AI mitigates skepticism and fosters engagement, which is critical for achieving high-quality hires. For Indonesian organizations, this finding highlights the need to build trust through transparent communication and ethical AI practices.

Moderating Role of Trust in AI: AI Implementation on Candidate Experience

Trust in AI moderates the relationship between AI implementation and candidate experience, with a moderation effect coefficient of 0.25 and a t-statistic of 3.25 (H8 supported). This finding indicates that the positive effects of AI implementation on candidate experience are amplified when candidates trust the AI system. Glikson and Woolley (2020) emphasized that trust in AI mitigates concerns about algorithmic bias, enhancing satisfaction and engagement. In Indonesia, where skepticism toward AI may exist, organizations must invest in building trust to fully realize the benefits of AI-driven recruitment (Syafriani et al., 2025). Practical strategies include improving the transparency of AI systems and ensuring ethical data usage (Xiong & Kim, 2025).

Moderating Role of Organizational Culture: AI Implementation on Candidate Experience

The study finds that organizational culture moderates the relationship between AI implementation and the quality of hires, with a moderation effect coefficient of 0.29 and a t-statistic of 4.05 (H9 supported). Organizations with an innovation-oriented culture are more likely to leverage AI effectively, resulting in better hiring outcomes. Zhang et al. (2023) noted that cultural alignment is crucial in technological adoption and impacting organizational performance. For Indonesian firms, fostering an innovation-driven culture can maximize the benefits of AI in recruitment, improving both candidate experience and hiring quality (Rathore, 2023). HR leaders should focus on cultural audits and change management strategies to ensure readiness for AI adoption.

Interaction Effect

Figure 2 illustrates the moderating role of trust in AI on the relationship between AI implementation and candidate experience. When trust in AI is low, the positive effect of AI implementation on candidate experience is modest. This is consistent with findings by Glikson and

Woolley (2020), who emphasized that low trust in AI diminishes its perceived fairness and efficiency, thus limiting its effectiveness in improving recruitment processes. Conversely, when trust in AI is high, the effect of AI implementation on candidate experience becomes significantly stronger. Candidates with high trust in AI perceive recruitment processes as transparent and unbiased, as noted by Van Esch et al. (2019). This suggests that building trust in AI systems is critical for organizations aiming to enhance candidate experience through technology. Strategies such as increasing transparency, ensuring ethical AI usage, and mitigating algorithmic bias can foster trust, as highlighted by Roppelt et al. (2025). Addressing these concerns, organizations can better leverage AI to create a more engaging and satisfactory candidate experience.

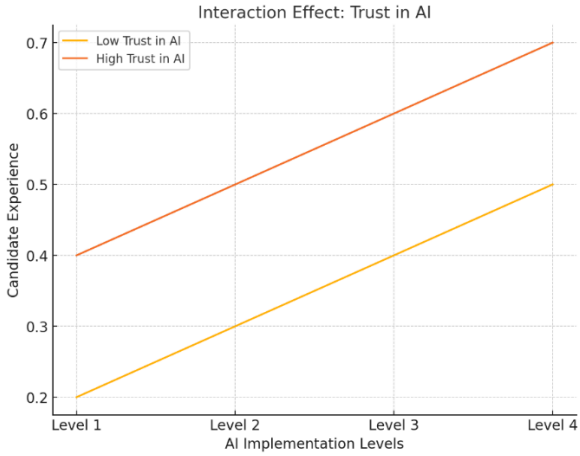

Figure 2. Interaction Effect of Trust and AI Implementation Level
Source: Data processing, 2024

Moreover, Figure 3 highlights the moderating role of organizational culture in the relationship between AI implementation and candidate experience. In organizations with a traditional culture, the positive effect of AI implementation on candidate experience is moderate. This aligns with research by Murire (2024), who found that traditional organizational cultures often resist technological innovations, limiting AI's potential benefits. In contrast, organizations with an innovation-oriented culture experience a much stronger improvement in candidate experience as AI implementation increases. Aldoseri et al. (2024) noted that innovation-friendly cultures foster greater acceptance of AI technologies, enabling these organizations to align technological advancements with their strategic goals better (Alam, 2025; Nahar, 2024; Sjödin et al., 2021). To capitalize on the advantages of AI, organizations must cultivate an innovation-driven environment by training employees, encouraging adaptability, and aligning organizational values with technological change, as recommended by Wang and Oscar (2024) and Zahidi et al. (2024).

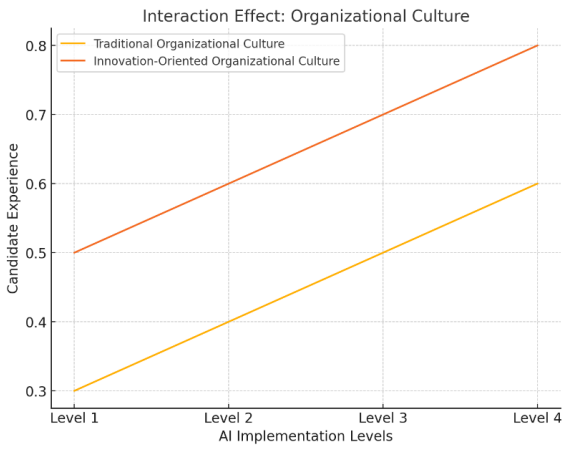

Figure 3. Interaction Effect of Organizational Culture and AI Implementation
Source: Data processing, 2024

Implication and Conclusion

This study offers significant insights into the role of AI implementation, trust in AI, organizational culture, and candidate experience in influencing the quality of hires in Indonesia. The findings confirm that AI implementation enhances both candidate experience and quality of hires, with candidate experience as a crucial mediator linking AI implementation and trust in AI to recruitment outcomes. Trust in AI and organizational culture further moderate these relationships, emphasizing their importance in maximizing AI's potential in recruitment.

Theoretical contributions include the conceptualization of candidate experience as a higher-order construct and the identification of trust in AI and organizational culture as moderating factors. Practically, the study provides actionable strategies for HR professionals, particularly in enhancing candidate experience. HR practitioners should focus on transparent communication during the recruitment process, provide timely feedback to candidates, and ensure fairness in AI-driven assessments. For instance, organizations like Unilever use AI to offer real-time updates and reduce bias, illustrating how technology can support candidate engagement and satisfaction. Additionally, fostering trust in AI through clear explanations of decision-making processes and aligning organizational culture with innovation are key strategies to optimize recruitment outcomes.

Expanding on HR practices, this study highlights the importance of leveraging AI to create a positive candidate experience, directly influencing the quality of hires. Building candidate trust through transparent algorithms and providing user-friendly platforms are essential steps. Organizations should also invest in training HR teams to use AI tools effectively and align recruitment practices with broader organizational values to ensure a cohesive and inclusive hiring process.

However, the study has limitations. The reliance on self-reported data introduces potential biases, which future research could address by integrating objective metrics, such as performance evaluations or retention rates. The cross-sectional design limits causal inferences, and longitudinal studies are recommended to explore dynamic effects. Additionally, the focus on Indonesia restricts generalizability; future research should expand to diverse cultural and industrial contexts to strengthen findings. Moreover, future studies should explore the ethical challenges of AI in recruitment, including algorithmic bias, transparency, and data privacy concerns. These challenges are critical to building trust in AI and ensuring its fair and equitable implementation. Investigating how organizations address these ethical concerns will provide deeper insights into the responsible use of AI in recruitment practices.

In conclusion, this study underscores the transformative potential of AI in recruitment, highlighting the importance of trust, candidate experience, and cultural alignment. By implementing transparent and fair AI systems, fostering innovation-driven cultures, addressing ethical concerns, and enhancing candidate engagement, HR professionals can create more effective and equitable recruitment practices that drive organizational success and candidate satisfaction.

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