
A STUDY ON TRADITIONAL HIRING AND ATS-BASED HIRING IN INDIAN COMPANIES

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In the modern world, recruitment plays an important role in organizational success by helping companies select suitable employees. In recent years, recruitment practices in India have changed significantly due to the adoption of digital technologies and Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS). Traditional hiring mainly depends on manual processes and human judgment, while ATS-based hiring automates activities such as resume screening, candidate tracking, and interview scheduling.

The present study compares traditional hiring and ATS-based hiring practices in Indian companies. The study focuses on factors such as recruitment speed, cost, efficiency, candidate experience, and quality of hiring. The research is based on both primary and secondary data collected through questionnaires, journals, research papers, and online sources.

The findings show that ATS-based hiring improves recruitment efficiency, reduces hiring time, and supports large-scale recruitment. Traditional hiring, however, remains effective for assessing interpersonal skills and cultural fit. The study concludes that a combination of technology and human involvement can provide better recruitment outcomes for organizations.

Keywords: Recruitment, ATS Hiring, Traditional Hiring, Human Resource Management, Recruitment Efficiency.

INTRODUCTION

Recruitment is one of the most important functions of Human Resource Management because organizational success largely depends upon the quality of employees hired. In a competitive and technology-driven business environment, organizations continuously seek efficient methods to attract, evaluate, and select talented candidates. Recruitment has evolved significantly over the years from manual and paperwork-based processes to digital and automated hiring systems.

Traditional hiring refers to the conventional recruitment process where recruiters manually manage activities such as job advertising, resume collection, screening, interview scheduling, and candidate selection. This method emphasizes face-to-face interaction and human judgment throughout the recruitment process. Traditional recruitment methods have been widely used for decades and continue to be relevant, especially for small organizations and specialized hiring.

With technological advancement and digital transformation, organizations have increasingly adopted Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) to streamline recruitment activities. ATS-based hiring refers to the use of software applications that automate and manage various stages of recruitment such as resume screening, candidate tracking, interview scheduling, communication, and reporting. ATS enables recruiters to handle large volumes of applications efficiently while reducing administrative workload and hiring time.

In India, the growing adoption of ATS is influenced by factors such as increasing competition for talent, digitalization of HR practices, remote hiring trends, and the need for faster recruitment processes. Large corporations, IT firms, startups, and multinational companies are increasingly integrating ATS platforms into their recruitment systems.

Despite the benefits of ATS-based hiring, traditional recruitment methods still hold importance due to their human-centred approach and ability to assess soft skills, communication abilities, and cultural fit. Therefore, organizations often face challenges in deciding which recruitment method is more effective.

The present study focuses on comparing traditional hiring and ATS-based hiring in Indian companies by analysing their efficiency, advantages, limitations, and impact on recruitment outcomes.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

In the modern business environment, organizations are continuously seeking effective and efficient recruitment methods to attract and select suitable candidates. Traditional hiring methods, which rely heavily on manual screening, paperwork, and human judgment, often consume significant time, cost, and administrative effort. At the same time, the increasing adoption of Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) has transformed recruitment practices by introducing automation, digital screening, and data-driven hiring processes.

However, despite the growing use of ATS in Indian companies, several concerns still exist regarding recruitment quality, candidate experience, human interaction, and fairness in selection. Traditional hiring allows better personal evaluation and communication, whereas ATS-based hiring improves speed and efficiency but may overlook suitable candidates due to keyword-based screening.

Therefore, there is a need to compare traditional hiring and ATS-based hiring practices to understand their advantages, limitations, and overall effectiveness. The present study attempts to analyse both recruitment methods in terms of efficiency, cost, accuracy, candidate experience, and organizational suitability in the Indian corporate sector.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To understand the concept and process of traditional hiring and ATS-based hiring in Indian companies.
- To compare the efficiency of traditional hiring and ATS in terms of time, cost, and accuracy.
- To analyse the candidate experience and quality of hire in both recruitment methods.
- To examine the quantitative efficiency such as time-to-hire, recruitment cost, and application processing.
- To identify the challenges faced by organizations while using traditional hiring and ATS-based hiring.

LITERATURE REVIEW

- Davis (2020), in the study *"Recruitment Efficiency Metrics in Traditional and ATS Hiring"*, analysed recruitment indicators such as time-to-hire and cost-per-hire. The findings showed that ATS significantly reduces recruitment cycle time by automating resume screening and interview scheduling. Traditional hiring was found to involve higher administrative costs because of manual processes. The study concluded that ATS-based hiring provides better operational efficiency and data-driven recruitment decisions.
- Taylor (2020), in the study *"Candidate Experience in Traditional and ATS-Based Hiring Systems"*, compared candidate satisfaction under both hiring methods. The research found that traditional hiring provides better personal interaction and emotional connection. ATS hiring improves communication through automated emails and application tracking systems. The study concluded that organizations should combine automation with human interaction to improve candidate experience.
- Brown (2019), in the research study *"Evolution of Recruitment Practices in Modern Organizations"*, analysed the shift from traditional recruitment to ATS-based hiring. The study highlighted that traditional hiring is slow due to paperwork and manual coordination, whereas ATS provides centralized data storage and real-time applicant tracking. ATS improves transparency and scalability in recruitment. However, lack of personalization and algorithmic bias were identified as major limitations.
- Kumar (2019), in the research titled *"Recruitment Practices in Emerging Economies"*, studied ATS adoption in developing countries. The research found that traditional hiring is still common in small businesses due to limited technological readiness. ATS adoption is increasing among multinational companies because it improves recruitment analytics and data management. The study concluded that gradual ATS integration can improve recruitment efficiency in emerging economies.
- Smith (2018), in the study titled *"Traditional Hiring Methods and ATS-Based Recruitment Systems"*, explained that traditional hiring mainly depends on manual resume screening and recruiter judgment, which may create inconsistency and bias. ATS-based hiring improves recruitment efficiency through automated screening and candidate ranking. The study found that ATS reduces hiring time and administrative workload. However, excessive dependence on ATS may overlook qualified candidates whose resumes lack keywords.
- Johnson (2018), in the study *"Bias and Fairness in Recruitment Systems"*, examined the issue of bias in recruitment methods. The study revealed that traditional hiring is more prone to unconscious human bias due to subjective decision-making. ATS systems help reduce bias by using standardized screening criteria. However, the study warned that poorly designed algorithms may also create unfair recruitment outcomes.

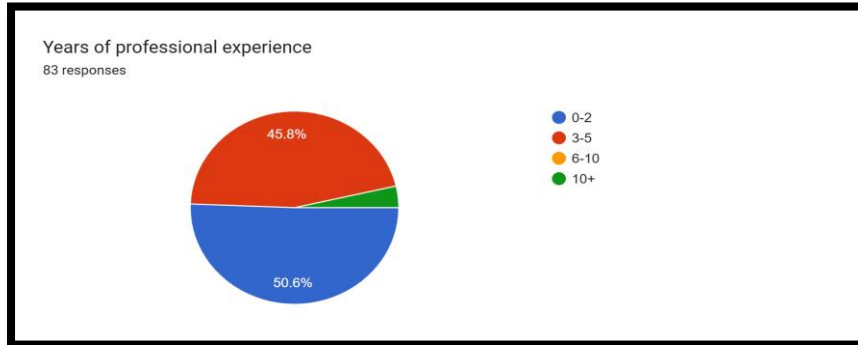
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is based on a descriptive research design and focuses on comparing traditional hiring and ATS-based hiring practices in Indian companies. The study aims to analyse the efficiency, cost, candidate experience, and overall effectiveness of both recruitment methods. The research is based on both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data was collected through structured questionnaires distributed among HR professionals, employees, recruiters, and job seekers, while secondary data was collected from research papers, academic journals, books, websites, and industry reports. The study was conducted using a selected sample of

respondents from different sectors. The collected data was analysed using percentage analysis, tables, charts, and interpretative methods to present meaningful findings and conclusions regarding recruitment practices in Indian organizations.

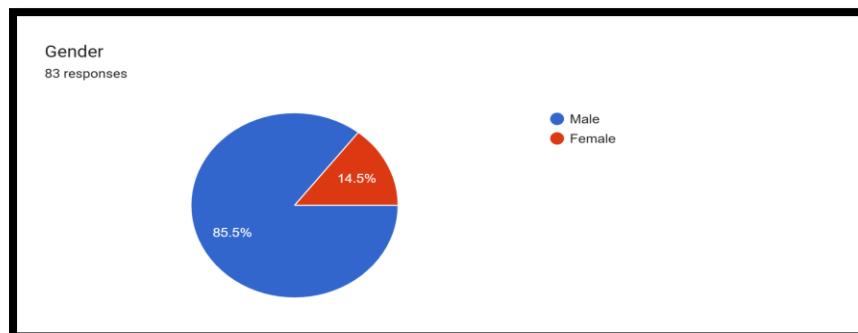
DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

1. Years of professional experience?



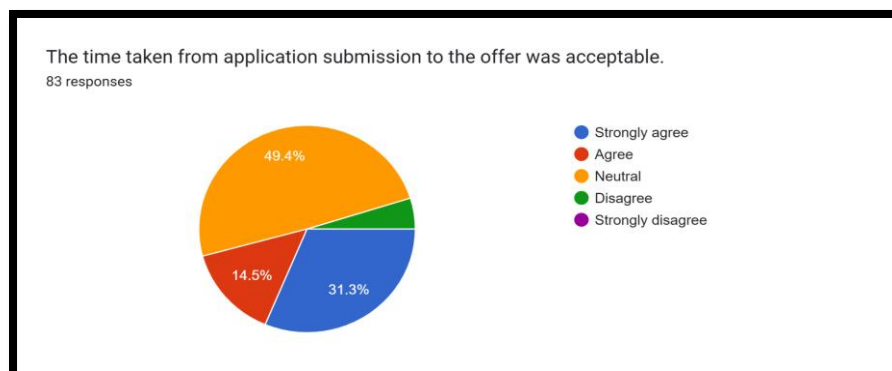
The data reveals that 50.6% of respondents have 0–2 years of professional experience, indicating that the majority of participants are freshers or individuals at the initial stage of their careers. Around 45.8% of respondents belong to the 3–5 years of experience category, showing a significant representation of mid-level professionals with moderate industry exposure. Only 3.6% of respondents have 10 or more years of professional experience, reflecting limited participation from highly experienced professionals in the study.

2. Gender ?



The data indicates that 85.5% of respondents are male, showing that male participants constitute the majority of the sample selected for the study. In comparison, only 14.5% of respondents are female, reflecting comparatively lower participation of female respondents in the research. This distribution suggests that the study is largely represented by male professionals.

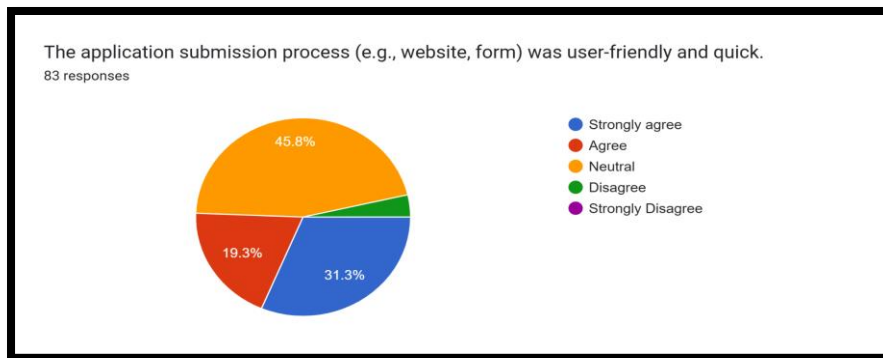
3. The time taken from application submission to the offer acceptable?



The findings reveal that 49.4% of respondents remained neutral regarding the time taken from application submission during the recruitment process. Around 31.3% of respondents strongly agreed that the time taken was satisfactory, while 14.5% agreed with the recruitment duration. However, only 4.8% of respondents

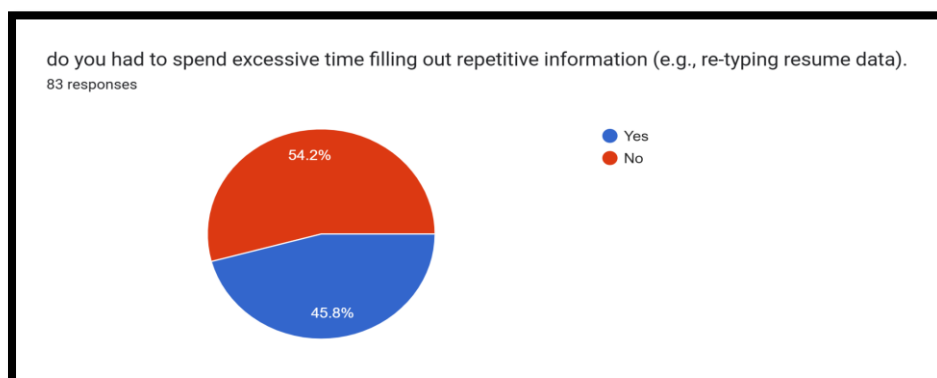
disagreed, indicating dissatisfaction with the time taken from application submission. Overall, the data suggests that most respondents were either satisfied or neutral regarding the recruitment processing time.

4. The application submission process (e.g., website, form) was user-friendly and quick?



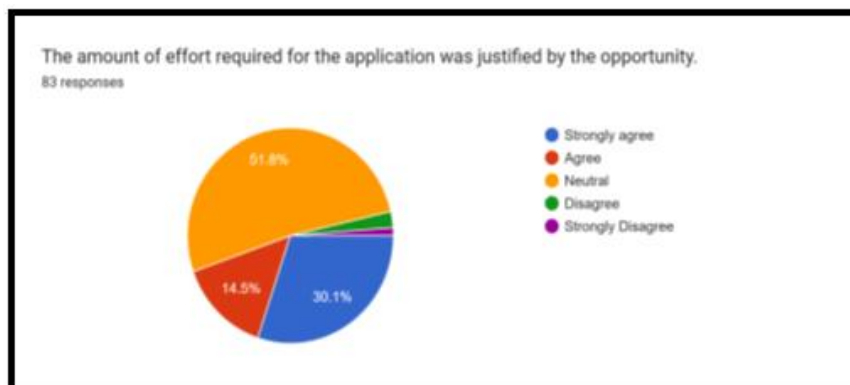
The data indicates that 45.8% of respondents remained neutral regarding whether the application submission process, such as the website or application form, was user-friendly and quick. Around 31.3% of respondents strongly agreed that the process was convenient and efficient, while 19.3% agreed with the ease of the application process. Only 3.6% of respondents disagreed, indicating dissatisfaction with the application submission experience. Overall, the findings suggest that most respondents had a positive or neutral perception of the application process.

5. Do you have to spend excessive time filling out repetitive information (e.g., re-typing resume data)?



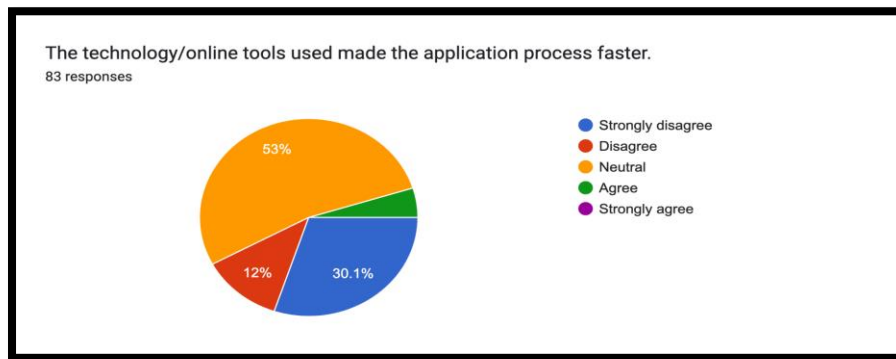
The findings reveal that 54.2% of respondents did not have to spend excessive time filling out repetitive information such as re-entering resume details, indicating that the application process was comparatively smooth and user-friendly for most participants. This suggests that certain recruitment platforms effectively used automated data extraction and simplified application forms. However, 45.8% of respondents reported spending excessive time filling out repetitive information, highlighting that a significant number of applicants still faced inconvenience during the recruitment process. This reflects the presence of inefficiencies in some hiring systems where resume parsing and data integration are not properly optimized.

6. The amount of effort required for the application justified by the opportunity?



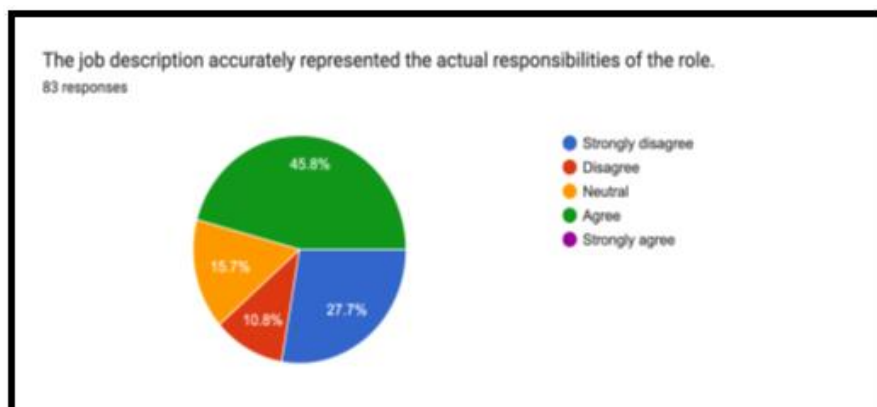
The data indicates that 51.8% of respondents remained neutral regarding whether the amount of effort required for the application process was justified by the opportunity provided. Around 30.1% of respondents strongly agreed, while 14.5% agreed that the effort involved in the application process was worthwhile. However, only 2.4% disagreed and 1.2% strongly disagreed with the statement. Overall, the findings suggest that most respondents considered the application effort reasonable or were neutral about the process.

7. The technology/online tools used made the application process faster?



The findings reveal that 53% of respondents remained neutral regarding whether the technology and online tools used made the application process faster. Around 30.1% of respondents strongly agreed that technology improved the speed and convenience of the application process, while 4.8% agreed with the statement. However, 12% of respondents disagreed, indicating that some applicants still faced challenges while using online recruitment tools. Overall, the data suggests that technology had a moderately positive impact on the application process.

8. Does the job description accurately represent the actual responsibilities of the role?

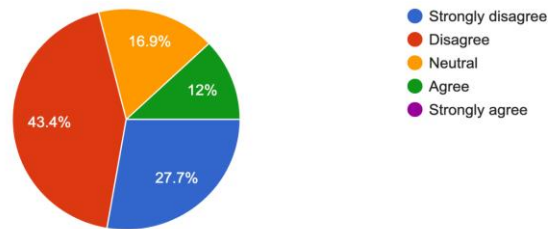


The data indicates that 45.8% of respondents agreed that the job description accurately represented the actual responsibilities of the role, while 27.7% strongly agreed with the statement. Around 15.7% of respondents remained neutral, whereas 10.8% disagreed. Overall, the findings suggest that most respondents felt that the job descriptions provided clear and accurate information about the role and responsibilities.

9. The selection steps effectively assessed my required skill?

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83 responses

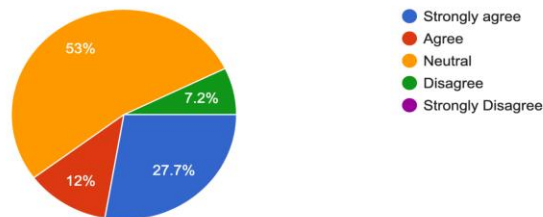


The findings reveal that 43.4% of respondents disagreed that the selection steps effectively assessed their required skills, while 27.7% strongly disagreed, indicating a largely negative perception of the evaluation process. Around 16.9% of respondents remained neutral, showing mixed opinions regarding the effectiveness of skill assessment. Only 12% of respondents agreed that the selection process properly evaluated their skills and abilities.

10. The recruitment process adequately assessed my cultural fit with the company?

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83 responses

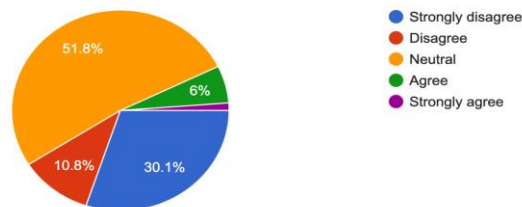


The data indicates that 53% of respondents remained neutral regarding whether the recruitment process adequately assessed their cultural fit with the company. Around 27.7% strongly agreed and 12% agreed that the process effectively evaluated their compatibility with the organization's culture. However, 7.2% of respondents disagreed, showing that a small proportion felt the assessment of cultural fit was inadequate.

11. The number of interview rounds/steps was appropriate for the seniority of the role?

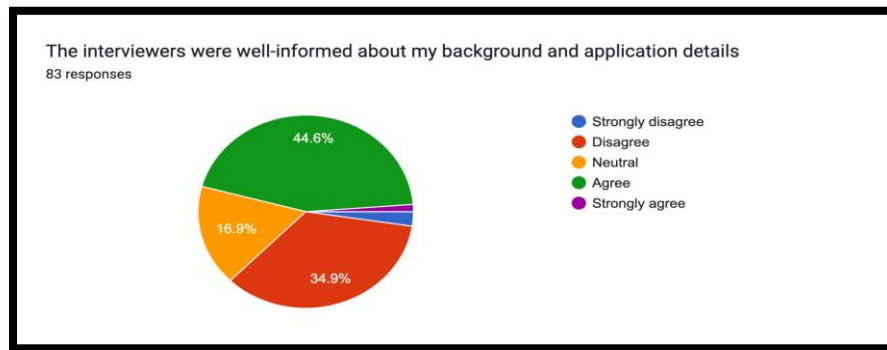
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83 responses



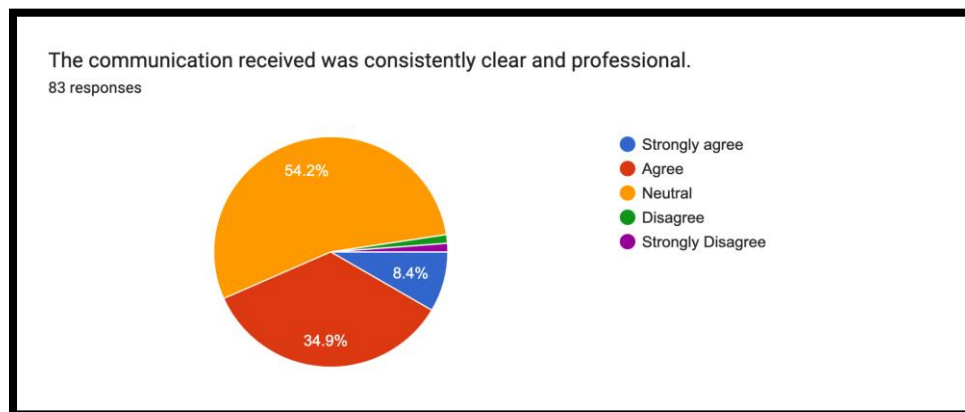
The findings reveal that 51.8% of respondents remained neutral regarding whether the number of interview rounds or selection steps was appropriate for the seniority of the role. Around 30.1% strongly disagreed and 10.8% disagreed, indicating dissatisfaction with the recruitment stages. Only 6% agreed and 1.2% strongly agreed that the number of interview rounds was suitable for the position offered.

12. The interviewers were well-informed about my background and application details?



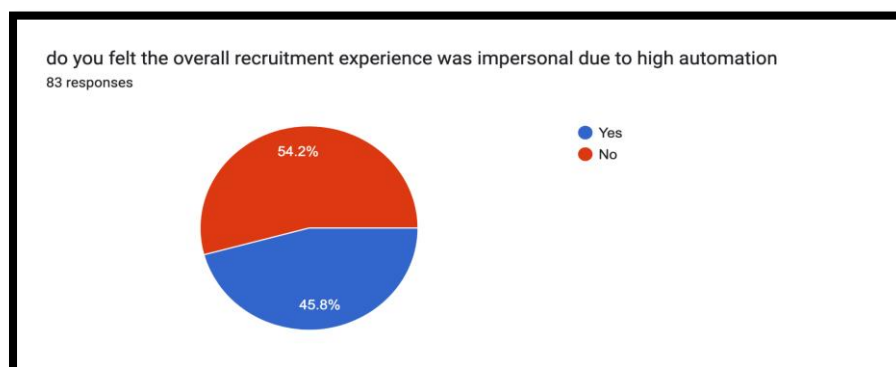
The data indicates that 44.6% of respondents agreed that the interviewers were well-informed about their background and application details, while 34.9% disagreed with the statement. Around 16.9% remained neutral, and only a very small percentage strongly agreed or strongly disagreed. Overall, the responses reflect mixed opinions regarding interviewer preparedness.

13. The communication received was consistently clear and professional?



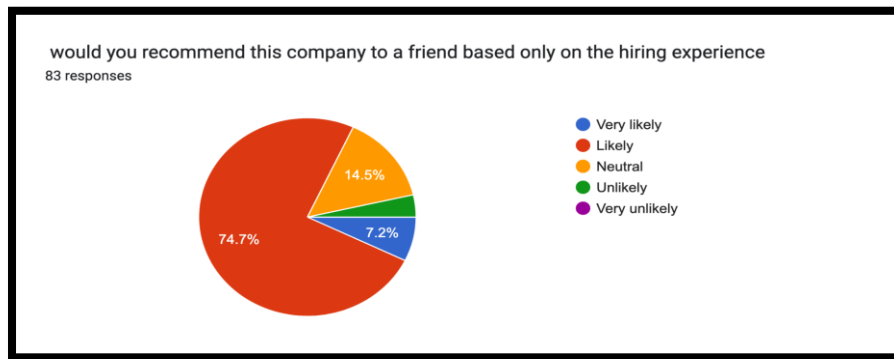
The findings show that 54.2% of respondents remained neutral regarding whether the communication received during the recruitment process was consistently clear and professional. Around 34.9% agreed and 8.4% strongly agreed with the statement, while only a very small percentage disagreed. Overall, the data reflects a generally positive perception of recruitment communication.

14. Do you feel the overall recruitment experience was impersonal due to high automation?



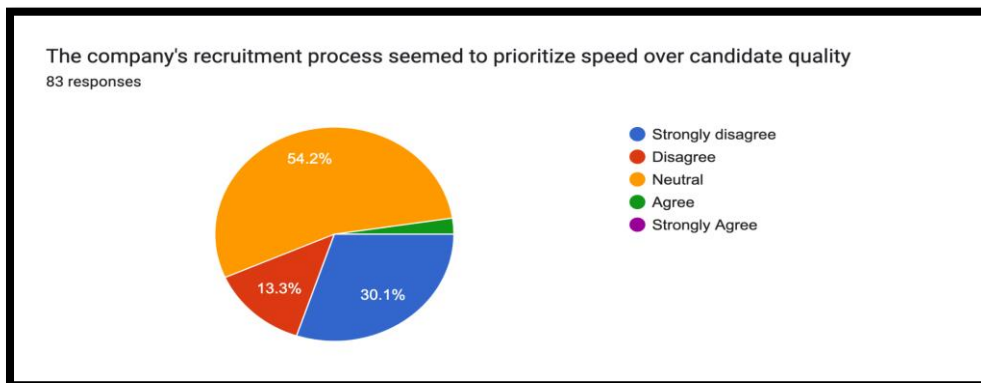
The findings reveal that 54.2% of respondents felt the recruitment experience was impersonal due to high automation, while 45.8% did not perceive automation as negatively affecting their recruitment experience. This indicates that although automated systems improve efficiency and speed, they may also reduce human interaction during the hiring process. Overall, candidates showed mixed opinions regarding the impact of automation on recruitment experience.

15. Would you recommend this company to a friend based only on the hiring experience?



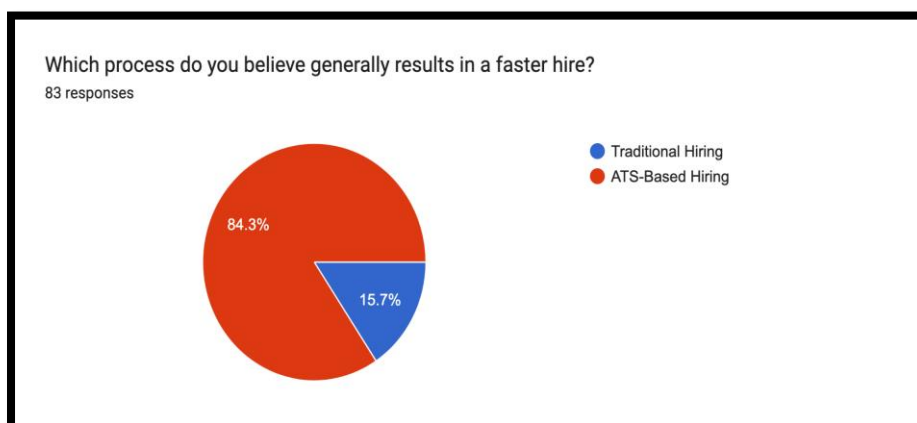
The findings show that 74.7% of respondents were likely to recommend the company to a friend based on the hiring experience, while 7.2% were very likely to recommend it. Around 14.5% remained neutral, and only 3.6% were unlikely to recommend the company. Overall, the data reflects a positive perception of the recruitment experience.

16. The company's recruitment process seemed to prioritize speed over candidate quality.



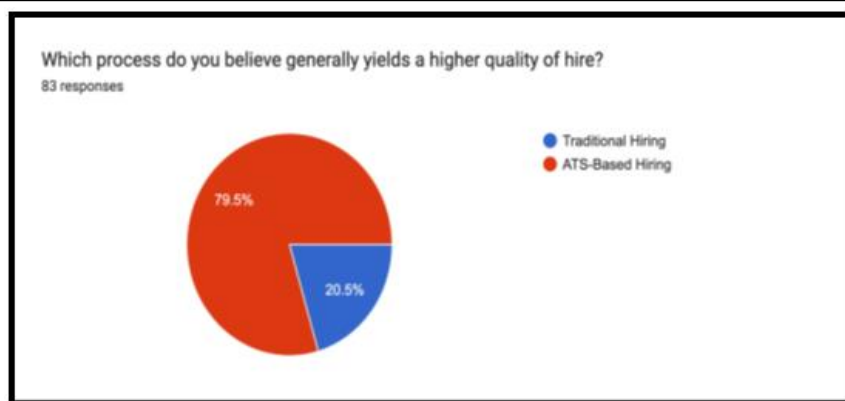
The findings reveal that 54.2% of respondents remained neutral regarding whether the company's recruitment process prioritized speed over candidate quality. Around 30.1% strongly disagreed and 13.3% disagreed with the statement, while only 2.4% agreed. Overall, most respondents did not strongly feel that recruitment speed was prioritized over candidate quality.

17. Which process do you believe generally results in a faster hire?



The findings show that 84.3% of respondents believed that traditional hiring results in a faster hiring process, while only 15.7% felt that ATS-based hiring is faster. This indicates a stronger preference for traditional recruitment methods in terms of hiring speed.

18. Which process do you believe generally yields a higher quality of hire?



The findings reveal that 79.5% of respondents believed that traditional hiring yields a higher quality of hire, while 20.5% preferred ATS-based hiring for better candidate selection. This indicates that most respondents trust personal evaluation and human judgment more than automated recruitment systems.

FINDING and SUGGESTION

- The majority of respondents believed that traditional hiring provides better quality of hire and faster recruitment compared to ATS-based hiring.
- Most respondents found the application submission process user-friendly and reasonably quick.
- A significant number of respondents felt that automated recruitment processes reduced personal interaction during hiring.
- Many respondents were dissatisfied with the effectiveness of selection steps in properly assessing their skills and abilities.
- The study revealed that candidates generally had a positive perception of communication and overall hiring experience.
- Organizations should combine ATS technology with human interaction to improve recruitment effectiveness.
- Companies should simplify application forms and reduce repetitive information entry during the application process.
- Recruitment systems should focus on better skill assessment methods to improve candidate evaluation.
- Organizations should maintain clear, timely, and professional communication throughout the recruitment process.
- Companies should regularly update ATS systems and recruitment strategies to improve fairness, efficiency, and candidate experience.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study highlights that both traditional hiring and ATS-based hiring play an important role in modern recruitment practices. Traditional hiring is preferred by many respondents because it allows better personal interaction, human judgment, and effective evaluation of candidate quality. Face-to-face communication and manual assessment help recruiters understand candidates more effectively, especially in evaluating interpersonal skills, cultural fit, and overall personality.

On the other hand, ATS-based hiring improves recruitment efficiency by reducing hiring time, simplifying application management, and supporting automated processes such as resume screening, candidate tracking, and interview scheduling. ATS systems are highly beneficial for organizations handling large-scale recruitment and high volumes of applications. They also improve data management, transparency, and consistency in the hiring process.

The study further reveals that although technology has made recruitment faster and more convenient, excessive automation may reduce the personal touch and emotional connection during the hiring process. Some respondents also felt that automated systems may not always effectively assess candidate skills and suitability.

Overall, the research concludes that neither traditional hiring nor ATS-based hiring alone is completely sufficient for modern organizational needs. Therefore, organizations should adopt a balanced recruitment approach by combining technological efficiency with human involvement. A hybrid hiring model can help

companies achieve better recruitment outcomes, improved candidate experience, fairness, and effective talent acquisition in the competitive business environment.

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