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**Artificial intelligence in recruitment
processes: impacts on employer branding
and perception of equity and inclusion**

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ABSTRACT

Modern firms increasingly recognize the importance of diversity and inclusion (D&I) strategies as essential to their success. An inclusive atmosphere that embraces individuals from many backgrounds fosters a healthy organizational culture, stimulates innovative thinking, and enhances productivity. The implementation of artificial intelligence (AI) in the selection process has substantial ethical concerns, including the potential to maintain or intensify existing biases. Effective and open communication is a crucial aspect in fostering trust and confidence with candidates and employees. Organizations can enhance perceptions of fairness and inclusiveness by successfully communicating their policies and processes, including their selection methods and the utilization of artificial intelligence. This study examines the ethical and transparent application of artificial intelligence to improve recruitment processes and strengthen corporate branding. The following study presents a comprehensive examination of the relationships among artificial intelligence, employer branding, equality, and inclusiveness. This is achieved through a quantitative analytical method involving the distribution of a questionnaire to a representative sample of employees and candidates, alongside a thorough literature review. Consequently, real recommendations have been offered to organizations seeking to integrate artificial intelligence (AI) into their recruitment processes ethically and transparently, thereby improving their standing as employers. This investigation addresses a critical gap in existing research by offering vital insights into the utilization of artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance recruitment methods and bolster business reputation, while simultaneously fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace. Furthermore, it provides valuable guidance to organizations seeking to attract and retain highly talented employees by effectively addressing the ethical and practical problems associated with the utilization of artificial intelligence in the recruitment process.

Moreover, this study provides a comprehensive analysis of the relationships among artificial intelligence, employer branding, equality, and inclusivity. This is achieved using a quantitative analytical method involving the distribution of a questionnaire to a representative sample of employees and candidates, together with an extensive literature review. Consequently, recommendations based on evidence have been offered to organizations seeking to integrate artificial intelligence (AI) into their recruitment processes ethically and transparently, thereby improving their reputation as employers. This investigation addresses a critical gap in existing research by offering vital insights into the utilization of artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance recruitment methods and bolster business reputation, while simultaneously fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace. Furthermore, it provides valuable guidance to organizations seeking to attract and retain highly talented employees by effectively addressing the ethical and practical problems associated with the implementation of artificial intelligence in the recruitment process.

CHAPTER I

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The revolutionary influence of artificial intelligence (AI) in technology and business has brought about significant changes in various fields, such as marketing and human resources. Specifically, AI has enhanced the efficiency and precision of commercial decision-making by equipping businesses with tools that facilitate the collection, analysis, and processing of vast quantities of data within a reduced timeframe. As a result, there are noticeable enhancements in the recruiting and selection procedures, as artificial intelligence (AI) is capable of automating intricate activities like resume screening, evaluating soft skills via automated video interviews, and matching skills with available openings using powerful machine learning algorithms. An essential element of utilizing AI in the recruitment process is its capacity to expedite the entire

procedure, hence diminishing the time required for applicant selection and enhancing the precision in identifying the most appropriate prospects. Companies can efficiently assess a larger number of candidates using a methodical approach that minimizes the influence of human bias. For instance, AI technologies like HireVue and Pymetrics employ advanced algorithms to scrutinize the facial expressions, tone of voice, and conduct of candidates during interviews, astutely assessing aspects that may not be readily discernible to a human recruiter. These methods enable users to identify soft skills, such as problem-solving and stress management, with enhanced objectivity (Langer et al., 2020). Nevertheless, the incorporation of AI into selection procedures also gives rise to substantial ethical concerns. Transparency is a crucial aspect of debate, since candidates may lack complete awareness of the extent to which algorithms impact recruiting decisions. Even when provided with information, they may not fully comprehend the precise influence of these technologies on the decision-making process. This situation has the potential to create a sense of mistrust between candidates and the company, particularly if the utilization of artificial intelligence is not effectively communicated in a transparent and comprehensible manner. Therefore, it is crucial to have transparency in the utilization of these technologies to establish trust with candidates and guarantee that the recruiting process is seen as just and unbiased (Rawlins, 2008). Furthermore, there is a potential for algorithmic bias to arise when artificial intelligence models replicate underlying biases present in the training data. This can result in outcomes that exhibit bias against specific social, ethnic, or gender groups, so compromising the principles of fairness and inclusivity that many organizations strive to uphold. Raghavan et al. (2020) highlight that without rigorous monitoring, AI has the potential to prolong and magnify pre-existing discrimination, rather than eradicating it. Another factor to consider is to inclusivity. If utilized correctly, AI has the potential to enhance the inclusivity of recruiting processes by impartially examining candidate data using objective criteria. Nevertheless, for this to occur, it is imperative that corporations adopt ongoing surveillance measures for their algorithms, guaranteeing that they do not exhibit cultural or societal prejudices. Google has made substantial investments in monitoring and optimizing algorithms to guarantee that its selection methods align with their diversity and inclusion policies (Jeske & Shultz, 2016).

To comprehend the dynamics and the positions of firms concerning the use of such technologies, it is beneficial to engage in dialogue with many stakeholders, irrespective of their operational sectors. In the discussion with Paolo Traisci, CEO of Alisped Logistic SRL, a notably reflective and critical perspective surfaced concerning the implementation of artificial intelligence (AI) tools in logistics and international shipping. Traisci reports that Alisped's parent business in Montreal has resolved to prohibit the utilization of AI within the organization, citing privacy issues and the potential for personal data breaches resulting from the adoption of such technology. Traisci articulated that the parent corporation "harbors skepticism regarding the utilization of AI," notwithstanding its promise, "apprehensive that its ramifications on privacy may prove challenging to regulate." He referenced Microsoft Copilot, a component of the Microsoft 365 suite, as a potential initial step for integrating AI technologies into business processes, while emphasizing that no definitive decisions have been reached: "Copilot could serve as a starting point, but no clear decision has been made at this time."

Another significant issue that Traisci emphasized is to the absence of transparency among AI technology suppliers. He stated, "No companies are currently fully transparent regarding the benefits and risks associated with AI." This aspect significantly hinders the widespread implementation of these technologies, since the ambiguity regarding potential outcomes, both beneficial and detrimental, inhibits firms from fully trusting these tools. "I still do not observe a definitive intention for a global proliferation of these products," he stated, alluding to the lack of a genuine commitment from AI software businesses to advocate for these tools explicitly and thoroughly. Notwithstanding these hurdles, Traisci was highly supportive of integrating artificial intelligence into his organization's business operations. He posits that AI might signify a revolution like to that initiated by the Office suite, emphasizing how applications like Excel and PowerPoint have fundamentally altered data and information management in organizations. He asserted that artificial intelligence may represent the paramount innovation of our day, equivalent to the impact of email and Excel, perceiving AI as possessing the capacity to markedly enhance operational and decision-making efficiency. He also recognized that the implementation of artificial intelligence tools

necessitates adequate training programs for employees, especially those not belonging to the younger age. Traisci observed that older personnel can exhibit reluctance or apprehension towards the adoption of new technology, emphasizing that AI could be seen with suspicion by individuals less familiar with technical advancements. His primary issue pertains to the necessity of implementing a "targeted training path" alongside the introduction of AI, which directs people towards a more informed and assured management of new technologies and their roles within the firm. He contends that it is feasible to alleviate apprehensions and facilitate a seamless and incremental transition to innovation.

In an interview with Alpha Sonko, HR Business Partner Manager for Commercial Functions at Fater, a joint venture between Procter & Gamble and Angelini Industries, significant insights were revealed on the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) tools in major enterprises. At Fater, Sonko stated, "we are among the initial companies to implement Microsoft Copilot," the new AI-driven assistant integrated into the Microsoft 365 suite, "albeit in a trial capacity." This enables us to engage individual users, thereby affirming the company's leadership in the introduction of innovative solutions. He noted that "regarding recruitment processes, AI tools still exert a minimal influence," since CV screening operations are primarily conducted by human recruiters. Sonko emphasized that dependence on educated professionals for applicant evaluation remains prevalent: "We continue to favor reliance on trained professionals in candidate screening."

Nonetheless, he acknowledged the prospective capabilities of AI in the future, particularly with the reduction of operational time. According to Sonko, AI tools will enable employees to concentrate on strategic elements of their work instead of engaging in repetitive and time-consuming tasks. "Such tools can be highly beneficial in the future, as they would permit employees to minimize time spent on operational processes and emphasize more strategic facets of our work." At Fater, AI is utilized in interview management, employing digital technologies to schedule and enhance agendas, hence increasing organizational efficiency.

In terms of privacy and security, Sonko had significantly greater confidence than

numerous other critics of AI deployment. He stated, “I do not perceive AI as an adversary capable of compromising my sensitive data, but rather as an ally.” This assurance also arises from adherence to European data protection standards, such as the GDPR, which guarantee a sufficient level of security against potential breaches: “From a legal perspective, European regulations, such as the GDPR, safeguard us against violations.” Sonko noted that the present digitization environment, characterized by the emergence of social networks like LinkedIn and Instagram, has compelled professionals to share personal data inevitably.

For Sonko, a crucial element is the necessity of training and equipping AI to aid in applicant selection without replacing human discernment: “AI tools must be trained and prepared to identify candidates who genuinely merit employment.” He emphatically reaffirmed that AI must serve as a tool rather than a goal, asserting that the ultimate choice should invariably rest with a professional: “The selection of candidates should always be concluded by a professional, albeit one who is assisted and supported by a machine.” This equitable perspective affirms the notion that AI serves as a tool to assist, rather than supplant, the essential "human touch" required to guarantee a favorable candidate experience.

Sonko reflected on prior experiences, noting that some organizations attempted to fully automate recruitment processes with artificial intelligence, only to recognize the indispensable role of human involvement. “I have been employed by companies that attempted to fully automate recruitment processes through artificial intelligence, only to recognize that the human element is and will perpetually be essential.” For him, a candidate receiving a personal phone call instead of an automated email will experience a significant difference, and this form of human engagement enhances business branding. A candidate's experience is significantly enhanced when receiving a phone call from a someone rather than an automated email, as this fosters robust corporate branding.

This methodology aligns seamlessly with Fater's business ethos, recognized for its "People First" strategy that prioritizes employees throughout its management tactics. Fater has incorporated the notion of person-centeredness not only in human resource management but also throughout the recruitment and selection process, fostering an inclusive atmosphere that prioritizes the well-being of its employees. The "People First"

philosophy posits that employee well-being is essential for corporate success and for sustaining elevated levels of performance, creativity, and market reputation.

Contemporary businesses are progressively seeking individuals who possess a global perspective and comprehend the significance of residing and operating in varied cultural environments. The experience of residing and working in a foreign country is frequently linked with the proficiency in a second language and the cultivation of cross-cultural sensitivity, both of which are highly beneficial to multinational corporations.

Individuals with these traits demonstrate a proclivity for receptiveness, a proficiency for embracing novel obstacles, and the capacity to adjust to unorthodox circumstances, rendering them well-suited for dynamic and ever-evolving work settings. A team consisting of individuals from various cultural backgrounds can make a substantial contribution to the overall harmony and effectiveness of the group. The presence of a wide range of experiences and viewpoints contributes to the enhancement of the overall knowledge pool, offering fresh ideas that can question existing conventions and foster creativity. Within this framework, diversity assumes the role of a strategic asset for organizations, empowering them to exhibit greater adaptability and durability when confronted with shifts in the market. Incorporating a wide range of individual backgrounds not only enhances the process of making decisions, but also enhances problem-solving by fostering greater creativity and determination. Moreover, recent research indicates that firms that effectively foster diversity and inclusion within their teams exhibit enhanced flexibility in adapting to market fluctuations and a heightened inclination to tackle obstacles with creativity and resolve. This results in enhanced organizational flexibility and heightened competitiveness. Teams that include personnel with diverse cultural backgrounds and specialized knowledge allow organizations to effectively target global markets by adopting an innovative strategy and predicting the demands of clients in various regions. Furthermore, when transparency practices are consistently integrated into daily business operations, there is a positive impact on employee motivation and engagement. A work environment that promotes transparency by openly communicating its accomplishments in diversity initiatives fosters increased employee engagement and a sense of belonging. This, in turn, enhances the overall performance of the company, not just in terms of productivity but also in terms of

innovation, as employees feel more secure in sharing ideas and suggestions without fear of judgment or discrimination. Moreover, the regular integration of transparency techniques into daily business operations has a favorable effect on employee motivation and engagement. An open and transparent work environment, where progress on diversity efforts is clearly communicated, encourages increased employee participation and a stronger sense of ownership. Consequently, this enhances the company's total performance, including both productivity and innovation, as employees become more self-assured in expressing ideas and proposals without apprehension of criticism or bias. Companies that transparently express their inclusion and diversity policies have a competitive edge in terms of reputation, since consumers and the public are becoming more conscious of ethical and socially responsible practices. For instance, multiple studies indicate that young individuals, including Generation Z and Millennials, prefer organizations that exhibit a strong dedication to diversity, inclusiveness, and openness. These workers are looking for an employer that aligns with their own beliefs, and clear communication about how the company addresses these matters becomes an important tool for attracting and keeping such skilled individuals.

In this scenario, employer branding has become a key component in the marketing strategies of modern businesses, and it is becoming increasingly important. The reputation of a company as an employer, as well as its ability to attract, involve, and keep qualified workers, are all aspects that are addressed in this process. In a labor market that is becoming increasingly competitive, businesses need to differentiate themselves not just by the quality of the products and services they provide, but also by the way in which they prioritize the health and happiness of their employees within the company. A powerful and appealing employer brand has the potential to be the deciding factor in successfully attracting highly talented personnel. On the other hand, failing to create such a brand may result in the loss of attractive applications to other organizations. The establishment of an employer brand is based on several factors, including the company's values, the culture of the organization, the opportunities for professional growth, and, increasingly, the corporate policies regarding diversity and inclusion. To develop a powerful employer brand, it is necessary to maintain a consistent commitment to building and maintaining a positive and authentic reputation that is in accordance with the values held by both potential new hires and current

employees. As a means of boosting company branding and supporting diversity and inclusion efforts, effective communication is among the most important factors. The establishment of communication that is both open and honest is necessary to cultivate trust and credibility among both current employees and potential employees. The extent of openness in corporate communications, particularly about the selection processes and the application of artificial intelligence, has the potential to have a significant influence on the way in which candidates and employees perceive the company. Not only do companies that communicate their policies and processes in a way that is both effective and transparent develop a reputation for being honest and responsible, but they also demonstrate a commitment to establishing an environment that is both diverse and just in the workplace. Inadequate transparency, on the other hand, can lead to mistrust, skepticism, and a bad opinion of the company, all of which are detrimental to branding efforts and efforts to encourage inclusion. When it comes to incorporating AI into their selection processes, organizations face several problems as well as possibilities. Artificial intelligence can automate laborious processes associated with the selection of applicants, analyzing vast amounts of data to arrive at the profiles that are the most suitable, and reducing the amount of human bias that is present in the selection process. On the other hand, artificial intelligence can perpetuate or even exacerbate underlying prejudices, which might give rise to discriminatory and unfair judgments if it is not applied in the appropriate manner. Considering this, it is of the utmost importance for businesses to incorporate artificial intelligence (AI) into their talent acquisition processes in a transparent manner, while also retaining a strong emphasis on ethical issues. To instilling confidence in applicants and staff regarding the fairness and inclusiveness of selection methods, it is vital to provide openness in the employment of artificial intelligence. To demonstrate their commitment to transparency and objectivity, businesses are expected to properly communicate the techniques and aims of their use of artificial intelligence (AI).

When applied with prudence and competence, the deployment of AI has the potential to significantly improve the efficiency of diversity and inclusion initiatives. It is possible for businesses to make use of artificial intelligence (AI) to supervise and improve their recruitment processes, therefore ensuring that they are fair and inclusive. An example of

this would be the use of artificial intelligence to aid in identifying any inconsistencies in the selection process and suggesting improvements to improve inclusion. Additionally, artificial intelligence may be applied to develop individualized training programs that are designed to improve employees' understanding and grasp of issues pertaining to diversity and inclusion. However, to ensure that these benefits are fully realized, it is essential that the use of AI be accompanied by communication that is both transparent and explicit. This communication should guarantee that the selection procedures are fair and comprehensive for both the candidates and the workers. A close relationship exists between the adoption of diversity and inclusion policies and the utilization of artificial intelligence (AI). Additionally, the ideas of employer branding and transparent communication are intimately tied to one another. An effective employer brand is dependent on how employees and job seekers perceive the business in terms of its employment practices, specifically how they perceive the firm to be equitable, inclusive, and open. Companies have a responsibility to make ongoing efforts to develop and maintain this image by effectively communicating their policies and practices and demonstrating a genuine devotion to diversity and inclusion. It is of the highest significance to ensure that there is openness in the communication of the use of artificial intelligence in the selecting process. Transparently exposing how organizations apply artificial intelligence has the potential to generate confidence and dependability, therefore reducing the worries of applicants regarding the impartiality of the selection procedures and the dependence on unbiased criteria. The use of artificial intelligence into the selection process has the potential to significantly impact how candidates and employees view the business. The use of artificial intelligence has the potential to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the selection process, hence reducing the amount of time and resources that are necessary to find the applicants who are the most suitable for the position. However, artificial intelligence has the potential to develop a sense of injustice and prejudice if it is deployed in an inappropriate manner, which would mean that the company's reputation as an employer that is unbiased and diverse would be compromised. To reduce the risk of these possible dangers, it is essential for businesses to adopt a transparent and accountable approach to the utilization of artificial intelligence (AI), by properly communicating the procedures and goals associated with the utilization of this technology.

One of the most important aspects of developing and maintaining a strong employer brand is the ability to communicate effectively. It is of the utmost importance for businesses to have the capacity to successfully and openly communicate their policies and practices, including topics such as the selection process and the application of artificial intelligence. By fostering confidence and credibility among employees and prospects, corporate communications that stress openness contribute to the enhancement of the company's reputation as an employer that is responsible and welcoming to all potential employees. For communication to be effective, it is necessary to maintain consistency, sincerity, and an emphasis on transparency. This demonstrates a genuine commitment to diversity, justice, and inclusion. Employer branding is more than just marketing; it is an all-encompassing strategy that incorporates all aspects of a company, such as the criteria for recruitment and selection, the methods for managing human resources, and the communication inside the company. To construct a powerful employer brand, it is necessary to make a continual effort to improve the employee experience, cultivate an inclusive workplace, and effectively convey the policies and practices of the corporation. Aspiring to develop a positive and authentic corporate culture that is congruent with the values of both current employees and prospective prospects is something that businesses should aim to do. When this is done, it will create an environment at work in which every single person is made to feel valued and treated with dignity.

To provide a summary, the incorporation of artificial intelligence into the selection process presents modern enterprises with a challenge as well as an opportunity. To properly manage this transformation, it is vital to have a complete grasp of the interaction that exists between technology, human perceptions, and communication strategies. It is necessary for businesses to find a middle ground between the efficiency and accuracy offered by artificial intelligence (AI) and the necessary precautions to take to maintain fair and comprehensive selection processes. It is crucial to preserve this equilibrium by fostering trust and establishing credibility with both future job seekers and current staff members. This may be accomplished by open and honest communication, as well as the promotion of a favorable image of the business. It is only through the adoption of an integrated strategy that takes into consideration all these

components that enterprises will be able to fully reap the benefits of artificial intelligence and develop a work environment that is diverse, inclusive, and exciting.

1.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Because of its potential to transform a wide range of sectors, including marketing and human resources, artificial intelligence (AI) has emerged as a significant focus in the research that is now being conducted. Artificial intelligence can improve the effectiveness and accuracy of decision-making processes in the selection and recruitment processes. This may be accomplished by minimizing the impact of human biases and maximizing the identification of individuals who possess a high level of qualifications (Liebowitz, 2020; Upadhyay & Khandelwal, 2018). The use of this strategy has the potential to reduce the amount of work that recruiters must do while also improving the accuracy of applicant selections. When it comes to the use of artificial intelligence in recruitment, the literature has brought attention to various difficulties connected to equality, openness, and inclusion (Binns, 2018; Raghavan et al., 2020; Mehrabi et al., 2021). This is despite the initial enthusiasm that was generated using AI. According to the findings of study carried out by Upadhyay and Khandelwal (2018), artificial intelligence may be able to reinforce the biases that are present in the data that it is trained on, which might lead to discriminatory judgments whenever there is insufficient human supervision. The use of artificial intelligence in selection processes has been the subject of a number of studies, which have led to the discovery of both potential benefits and potential difficulties. An investigation that was carried out by Van Esch et al. (2019) highlighted the potential of artificial intelligence to improve operational efficiency by reducing the amount of time spent screening candidates. Despite this, the research highlights the significance of openness and human supervision in order to ensure that decisions are made in a fair manner. In a similar vein, Leicht-Deobald et al. (2019) did a study that emphasized the significance of enacting rules that restrict the utilization of artificial intelligence in order to prevent discrimination. Several studies, such as the ones carried out by Dastin (2018) and Ajunwa

et al. (2016), have shown that artificial intelligence has the potential to reinforce preexisting prejudices if it is not created and regulated with great care. According to O'Neil (2016), an artificial intelligence system has the capability of acquiring information from historical data that demonstrates prejudices against particular racial or gender groups, hence perpetuating these prejudices in subsequent decision-making processes. This is an example of how the system may learn such knowledge.

Binns (2018) stressed the importance of giving justice a higher priority in artificial intelligence systems. To ensuring accountability, they suggested that algorithmic decisions should be made public and easily understandable. Raghavan et al. (2020) carried out an investigation on the approach that can be taken to lessen the impact of bias in algorithmic hiring and presented a set of principles that can be utilized to improve the fairness of these processes. In their study, Mehrabi et al. (2021) gave a complete analysis of the many types of biases that might potentially influence artificial intelligence systems. Additionally, they proposed methods for recognizing and correcting these biases. The findings of these research underline the necessity of inventing algorithms that not only optimize efficiency but also respect the principles of equality and inclusion if they are to be used. It has been demonstrated by Ajunwa et al. (2016) and Dastin (2018) that artificial intelligence systems can perpetuate preexisting prejudices if they are not properly constructed and directed by humans. As an instance, Amazon was recently forced to terminate an AI-driven recruitment tool that shown prejudice against women. This highlights the need of building AI systems that are unbiased and inclusive from the beginning. As an illustration of the possible ethical and reputational repercussions that may befall businesses because of the careless adoption of artificial intelligence technology, this scenario serves as an example. In the body of research that has been conducted, the relevance of inclusion and equality (D&I) policies in organizations has been extensively addressed. According to the findings of a research conducted by McKinsey in the year 2020, businesses that successfully implement diversity and inclusion (D&I) strategies are expected to outperform their rivals in terms of both innovation and productivity. According to Herring's research from 2009, which discovered a positive association between diversity and business performance, this result is backed by the findings of the research. In a study that was carried out by Shore et al.

(2018), the researchers underlined the beneficial influence that an inclusive work environment has on the satisfaction of employees, their engagement, and the reputation of the organization. Furthermore, a study that was carried out by Catalyst (2020) indicated that businesses that have a greater proportion of women serving on their boards of directors tend to display stronger financial success. This research provides more evidence that diversity and inclusion policies are extremely important.

Within the context of corporate marketing strategies, the topic of employer branding has also been extensively researched and investigated. According to the findings of a study that was carried out by Backhaus and Tikoo (2004), employer branding is the collective perception that both prospective and current employees have regarding the reputation of the organization as an employer. Mosley (2015) highlighted the favorable influence that strong corporate branding has on attracting high-quality personnel and improving employee retention in a paper that was published not too long ago. According to Eger et al. (2019) and Collins & Kanar (2020), there is a close connection between diversity and inclusion policies and employer branding. This is because candidates tend to have a more favorable impression of firms that actively push for inclusion and justice. The significance of open and honest communication was another topic that was covered in the literature. According to the findings of a study that was carried out by Rawlins (2008), the degree of openness that is present in corporate communications has a beneficial influence on the amount of trust and engagement found among employees. When it comes to selection processes that involve the use of artificial intelligence, transparency is an extremely important factor since it helps relieve worries about bias and discrimination (Berkelaar, 2017; Gillespie et al., 2020). The findings of a study that was carried out by Shadbolt et al. (2019) indicate that candidates are more likely to see selection methods as fair when firms offer an effective description of the implementation and purpose of artificial intelligence. There is a growing interest in international recruitment, which is one of the increasing aspects in the literature. According to Collings et al. (2018) and Scullion et al. (2007), global companies are expanding their investments in the recruitment of individuals with global profiles in order to develop a workforce that is varied and accommodating of other perspectives. Following an investigation that was carried out by Stahl et al. (2010), it was discovered that foreign teams provide a wide

range of viewpoints and abilities that have the potential to drive innovation and creativity, hence boosting the success of businesses. Furthermore, a study that was carried out by Reiche et al. (2019) indicated that individuals who have had foreign experiences are more likely to exhibit advanced intercultural abilities. These talents are extremely useful for businesses that operate in global environments.

There is a significant body of research on artificial intelligence (AI), employer branding, and diversity and inclusion policies; however, only a limited number of studies have conducted in-depth research on the interaction between these components in the specific context of recruiting and personnel selection. For instance, Lee et al. (2019) performed a study that investigated the application of artificial intelligence (AI) in the selection of candidates. However, the study did not analyze how the impression of fairness and inclusion influences the branding of a firm. A similar study was carried out by Vrontis et al. (2020), which investigated the impact of company branding on staff retention. However, the researchers did not consider the function that transparent communication plays in the use of artificial intelligence. A number of other research, such those carried out by Faliagka et al. (2012) and Langer et al. (2020), have studied specific uses of artificial intelligence in the recruiting process; however, these studies have not completely incorporated equity and inclusion characteristics. As was said earlier, one further research issue that should be taken into account is the influence that openness in corporate communication has on the effectiveness of diversity and inclusion (D&I) programs. According to the findings of a study that was carried out by Brown et al. (2020), open and honest communication can improve the perceived feeling of fairness among workers. Further investigation is necessary, however, to get an understanding of the influence that this openness has on the branding of employers and the use of artificial intelligence (AI). In addition, the existing body of research has not adequately investigated the ways in which control variables, such as the level of candidate engagement and age, might have an impact on the relationship between the utilization of artificial intelligence and individuals' perceptions of employer branding. Previous research, such as that conducted by Bozeman and Kacmar (1997) and Cable and Judge (1994), has investigated control factors in a variety of contexts; however, these studies have not particularly investigated the link between control variables and artificial intelligence and recruitment branding.

Over the course of its whole, the study that has been conducted so far provides a basis for appreciating the benefits and challenges associated with the implementation of artificial intelligence in selection methods, the relevance of diversity and inclusion policies, and the crucial role that employer branding and clear communication play. Despite this, there are still significant shortcomings that need to be addressed. Specifically, there is a necessity for more extensive study exploring the association between the employment of artificial intelligence, the perspectives of equality and inclusion, and the reputation of employers. In addition, it is recommended that future research study the extent to which openness in corporate communication has the potential to reduce the impact of these linkages and influence the attitudes of both job hopefuls and currently employed individuals. These emerging traits offer a potentially fruitful field for further research in the future. This research may give crucial insights for businesses that are interested in using artificial intelligence into their selection procedures in a manner that is both ethical and transparent. In addition to this, it might be of assistance to businesses in integrating their employer branding strategy to create and maintain an inclusive working environment.

1.3 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The theoretical framework of this research is situated at the crucial intersection between the exploitation of advanced technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI), and human resource management strategies. The research focuses on employer branding, equity, and inclusion as its primary areas of investigation. There is a significant junction at this location. According to Brynjolfsson and McAfee (2014), the theory of automated decision-making claims that artificial intelligence has the potential to significantly increase the efficiency and accuracy of staff selection procedures. This is a proposition that is supported by the theory. It is possible to achieve this goal by reducing the impact of human biases as much as possible and maximizing the identification of top candidates through the analysis of massive volumes of data. On the other hand, as O'Neil (2016)

demonstrates in her well-known essay "Weapons of Math Destruction," artificial intelligence can perpetuate preexisting prejudices if it is not created and monitored in the appropriate manner. Consequently, this gives rise to significant ethical issues of fairness and openness.

There are several academic notions that highlight the importance of efficiency, fairness, and openness. These concepts serve as the basis upon which the inclusion of artificial intelligence into selection processes is formed. Within the framework of the idea of organizational efficiency, it is hypothesised that the use of cutting-edge technology has the potential to considerably increase the operational efficiency of enterprises. This is a hypothesis that is supported by the notion of organizational efficiency. Brynjolfsson and McAfee (2014) conducted research to evaluate the prospect that artificial intelligence may be used to automate tasks that are laborious, boring, and repetitive. Because of this, human resources would be able to concentrate on activities that are more strategic and imaginative respectively. Regarding Becker's (1964) theory of human capital, there is a strong connection that exists between this technique and the theory. The need of successfully allocating resources to maximize the worth of workers is emphasized by this theory. This theory takes into consideration the fact that persons are important assets from the point of view of decision-making. In addition, to have a comprehensive grasp of the concepts of equality and inclusion, it is essential to have an awareness of how workers and candidates see the procedures of personnel selection and management. In accordance with Adams's (1963) equity theory, individuals evaluate the fairness of business choices by comparing their own contributions and outcomes with those of other persons. This is done to determine whether the decisions are fair. When people believe that they are being treated on an equal footing, they experience higher levels of enjoyment and motivation than when they do not in this situation. When it comes to the definition that was offered by Shore et al. (2011), inclusion is defined as the extent to which employees have the view that they are respected and integrated within the workplace. Shore and colleagues (2018) It has been demonstrated via research that the use of inclusive selection strategies has the potential to enhance employee happiness and engagement, as well as bring about an increase in the feeling of justice that employees feel toward their place of employment.

The theory of bias reduction in decision-making processes is another important theoretical foundation that is known as the "Theory of bias reduction". The research that was carried out by Caliskan et al. (2017) investigated the idea of artificial intelligence systems being able to evaluate candidates based on certain criteria, for the purpose of eliminating the effect of unconscious biases that are frequently present in human decision-making. The capacity of artificial intelligence to minimize prejudice not only enhances the impartiality of the selection process, but it also fosters increased diversity and inclusion inside enterprises, both of which are believed to be essential for long-term success. Moreover, the ability of AI improves the impartiality of the selection process. Page (2007) drew attention to the positive connection that exists between diversity and creativity of a company, as well as enhanced performance within that organization. Considering this, a number of companies regard the removal of prejudice to be a purpose that is both strategic and necessary.

As was said before in the section of this study that was headed "Literature Review", employer branding is yet another significant topic that is being studied in this study. Edwards (2010) suggests that it is feasible to define it as the reputation of a company as an employer, in addition to the company's ability to recruit and retain personnel of a high quality. This result is the consequence of a lot of factors, including the candidate's experience during the selection process, the sense of fairness and transparency, and the general image of the organization in the job market. All these factors contribute to the production of this result. Transparency, which may be defined as the clarity and openness with which organizations communicate their techniques and conclusions to applicants, is vital for building confidence and increasing the feeling of fairness and justice in the selection process, as stated by Hancock et al. (2018). Transparency can be described when companies communicate their methods and conclusions to applicants.

In this specific setting, it is without a doubt essential to have a conversation about the application of artificial intelligence in a way that is not just open but also truthful. Turban et al. (2018) emphasized the significance of openness in establishing and sustaining the confidence of workers and candidates. As a result, the necessity of transparency was

emphasized. The candidates who have a comprehensive understanding of the purpose and workings of the artificial intelligence that is utilized in the selection process have a propensity to feel a higher level of respect and fairness in the way they are accepted. The presence of openness helps to relieve concerns regarding prejudice or discrimination that is not warranted from the perspective of the applicant. Candidates can have faith that their applications are reviewed based on impartial criteria when there is transparency. Furthermore, the idea of organizational justice, which investigates how perceptions of fairness and justice influence employee behavior and satisfaction, highlights the significance of openness in decision-making processes (Greenberg, 1987). This notion emphasizes the need of transparency in the workplace. This strategy recognizes the need of maintaining openness and honesty within the operational setting. Even though artificial intelligence has been widely utilized in selection methods, the current corpus of research still has a number of critical gaps that need to be filled. The practical benefits of artificial intelligence, such as greater production and decreased expenditures, have been the subject of a significant number of studies, which have been conducted throughout the years. On the other hand, there is a paucity of empirical research that explores the influence that artificial intelligence has on the perspectives of employers and the degree of confidence that candidates have in it. To be more precise, there has been a limited amount of study undertaken on the extent to which transparency is taken into consideration in the use of artificial intelligence, as well as its influence on the sense of justice and the attractiveness of an organization. This is because there has simply not been enough research done on these topics. This research gap underscores the significance of undertaking in-depth studies that study these processes and give a theoretical and practical basis for improving recruiting methods. These studies should be conducted to improve recruitment practices.

Previous research has proved the numerous practical benefits of artificial intelligence, including its potential to minimize bias and the importance of transparency in decision-making processes. This research has been used to develop the theoretical framework, which has been established based on this study. It was proved by Boudreau et al. (2003) that the strategic deployment of technology that utilizes artificial intelligence can considerably increase the efficiency of human resources. Kahneman et al. (2011) brought attention to the fact that algorithms have the potential to overcome the cognitive biases

that are intrinsic to humans. This, in turn, eventually results in judgments that are more equal and rational. As a result of the findings of a study that was carried out by Lee et al. (2020), it has been demonstrated that the presence of transparency in the operations of artificial intelligence (AI) has been proven to raise the level of satisfaction among applicants and to boost their confidence in the organization. The subject of human resources has been significantly enlarged in terms of the potential applications that may be created because of the advent of more powerful AI technologies. Some examples of these more powerful technologies include neural networks and deep learning. Neural networks can evaluate vast amounts of unorganized data, such as interview replies, to find individuals who possess the essential abilities and qualities (LeCun et al., 2015). This allows neural networks to discover individuals who possess the relevant information. Artificial neural networks can find individuals who possess the relevant skills and characteristics as a result of this. In addition to the fact that these cutting-edge technologies have the potential to enhance the effectiveness and precision of the selection process, they also present new prospects for the development of unique and enhanced methods of recruiting. Through the application of the theory of human-computer interaction, one may be able to get a deeper comprehension of the significance of transparency and fairness in the use of artificial intelligence. Through the course of their research conducted in the year 2000, Parasuraman and his colleagues explored the role that trust and transparency play in the process of embracing artificial intelligence technologies and making the most of their potential. According to the findings of their research, people are more inclined to trust artificial intelligence (AI) and cooperate with it when they have a solid understanding of how it functions and when they perceive that it is being implemented in a fair manner.

Therefore, the theoretical framework that is being used to investigate the use of artificial intelligence in the processes of recruiting has its origins in well-established concepts of organizational success, the reduction of prejudice, and human resources. A good foundation for understanding the underlying dynamics may be established by the precise characterization of crucial concepts such as artificial intelligence (AI) and employer branding, to mention a couple. This makes it feasible to construct a solid foundation for comprehending the dynamics. Because of this, the objective of this study is to fill in the

gaps that are currently present in the existing body of literature. This will be accomplished by concentrating on determining the research requirement and establishing specific hypotheses concerning the research. The objective of this study is to offer a contribution to a more comprehensive knowledge of the influence that artificial intelligence has on the perspectives of employers and the confidence of candidates. For providing organizations that are interested in incorporating artificial intelligence (AI) into their selection processes in a manner that is both ethical and transparent, while simultaneously improving their ability to recruit and retain highly qualified personnel, the purpose of this study is to provide principles that can be implemented by these organizations. Because of the theoretical framework, it is necessary to place a large focus on openness when it comes to the application of artificial intelligence. According to the findings of the research that has been carried out (Binns et al., 2018), a lack of transparency may lead to adverse views and a reduction in trust in the selection process. On the other hand, communication that is open and honest on the application of artificial intelligence can increase trust and views of equality in relation to selection processes. This is because it is more likely to provide accurate information. Furthermore, openness can make it easier to implement selection processes that are more comprehensive, which, in turn, can contribute to the development of a varied working environment and lower the risk of prejudice that is not required.

As was indicated earlier, one of the most significant components of this research is the significance of providing candidates with information regarding the method in which artificial intelligence is utilized during the selection process as well as the times at which it is applied. To be more specific, this includes explanations of the data that is acquired, how it is processed, and how it forms the basis for the judgments that are made regarding selection. The establishment of trust and the enhancement of a feeling of justice are two of the most significant goals that may be realized by ensuring that these explanations are easily accessible and intelligible to all applicants, regardless of their past experiences. To provide candidates with the opportunity to inquire about explanations and offer feedback about the selection process, the material must be presented in a manner that is not just straightforward but also free of any jargon. As a matter of fact, Gillespie et al. (2020) conducted research to study the ways in which applicants' views of the fairness of the selection process may be positively impacted by explicit information on the utilization of

artificial intelligence. When organizations openly explain their methods of employing artificial intelligence (AI) in the selection procedures, applicants' faith in the selection system is strengthened. This is because applicants are more likely to follow the practices. Applicants have the perception that these companies are more reliable and fairer, which is the reason for this. An empirical investigation that demonstrated the value of transparency and clear communication in the use of artificial intelligence has shown the significance of these characteristics. This study has established the importance of these aspects. It has the potential to considerably increase perceptions of fairness and confidence in the selection process, according to Floridi et al. (2018). This is because if they can successfully explain and be honest about the use of artificial intelligence, it has the ability to significantly improve the selection process. Furthermore, openness can make it easier to implement selection processes that are more comprehensive, which, in turn, can contribute to the development of a varied working environment and lower the risk of prejudice that is not required. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance to examine these relationships to get an understanding of how organizations might apply artificial intelligence in a manner that is both ethical and transparent, while simultaneously boosting their capacity to recruit and retain highly competent personnel.

The goal of this research is to investigate the ways in which the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in selection processes, in conjunction with employer branding and diversity and inclusion policies, could impact the perception of fairness and inclusion. Specifically, the research will focus on how these factors might interact with one another. In order to accurately analyze the link between fairness and inclusion as mediators, as well as the impact that open and honest communication has as a moderator, the goal of this study is to conduct an investigation. The findings of this study are quite pertinent in view of the present circumstances. This is due to the fact that companies are gradually implementing cutting-edge technology in order to better their selection procedures; yet, they are experiencing issues with fairness and transparency that are both ethical and practical in nature. According to the body of literature that is currently available, there are gaps that need to be addressed by doing further research in order to get a more thorough understanding of the ways in which these variables interact with one another and impact the viewpoints of applicants and workers. One approach to accomplish this is

by conducting additional study. A number of previous studies, including those conducted by Lee et al. (2019), Vrontis et al. (2020), Faliagka et al. (2012), and Langer et al. (2020), have shed light on the knowledge gaps that have been identified. For the purpose of providing a strong foundation for analyzing the impact that the incorporation of artificial intelligence in selection processes has on business branding as well as views of fairness and inclusiveness, the theoretical framework of this research provides a solid platform. Additionally, it analyzes the ways in which one may potentially manage these relationships through the use of open communication. There is a plethora of potential for more study to be conducted in the future in relation to these emergent challenges. In the event that businesses are interested in incorporating artificial intelligence (AI) into their selection processes in a manner that is both ethical and transparent, while simultaneously strengthening their employer branding and cultivating an inclusive working environment, this study has the potential to offer substantial insights to those businesses.

1.4 DEFINITION OF TOPIC

Artificial intelligence (AI) provides a wide range of technologies that greatly simplify and improve the recruitment process, making it easier to screen candidates in the early stages and manage talent acquisition over time. Notably, machine learning algorithms are employed to analyze resumes (CVs) and cover letters among these products. These algorithms possess the ability to identify significant keywords and phrases in resumes, and then compare them with the job requirements in order to assess the eligibility of candidates. Through the automation of this process, artificial intelligence significantly decreases the amount of time needed for human examination of resumes, enabling recruiters to concentrate on more strategic responsibilities. Moreover, these technologies possess the capability to alleviate subconscious prejudices that frequently permeate human decision-making, thereby fostering a fairer selection process. Organizations such as Unilever and IBM have successfully deployed AI-powered CV screening systems. These companies have shown enhanced efficacy in recognizing exceptional individuals while reducing human prejudices (Stone et al., 2015; Upadhyay & Khandelwal, 2018).

An example of this is Unilever, which utilized artificial intelligence to automate a substantial part of its initial recruitment process. The organization use artificial intelligence (AI) to evaluate candidate resumes and online application forms, as well as give psychometric tests, throughout the initial stages of the recruitment process. This technique has not only enhanced the efficiency of candidate screening but also facilitated the company's interaction with a wider and more varied group of applicants. Unilever's AI system utilizes a comprehensive study of candidates' backgrounds to match them with suitable roles. The system's capacity to learn and adapt has contributed to its ongoing enhancement. Similarly, IBM has employed artificial intelligence (AI) technologies in its recruitment procedures, including machine learning algorithms to evaluate resumes and align them with open roles within the organization. IBM's Watson AI examines both the overt abilities and underlying attributes that candidates possess, going beyond the superficial criteria that may be mentioned in a CV. According to Upadhyay and Khandelwal (2018), Watson has the ability to forecast a candidate's future performance and compatibility with the company's culture, offering a more thorough evaluation in comparison to conventional approaches.

AI-powered chatbots are increasingly being used with CV screening systems to enhance the candidate experience and streamline recruiter productivity. These chatbots, utilizing natural language processing (NLP) and machine learning, have the ability to engage with candidates in real-time. They can answer common inquiries, give updates on application status, and gather more information. Chatbots automate these processes, freeing HR experts from monotonous administrative duties and enabling them to concentrate on higher-level strategic decision-making. Furthermore, the chatbots' capacity to deliver prompt and precise answers boosts the candidate's experience, providing a feeling of immediacy and involvement that is greatly appreciated in the current competitive job market. An instance of this is L'Oréal, which effectively implemented an AI-driven chatbot called "Mya" to engage with applicants. The chatbot aids in pre-screening, addressing applicant inquiries, and arranging interviews, thereby enhancing the company's ability to handle a large number of applications in a more effective manner, while also providing a more prompt and tailored candidate experience (Garg & Sangwan, 2020). Nevertheless, the implementation of AI chatbots necessitates thoughtful

deliberation. For example, the chatbot must be developed to effectively and compassionately address a diverse range of requests. Inaccurate or ambiguous responses from a chatbot have the potential to cause frustration among candidates, which can ultimately damage the employer branding of the organization. Hence, it is imperative for organizations employing AI chatbots to consistently update their systems with up-to-date information and include human supervision as required, to guarantee that candidates feel sufficiently supported throughout the process (Tursunbayeva et al., 2018).

Moreover, AI-powered chatbots are proven to be extremely beneficial in effectively handling enormous numbers of applications, especially in businesses that undergo extensive recruitment campaigns, such as retail and hospitality. During times when companies are hiring for specific seasons, AI-powered chatbots may effectively handle job applications, carry out early evaluations, and guarantee that suitable candidates move on in the recruitment process, all while retaining a strong level of candidate involvement. Automated video interviews, utilizing artificial intelligence (AI), have revolutionized the recruitment process by greatly improving its efficiency. These technologies enable organizations to remotely evaluate candidates by evaluating their facial expressions, speech tones, and body language. This provides a first assessment of the candidate's suitability for the position. This technology offers a significant time-saving advantage, as organizations may evaluate a huge pool of candidates without the requirement for face-to-face contacts. This is especially advantageous for firms that require efficient management of large numbers of applications across multiple worldwide locations. Platforms like HireVue have gained prominence in this field by providing AI-powered video interviews. Their methods employ algorithms to assess non-verbal clues, including micro-expressions and speech patterns, in conjunction with the spoken responses' substance. HireVue's artificial intelligence (AI) utilizes predetermined criteria to provide ratings, enabling recruiters to efficiently filter down a group of candidates. This tool is especially beneficial for extensive recruitment processes or for firms that require the identification of prospects across multiple regions. Recruiters are able to gain valuable insights that may not be evident in typical written applications due to their ability to evaluate numerous aspects concurrently.

Nevertheless, the utilization of such technology gives rise to ethical considerations, specifically with the safeguarding of personal data and the possibility of algorithmic prejudice. An important critique of automated video interviews is the potential for biased algorithms that could unintentionally discriminate against candidates due to cultural or physical disparities. Langer et al. (2020) highlight the difficulty AI systems face in accurately interpreting facial expressions or tones of voice that differ from the standard datasets they were trained on. For example, facial emotions and body language can be interpreted differently depending on cultural circumstances, thus resulting in biased judgments of individuals from diverse backgrounds. Consequently, candidates who do not adhere to the cultural norms ingrained in the AI's algorithms may receive worse scores, even if they possess exceptional qualifications. HireVue has been criticized for its lack of transparency about the operation of its AI-driven scoring systems, as pointed out by critics. Cappelli (2019) contends that due to the proprietary nature of these algorithms, both candidates and recruiters are frequently uninformed about the decision-making process. This gives rise to questions regarding equity and responsibility, as candidates are unable to ascertain whether their rejection was based on pertinent qualifications or prejudiced interpretations of their non-verbal conduct. HireVue has addressed these accusations by highlighting the significance of mitigating human bias and asserting that their AI algorithms undergo thorough testing to assure impartiality. However, the current debate around transparency and bias underscores the necessity for continuous examination of these technologies.

As a reaction to these difficulties, firms such as LinkedIn are also testing out video interview tools powered by artificial intelligence. Their goal is to enhance the whole experience for recruiters and candidates on their platform. LinkedIn aims to utilize its extensive network data to enhance applicant assessments by providing solutions that enable businesses to conduct remote interviews with candidates from various locations worldwide. LinkedIn's features aim to enhance the efficiency of global talent acquisition by streamlining the interview process and offering recruiters extensive applicant insights. LinkedIn utilizes AI-powered assessments to facilitate efficient applicant management and evaluation for organizations. Nevertheless, the identical apprehensions regarding

partiality and clarity in the assessment procedure are applicable in this context as well. Therefore, it is imperative for businesses to meticulously oversee the incorporation of such tools to prevent the reinforcement or intensification of biases in the recruiting process. Notwithstanding these ethical dilemmas, AI-powered video interview solutions remain advantageous for firms in terms of time and cost savings, especially in extensive recruitment endeavors. However, firms should use prudence when using such tools, making sure they are accompanied by human supervision and subject to frequent testing to prevent any prejudice. Artificial intelligence (AI) technologies should enhance human decision-making rather than supplant it, particularly in crucial processes like talent acquisition, where justice, inclusion, and transparency are of utmost importance. Artificial intelligence-powered matching systems are highly sophisticated technologies used in contemporary recruitment procedures. Their increasing adoption is transforming the way firms locate and assess prospective candidates. Contrary to conventional approaches that heavily depend on keyword-based searches, these AI-powered systems employ advanced algorithms to comprehensively analyze a candidate's entire professional history, experiences, and abilities, thereby providing a more profound and contextual comprehension of their qualifications.

An exemplary instance of this technology is LinkedIn's AI-powered applicant matching service. This tool utilizes an in-depth assessment of users' profile data, such as their professional progression, specific expertise, and achievements, to recommend potential candidates for available openings. LinkedIn's matching tool distinguishes itself from prior systems by its capacity to comprehend the context of work experiences, allowing the computer to identify how specific abilities can be relevant to various industries or positions. This extends much beyond basic keyword matching, where the computer would just search for terms in resumes or profiles that correspond to job descriptions. AI can evaluate the significance of abilities by comprehending their practical uses, level of expertise, and the context in which they were acquired. This provides a more refined method for identifying talent. Furthermore, these artificial intelligence-driven solutions greatly improve efficiency in the screening process. Instead of recruiters dedicating extensive time to manually review numerous applications, artificial intelligence (AI) may promptly assess and prioritize candidates based on their alignment with the specific

qualifications of a given position. Consequently, recruiters may concentrate on the most prospective prospects, making the hiring process more efficient and decreasing the time it takes to employ. This level of efficiency is especially advantageous for major corporations that get a substantial number of applications or operate in fiercely competitive sectors where top-notch personnel is swiftly recruited by rival organizations. AI-based matching systems have the capability to identify "passive" candidates, which is one of its most transformational features. These folks are not actively pursuing new chances yet may have the perfect qualifications for a specific career. Conventional recruitment approaches are likely to disregard such people, as they usually prioritize individuals actively seeking employment. AI algorithms have the ability to analyze data from many sites, such as LinkedIn, and find passive applicants who have not actively applied for a job but have profiles that indicate they might be a good match. This not only expands the pool of skilled persons available to organizations, but also enables them to connect with exceptionally competent individuals who may not have previously considered changing jobs.

Moreover, AI-powered solutions have the potential to tackle issues such as unconscious prejudice in the recruitment process. Through the automation of the first screening process, these technologies can guarantee that all candidates are assessed according to objective criteria, such as their abilities, experience, and qualifications, rather than subjective elements that may influence human judgment. The impartiality of this approach enhances the fairness of the recruitment process, hence promoting increased diversity and inclusivity inside businesses. IBM has successfully implemented AI matching systems through the utilization of its Watson AI. Watson's recruitment platform use machine learning to discover applicants that meet job requirements by analyzing information beyond what is stated on their CV. It possesses the ability to comprehend the correlation between various abilities and employment positions, frequently establishing associations that may not be readily evident to human recruiters. Unilever has incorporated artificial intelligence (AI) into their employment process by integrating AI-powered matching with other technologies like as gamified evaluations and video interviews. This integration aims to produce a more efficient and fair recruitment process with decreased bias. Furthermore, artificial intelligence has the capability to be utilized

for the purpose of monitoring and analyzing the performance of employees, identifying potential talents, and evaluating their respective capabilities in real time. This type of predictive analysis enables businesses to develop personalized career paths and to promote more efficient talent management. It also allows for the development of more effective marketing strategies. However, the use of these instruments must be weighed against ethical considerations about the protection of personal information and the consent of the individuals who are dependent on them (Jeske & Calvard, 2020). According to Raghavan et al.'s research from 2020, General Electric is a good example of a company that uses predictive analysis tools to monitor the performance of its own employees and identify opportunities for potential growth.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is becoming an increasingly effective tool in recruitment and human resources management, particularly in the field of sentiment analysis. This technology allows organizations to track and analyze the sentiments of applicants, employees, and the general public on different social media and internet platforms. Sentiment analysis technologies utilize natural language processing (NLP) algorithms to analyze extensive amounts of data, detecting and categorizing opinions as positive, negative, or neutral. By utilizing these valuable insights, firms may acquire a more comprehensive comprehension of their employer brand, which is essential for preserving an attractive reputation in the fiercely competitive talent market. An illustrative example is Coca-Cola's utilization of sentiment analysis, which demonstrates how firms can proactively monitor the impression of their employer brand. Coca-Cola obtains immediate input on their employer image by monitoring references and conversations regarding their working conditions, recruitment procedures, and employee contentment on social media platforms. This input enables them to adapt their workplace branding and communication initiatives accordingly. If there is a prevalence of unfavorable opinions, Coca-Cola has the ability to swiftly adjust their messaging or tackle underlying problems in order to enhance their reputation as an attractive workplace. By adopting this dynamic approach, organizations are able to maintain their competitiveness in hiring highly skilled individuals (Strohmeier & Piazza, 2013).

By incorporating sentiment analysis into recruitment, it becomes possible to actively and

effectively manage employer branding initiatives. Companies have the ability to evaluate data not just from internal sources, such as employee reviews and departure interviews, but also from external platforms like LinkedIn, Glassdoor, Twitter, and Facebook. These platforms are commonly used by employees and prospects to discuss their experiences. This ongoing feedback loop offers HR teams essential data to adapt their recruitment strategy, customize retention techniques, and address crises before they worsen. In addition, Jeske and Shultz (2016) have pointed out that AI-powered sentiment analysis is being more and more utilized to forecast patterns in employee contentment and workforce morale. This assists firms in tackling possible discontentment before it spreads widely. An especially potent feature of sentiment analysis is its capacity to identify changes in public opinion over time. After establishing a new hiring procedure or introducing a new HR policy, firms can utilize sentiment analysis to assess the response from both potential and existing employees. This feedback enables firms to promptly determine whether the change was well-received or if modifications are required. For instance, if a corporation observes an increase in unfavorable sentiment after using a new AI-driven recruitment tool, they can tackle concerns around transparency or fairness, as evidenced by prior complaints of AI tools in recruitment (Langer et al., 2020). Companies can minimize harm to their employer brand and cultivate a more favorable relationship with prospects and workers by swiftly addressing negative feedback. AI-powered sentiment analysis can also play a crucial role in enhancing employer branding initiatives by providing more detailed insights at a micro level, in addition to mitigating reputational risk. Companies can enhance their messaging by identifying and focusing on the particular themes or parts of their employer brand that receive the most attention, such as diversity and inclusion initiatives, work-life balance, or career advancement prospects. Likewise, individuals might pinpoint areas where they are seen as deficient and implement deliberate enhancements. Sentiment analysis is crucial for ensuring that company actions are in line with employee expectations, thereby promoting a genuine and attractive employer brand.

LinkedIn have integrated sentiment analysis tools that assist organizations in monitoring the perception of their job listings, recruitment campaigns, and employee engagement activities by the professional community. These technologies examine user interactions, comments, and posts associated with the organization and offer practical insights that may

be utilized to improve recruitment methods. LinkedIn's Talent Insights service enables employers to track and compare their employer brand with competitors, offering a comprehensive perspective on their position in the labor market. By utilizing these valuable data, firms can guarantee their continued appeal to top personnel while simultaneously correcting any unfavorable opinions that may hinder their recruitment endeavors. Gamification and AI-based simulations are increasingly being utilized in the recruitment process as a potent means of evaluating prospects beyond the scope of conventional interviews. Gamification incorporates play and challenge into the evaluation process, enabling candidates to demonstrate their problem-solving abilities, creativity, and flexibility in dynamic and captivating settings. These tools are commonly created as interactive games that replicate working situations, necessitating applicants to make prompt decisions and resolve challenges. Contrary to conventional approaches that typically prioritize CV-based evaluations or structured interviews, gamified exams enable organizations to analyze cognitive ability, soft skills, and behavioral tendencies in a more practical and pertinent way. An example of such a platform is Pymetrics, which use artificial intelligence to evaluate cognitive and emotional characteristics, like attention to detail, risk tolerance, emotional intelligence, and problem-solving skills, through the use of neuroscience-based games. Candidates engage in a sequence of brief, interactive activities specifically created to assess these abilities, and their performance data is examined using artificial intelligence algorithms. Pymetrics subsequently aligns individuals with positions by evaluating their distinct aptitudes and the work prerequisites, providing an impartial and prejudice-minimized method for recruitment. This platform assists firms in constructing more diverse teams by prioritizing intrinsic attributes rather than conventional criteria such as school background or prior work experience. Deloitte and PwC have used Pymetrics into their recruitment procedures, resulting in enhanced caliber and inclusivity of the individuals they select. Through evaluating candidates' problem-solving methods and interpersonal abilities in simulated work settings, these companies have discovered that they can more effectively identify individuals who are well-suited for the position and align with the company's values. This has resulted in increased employee engagement and reduced turnover rates.

Another benefit of incorporating gamification into the recruitment process is its capacity

to mitigate unconscious bias. Conventional interviews are frequently impacted by subjective elements such as physical appearance, nonverbal communication, or common cultural backgrounds between the interviewer and interviewee. Conversely, gamification assesses candidates by analyzing their cognitive and behavioral reactions to exercises. This promotes equity, especially for applicants belonging to marginalized groups or individuals with unconventional backgrounds who might otherwise be disregarded. Deloitte discovered that employing AI-driven games and simulations resulted in a reduction of recruiting prejudice and an enhancement of diversity among their new recruits. This, in turn, led to the formation of more inventive and efficient teams. Gamification techniques have the potential to augment the candidate experience, while simultaneously promoting diversity. Candidates frequently perceive the procedure as more captivating and less anxiety-inducing compared to conventional approaches, as it provides a lighthearted yet demanding setting in which they may demonstrate their abilities. Embracing these creative techniques has significantly contributed to enhancing employer branding for firms. This is because they are perceived as forward-thinking, inclusive, and dedicated to utilizing innovative methods to attract the most talented individuals. Moreover, these solutions possess a high degree of scalability, rendering them especially advantageous for sizable enterprises that handle a substantial volume of applications. Conventional recruitment procedures can be lengthy and need a lot of resources, but gamified exams enable organizations to efficiently and rapidly analyze a huge number of candidates. Unilever, for instance, incorporated gamification into their worldwide recruitment strategy. The organization employed neuroscientific games throughout the initial phases of the recruitment process to evaluate cognitive attributes such as memory, risk aversion, and problem-solving proficiency. By using this method, the need for manual interviews was minimized, resulting in substantial time and cost savings. Additionally, the overall quality of the final hires was enhanced.

HireVue utilizes gamified assessments to assess their skills in leadership, teamwork, and resilience. The platform offers a thorough assessment by examining candidates' problem-solving approaches in a virtual setting. Companies such as Goldman Sachs have employed HireVue to optimize their talent acquisition approach. By doing so, they can assess a larger pool of candidates in a more efficient manner, while still upholding

rigorous standards for talent selection. Although gamification in recruitment offers numerous advantages, it also presents certain problems. An essential concern is to guarantee that the games are accurate and dependable indicators of job accomplishment. This necessitates meticulous planning and verification of the games to guarantee that they accurately assess the talents that are genuinely pertinent to the position. Moreover, there are apprehensions over the accessibility of the evaluations for candidates who may lack familiarity with gaming settings or have disabilities that impede their complete participation. It is imperative for companies to guarantee that these tools are all-encompassing and offer alternate assessment ways for candidates who may be unable to participate in the gamified aspects. People Analytics, when combined with AI tools, has become an essential element in contemporary people management. It provides organizations with the means to gather, examine and act based on data pertaining to both existing employees and potential prospects. These sophisticated technologies not only optimize the recruitment and selection process but also offer predictive insights that assist firms in making well-informed decisions about future skill needs and talent plans. This method goes beyond conventional HR practices by utilizing extensive datasets, which encompass not only internal employee data but also broader labor market trends, to secure a competitive advantage in talent acquisition.

An exemplary demonstration of People Analytics in practice is LinkedIn's Talent Insights, a service specifically developed to assist enterprises in comprehending market trends, talent requirements, and workforce composition. This portal offers up-to-date information on changes in the sector and sought-after talents, enabling firms to make proactive modifications to their recruitment and workforce development plans. By monitoring the rising demand for specific talents and the increasing difficulty in finding suitable candidates for certain positions, companies may predict their future workforce requirements and pinpoint deficiencies in their existing talent pool. Subsequently, companies can utilize this information to focus on skill sets during their recruitment endeavors, so enhancing the caliber of new workers and preparing the firm for forthcoming challenges. LinkedIn's algorithms utilize a comprehensive network of professional data to analyze and provide insights on individual applicants as well as broader industry trends. HR managers can adapt their recruitment tactics by monitoring

the increasing demand for specific abilities in a particular industry. This allows them to prioritize the acquisition of people with emerging skills that are likely to become essential soon. This strategy enables organizations to maintain a competitive edge by anticipating market trends and effectively adapting to future changes in industry demands. For instance, a company seeking to enhance its digital marketing capabilities could utilize People Analytics to ascertain the rising significance of talents like data analytics, SEO optimization, or AI-based marketing in the industry. Given this data, the company has two options: it can either enhance the abilities of its existing employees through focused training programs, or it may modify its recruitment strategies to attract applicants who already possess the sought-after talents. This strategy approach minimizes the duration and expenses linked to recruiting externally, while simultaneously promoting the advancement and progress of internal employees. Another significant benefit of People Analytics is its capacity to forecast staff attrition and detect future talent vulnerabilities. AI systems may identify potential attrition risks by evaluating employee engagement, performance, and satisfaction patterns. This enables managers to proactively address the situation by offering career growth prospects or enhancing working circumstances. Employing a data-driven strategy aids firms in retaining highly skilled employees, hence minimizing expenses associated with employee turnover and maintaining uninterrupted business operations.

One notable AI-driven People Analytics solution is IBM's Watson Analytics for HR, which utilizes predictive analytics to anticipate employee performance and identify risks of employee turnover. The system examines many data elements, including employment records, engagement scores, and external labor market factors, in order to offer practical insights for HR departments. This allows firms to proactively manage possible shortages of skilled workers, create plans for replacing key personnel, or even build more efficient ways for keeping employees. Google has utilized People Analytics to get insights into the aspects that contribute to good performance and employee satisfaction. This has resulted in the development of improved workplace policies and retention tactics. This technique can also detect biases in recruiting and promotion procedures by evaluating data patterns that may suggest an uneven allocation of opportunities based on gender, race, or other demographic variables. By identifying and emphasizing these recurring trends, human

resources teams may implement necessary measures to cultivate a work environment that is more inclusive and fairer. This, as evidenced by research conducted by Shore et al. (2018), ultimately results in increased employee satisfaction and enhanced corporate performance. Moreover, People Analytics enables firms to assess the efficiency of their talent acquisition and development programs by establishing a connection between workforce performance and specific HR activities. Companies may enhance their HR strategy by assessing the return on investment (ROI) of training programs, recruitment drives, and employee wellness initiatives, enabling them to prioritize the most influential areas. For instance, if a corporation discovers that employees who participate in targeted leadership training programs have a higher probability of receiving promotions and remaining employed with the company for a longer duration, they might dedicate additional resources to these programs, thereby guaranteeing improved long-term results.

Integrating artificial intelligence (AI) into human resource management (HRM) and recruitment procedures has the potential to bring about significant changes. It allows for the automation of different operations, leading to improved efficiency, accuracy, and customization. AI systems can detect deficiencies in employee abilities, suggest specific training and development options, and enhance workforce planning by matching future company requirements with long-term talent plans (Bondarouk & Brewster, 2016). Companies such as Google deploy machine learning algorithms to evaluate employee performance data, identify areas that need improvement, and tailor professional development programs appropriately (Jeske & Shultz, 2016). In addition to enhancing employee development, AI-powered HRM solutions help streamline mundane administrative duties, such as scheduling meetings, booking trips, and managing payroll. This decreases the burden on HR experts while enhancing the precision and effectiveness of these procedures. In order for HR specialists to effectively utilize these technologies, it is crucial that they have the requisite abilities, encompassing both the functional aspects and a comprehensive comprehension of the wider theoretical and practical consequences of using AI (Tursunbayeva et al., 2018). An exemplary instance is Accenture, which has employed AI-driven technologies to augment operational efficiency and diminish administrative expenses (Stone et al., 2015).

However, the use of AI in recruiting and HRM carries certain concerns, particularly concerning ethical matters such as transparency, privacy, and bias. Organizations must guarantee the secure management of candidate data in accordance with regulatory mandates, and consistently supervise AI algorithms to avert bias and guarantee that recruiting procedures stay equitable and all-encompassing (Raghavan et al., 2020). However, AI technologies provide substantial prospects for improving recruiting procedures by establishing a fair, based on merit, and inclusive work environment, using the varied cultural and experiential backgrounds of candidates. Consequently, AI is positioned as an essential instrument in influencing the future of HRM and talent acquisition initiatives.

CHAPTER II

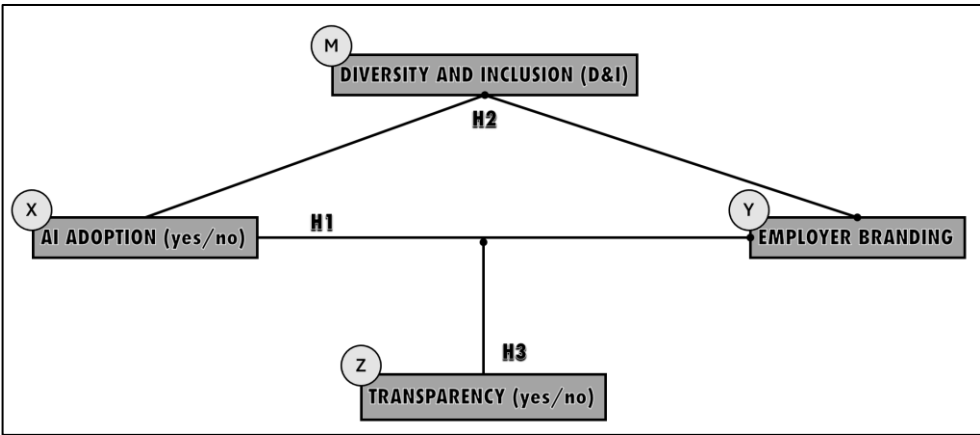
2.1 RESEARCH MODEL, VARIABLES AND HYPOTHESIS

The purpose of this thesis is to conduct an in-depth investigation into the ways in which the incorporation of artificial intelligence (AI) technology into the selection and recruitment processes can have an impact on the employer brand. Specifically, the purpose of this study is to investigate how perceptions of equity and inclusivity function as mediators, while communication that is both transparent and open works as a moderator throughout the process. According to Stone et al. (2015) and Tursunbayeva et al. (2018), artificial intelligence is a significant advancement in the ways that human resource management processes are carried out. This is because AI improves the efficiency and accuracy of selection decisions by evaluating large amounts of data. In spite of this, the research has brought to light ethical difficulties that are brought about by the existence of artificial intelligence systems that have inherent biases. As Binns (2018) and Raghavan et al. (2020) point out, these prejudices have the potential to undermine concepts of justice and inclusion. This is something that should be taken into consideration.

To provide more clarification, the study model may be dissected into four primary factors, which are as follows: the exploitation of artificial intelligence (X), employer branding (Y), the perception of equity and inclusion (M), and transparent communication (Z). There is a binary distinction made by variable X, which distinguishes between firms who employ artificial intelligence technology in their selection processes and those that do not. The variable Y, which is representative of employer branding, is evaluated with the use of a Likert scale, which is frequently utilized. There is a continual measurement of how employers view candidates and workers that may be obtained via the use of this scale. The feeling of fairness and inclusion is represented by the variable M, which acts

as a mediator in the connection between X and Y. It is evaluated using a Likert scale, which is a popular instrument. The variable Z serves as a moderator in the connection between X and Y, especially investigating the ways in which transparency in the application of artificial intelligence may have a positive effect on employer branding. Both Strohmeier and Piazza (2013) and van den Heuvel et al. (2014) provide support for this research with their respective findings.

Table 1. Research model: main relationship, mediator variable and moderator variable.



The present study aimed to investigate the influence of the implementation of artificial intelligence (AI) in recruitment processes on corporate employer branding. The mediating effect of equity and inclusion (D&I) practices and the moderating effect of transparency in communicating the use of AI were taken into account. Three research hypotheses were thus developed. The initial hypothesis (H1) posits that the utilization of AI in selection processes (variable X) has a beneficial impact on employer branding (variable Y), which refers to the perceptions of the company as an employer held by both employees and candidates. In particular, it is postulated that the company's reputation in the labor market is enhanced by the integration of advanced technologies, such as AI, which enhances its innovation and dynamic nature. The second hypothesis (H2) investigates the mediating role of equity and inclusion practices (M variable) in the relationship between employer branding and AI use. It is posited that the company's employer branding is further enhanced by the adoption of AI, which is accompanied by a strong commitment to equity and inclusivity to enhance its perception. In other words,

the company's capacity to guarantee an equitable and inclusive work environment would partially or entirely mitigate the favorable impact of AI on employer branding. Lastly, the third hypothesis (H3) posits that the relationship between AI use and employer branding is moderated by the degree of transparency (Z variable) with which companies communicate the use of AI in selection processes. It is postulated that the positive impact of AI on employer branding is exacerbated when the company is transparent about its use of the technology, as transparency fosters trust among candidates and employees.

The results of this study will provide businesses with precise advice on how to improve their employer brand and nurture a more equal workplace. These findings will also explain how to manage the process of employing artificial intelligence for hiring purposes. If companies have access to this information, they will be able to make educated decisions on their investments in artificial intelligence (AI), which will increase their attractiveness to prospective workers by encouraging the responsible and open utilization of new technologies. As a result of the fact that recruiting and keeping top personnel is key for attaining business success in today's highly competitive global market, this becomes even more important (Jeske & Shultz, 2016). It is possible for firms to distinguish themselves as leaders in ethics and innovation by implementing transparent AI policies, which in turn increases their employer brand and reputation. As artificial intelligence (AI) becomes more integrated into the selection and recruiting processes, there is a possibility that the management of human resources inside an organization may experience a sea shift. According to Stone et al. (2015), artificial intelligence has the potential to beat traditional methods when it comes to selecting top candidates. This is because AI can automate inefficient processes and make use of sophisticated data analysis. It is necessary that the implementation of such technologies be painstakingly overseen to prevent the growth of systematic bias and discrimination that may come from the wrong use of algorithms (Binns, 2018). This is needed in order to prevent the rise of such prejudice and discrimination.

Companies that choose to invest in artificial intelligence tools for the purpose of personnel selection are obligated to ensure that these systems are designed and utilized in a transparent manner. As a result of the fact that it enables them to comprehend how

decisions regarding selection are made and which criteria are used, transparency is an essential component in the process of establishing trust between candidates and employees (Gillespie et al., 2020). To achieve this, transparency is essential. By providing clear and detailed information on the utilization of artificial intelligence, it is possible to reduce the perceptions of unfairness and enhance the level of trust in the process, so improving the employer branding of the organization. Furthermore, the implementation of inclusive selection processes is of the highest significance to establish an environment that is equitable and varied in terms of professional prospects. According to Shore et al. (2018), organizations that include diversity and inclusion policies (D&I) into their selection processes are perceived in a manner that is more positive by both the candidates and the workers. This perception has the potential to boost the appeal of these organizations as possible employees. Because it is possible to contribute to the creation of a work environment that is more equitable and diverse through the utilization of artificial intelligence tools that are designed to minimize prejudice and promote inclusion, it is possible to bring about tangible benefits within the organization in terms of innovation and performance (Page, 2007). The findings of this study have a wide variety of and significant ramifications for practical applications. It is feasible for companies to make use of the results in order to establish a line of advice and identify best practices for the deployment of artificial intelligence in the selection process. This is something that may be done. As an illustration, it is possible that protocols could be developed in order to guarantee that artificial intelligence algorithms are regularly monitored and updated in order to prevent bias, and that the decisions that are made by AI are always supported by human supervision (Raghavan et al., 2020). This would be a good example of how this could be accomplished. Furthermore, companies have the capacity to make investments in training programs in order to develop knowledge about the human resources that are responsible for the significance of equality and inclusion in the selection process (Bondarouk & Brewster, 2016). This is done in order to promote awareness about the relevance of these considerations.

When it comes to the use of artificial intelligence, adopting methods that are transparent not only improves the employer's brand, but it also has the ability to lower the expenses

that are connected with staff turnover. According to the findings of a study that was conducted by Jeske and Calvard in the year 2020, the perception of transparency and equity in the selection process has the ability to raise the level of happiness and empowerment of workers, which in turn reduces the risk that employees would leave the firm. In highly competitive sectors, where it is necessary to maintain a competitive edge in order to maintain a competitive advantage, recruiting and retaining talented employees is of the utmost importance. Additionally, the utilization of artificial intelligence in the selection process has the potential to provide enterprises new chances for data analysis. This is a potential benefit. Technologies such as machine learning and deep learning are examples of sophisticated technologies that make it possible to gather and analyze massive volumes of data in real time. According to LeCun et al. (2015), these technologies offer the opportunity to gain significant insights regarding applicants and selection procedures. (Tursunbayeva et al., 2018) The aforementioned statement has the potential to aid companies in seeing patterns and tendencies that may not be easily evident through traditional techniques of selection, hence boosting their capacity to recruit and pick the most talented personnel. There is a possibility that this statement might be of assistance to businesses.

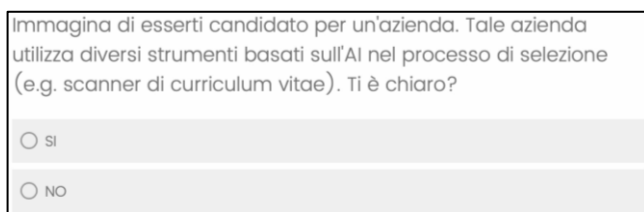
It is going to be a quantitative research approach that will be applied, and it will entail the distribution of a questionnaire to around ninety individuals who will be participating in the study. It is the requirement of gathering data that is both observable and measurable, which can be statistically evaluated to validate the hypotheses of research that lies behind the choice to conduct quantitative research. This is the driving force behind the decision to do quantitative research. Using this methodology, it will be feasible to recognize patterns and connections between the variables in a manner that is both strict and thorough. It is very necessary to carry out a quantitative analysis of the data to guarantee the reliability and validity of the findings. Considering this, a solid platform is provided upon which to make conclusions and create suggestions. The questionnaire will include questions that inquire about the perception of the use of artificial intelligence in the selection process, the perception of equality and inclusion, and the perception of communication that is transparent. To evaluating the replies, the Likert scale will be utilized (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Spector, 1992).

2.2 METHODOLOGY

2.2.1 QUESTIONNAIRE DESCRIPTION

This study utilized a questionnaire with the purpose of investigating the perspectives of respondents regarding the implementation of artificial intelligence (AI) in recruitment processes. Additionally, the questionnaire was designed to investigate the influence that AI has on critical variables such as corporate transparency, equity and inclusion (D&I), and employer branding. This survey instrument was distributed to a sample of roughly ninety persons, all of whom were between the ages of twenty-three and forty. The selection of the age range is not arbitrary; in Italy, reaching the age of 23 often marks the completion of one's studies at the university level and the beginning of the phase in which one begins the process of finding a job. Because of this, the participants are especially relevant to a study that investigates the dynamics of corporate selection procedures.

The questionnaire was constructed using a randomization of questions in order to reduce the possibility of response bias and ensure the collection of data that is as objective as possible. Within the first section of the questionnaire, there was a vital question that was randomly allocated to the participants. The purpose of this question was to determine the setting in which the participants would see themselves.



Immagina di esserti candidato per un'azienda. Tale azienda utilizza diversi strumenti basati sull'AI nel processo di selezione (e.g. scanner di curriculum vitae). Ti è chiaro?

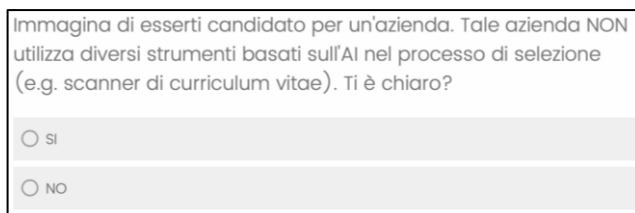
☐ SI

☐ NO

Figure 1. Randomized question scenario: company adopting AI tools in recruitment processes.

Specifically, respondents might come across two separate scenarios: one in which the

organization uses artificial intelligence tools in the selection process (such resume scanners), and another in which such tools are not utilized. This distinction was necessary in order to determine the independent variable (X), which is connected to the application of artificial intelligence in the selection process. The participants who gave a positive response to the clarification question, which was phrased as "Is this clear to you?", were allowed to move on to the subsequent inquiries, which ensured that they had a complete understanding of the context.



Immagina di esserti candidato per un'azienda. Tale azienda NON utilizza diversi strumenti basati sull'AI nel processo di selezione (e.g. scanner di curriculum vitae). Ti è chiaro?

☐ SI

☐ NO

Figure 2. Randomized question scenario: company NOT adopting AI tools in recruitment processes.

After completing the first part of the questionnaire, participants were given a set of questions specifically created to assess the dependent, mediator, and moderator variables. In order to evaluate the dependent variable (Y) related to employer branding, the Employer Attractiveness Scale (EAS) created by Berthon, Ewing, and Hah (2005), which is generally acknowledged and validated, was employed. The selection of this scale was based on its proven reliability in assessing the perception of an organization by both recruits and workers across various important aspects. The dimensions encompass innovation, dynamism, reputé, and the company's endeavors to better its staff. The Employee Attractiveness Scale (EAS) is highly efficient in assessing the level of appeal a company holds as an employer, taking into account these specific characteristics.

Considering the focus of this study, which aims to comprehend the correlation between the implementation of AI in recruitment procedures and the reputation of employers, the EAS provides the benefit of encompassing a broad spectrum of qualities that are crucial for a company's perceived worth. This scale enables a comprehensive assessment, offering valuable insights not only into the general attractiveness of the firm but also into

its effectiveness in promoting innovation and facilitating staff development. The thoroughness of this analysis is essential for the goals of this study, as it allows us to determine whether the introduction of AI technology in recruiting has a favorable or negative impact on an organization's reputation as an innovative, forward-thinking, and employee-centric employer. The study's interest lies in comprehending the influence of emerging technologies, like as AI, on employer branding, which coincides with EAS's focus on dynamism and innovation. By employing this scale, the study is able to accurately measure the subtle views of participants regarding a company's brand, particularly in a situation where technological advancement is becoming more influential in molding the hiring environment. Therefore, the EAS functions as a reliable instrument for assessing the appeal of employers in the context of contemporary recruitment techniques, thereby supporting the broader objectives of this research.

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| <p>L'azienda è all'avanguardia nelle tecnologie.</p> <p>L'azienda incoraggia l'innovazione tra i suoi dipendenti.</p> <p>L'ambiente di lavoro è vivace e stimolante.</p> <p>L'azienda è nota per la sua dinamicità e rapidità di adattamento.</p> <p>L'azienda gode di un'eccellente reputazione.</p> <p>L'azienda è rispettata nel suo settore.</p> <p>L'azienda riconosce e valorizza i contributi dei dipendenti.</p> <p>L'azienda offre un ambiente che promuove lo sviluppo dei dipendenti.</p> |
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Figure 3. Employer Attractiveness Scale's items: employer branding scale. Y variable .

The mediating variable M, which specifically addresses equity and inclusion within corporate contexts, was measured using the Inclusion Index developed by Nishii (2013). This index is based on a wealth of research on diversity and inclusion, providing a comprehensive framework for assessing the perceptions of an organization's practices regarding fairness, respect, and the representation of diverse groups by employees and candidates. The scale is intended to capture the subtleties of corporate diversity and

inclusion (D&I) initiatives by concentrating on a number of critical dimensions, such as the degree to which diverse perspectives are valued and incorporated into the organizational culture, equal opportunities for growth, and perceived fairness in hiring and promotion processes. Nishii's (2013) research emphasizes that inclusive environments not only enhance employee well-being but also significantly improve overall organizational performance by cultivating a sense of belonging among employees from a variety of backgrounds. The Inclusion Index enables researchers to evaluate these dynamics by concentrating on the perceptions of participants regarding the extent to which their organization implements equitable practices and whether they feel respected and valued as individuals. For the purposes of this investigation, this scale offers invaluable insight into the potential impact of AI on perceptions of equity and inclusion in recruitment processes. It is imperative to assess whether the utilization of AI is perceived as equitable and inclusive, as it has the capacity to either alleviate or exacerbate biases in recruitment.

Additionally, the Inclusion Index is particularly well-suited for evaluating the effectiveness of diversity and inclusion initiatives within an organization, as it has the capacity to capture employee perspectives regarding systemic equity and the equitable treatment of all employees. The Inclusion Index offers an empirical method to evaluate whether these new technologies are perceived as supporting or undermining inclusive hiring practices in the context of this research, where AI tools in hiring might challenge or support traditional hiring practices. This, in turn, functions as a critical mediator in comprehending the broader influence on employer branding, as a company's overall reputation and appeal in the labor market are directly influenced by perceptions of inclusivity and fairness.

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| <p>L'azienda tratta tutti i dipendenti in modo equo, indipendentemente dalle loro caratteristiche personali (es. genere, etnia, età).</p> <p>L'azienda promuove attivamente la diversità e l'inclusione in tutte le sue pratiche.</p> <p>Mi sento valorizzato e rispettato come individuo nel mio ambiente di lavoro.</p> <p>Le politiche e le pratiche aziendali riflettono un impegno genuino per l'equità e l'inclusione.</p> |
|--|

Figure 4. Nishii's Inclusion Index Scale's items: D&I scale. M variable.

Lastly, the moderating variable Z, which measures the degree of transparency in corporate communication, was evaluated in this study using the Perceived Transparency Scale developed by Rawlins (2008). This scale is particularly relevant in the context of the use of AI in recruitment procedures. This scale was chosen for its demonstrated effectiveness in collecting stakeholder perspectives on the clarity, honesty, and accessibility of information shared by organizations. The perception of the company's integrity and trustworthiness by both current and prospective employees is directly influenced by transparency, which is particularly important in the context of human resource management.

The Perceived Transparency Scale concentrates on several critical dimensions that are indispensable for assessing the degree of transparency with which a company discloses sensitive information. These dimensions encompass clarity of communication, which evaluates the company's ability to convey information in a clear and uncomplicated manner; honesty, which evaluates the extent to which the company is perceived to disclose accurate and comprehensive information without manipulation; and accessibility, which indicates the ease of access to the information for stakeholders. The transparency with which companies communicate their use of AI-driven recruitment tools can substantially influence their employer branding and candidate trust in the specific context of this study, where AI-driven recruitment tools are becoming increasingly prevalent. Rawlins' scale enables us to assess the extent to which candidates are adequately informed about the use of AI in the recruitment process and whether they have confidence that this technology is being employed ethically and fairly. This is especially

pertinent considering the privacy and algorithmic bias concerns that frequently accompanied AI applications in HR processes (Gillespie et al., 2020). The Perceived Transparency Scale also offers insight into the extent to which companies are proactive in disclosing potential limitations or risks associated with AI, as well as the measures they are taking to mitigate such risks. For instance, candidates may desire to ascertain whether AI systems are being monitored for biases or whether their data is being securely managed. Brown et al. (2020) have found that organizations that are transparent about these aspects are more likely to be perceived as ethical and trustworthy, which can enhance their employer attractiveness and overall brand reputation.

Additionally, the utilization of this scale to assess corporate transparency is consistent with the broader trends in corporate social responsibility (CSR) and ethical leadership, which increasingly recognize transparency as a critical component in the establishment of enduring stakeholder relationships. Companies can enhance their internal communication and establish stronger relationships with external stakeholders, including potential candidates and the public, by providing plain, honest, and accessible information about AI use in recruitment. Consequently, the Perceived Transparency Scale is a critical instrument in this investigation to ascertain the extent to which the broader perceptions of the company as an employer are influenced by transparency in the use of AI technologies.

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| <p>L'azienda fornisce informazioni accurate e dettagliate sui suoi processi di selezione.</p> <p>L'azienda comunica apertamente l'uso di tecnologie di intelligenza artificiale nei processi di selezione.</p> <p>Le informazioni fornite dall'azienda sui processi di selezione sono comprensibili e facili da seguire.</p> <p>L'azienda è disponibile a rispondere alle domande e ai dubbi dei candidati riguardo all'uso dell'AI.</p> <p>L'azienda è trasparente sui criteri utilizzati dall'AI per valutare i candidati.</p> |
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Figure 5. Rawlins' Perceived Transparency Scale's items: transparency scale. Z variable.

However, despite the utilization of three prevalidated multi-item scales, a factor analysis was performed uniformly for all three cases under consideration. This reduction to a single factor will be necessary to conduct our subsequent analyses on the model. The factor created for the employer branding scale explains 70.28% of the variance ($\alpha=0.939$; $p<0.001$). The factor implemented for the D&I scale explains 87.88% of the total variance ($\alpha=0.953$; $p<0.001$). Lastly, the factor summarizing the items for the scale related to the transparency of AI tools used in the recruitment process explains 77.27% of the total variance ($\alpha=0.923$; $p<0.001$). All factor analyses yielded significant and positive results, indicating the accuracy of the scales used in the questionnaire.

A 7-point Likert scale was employed to administer the entire set of questions, with responses ranging from "little agree" to "very agree." This method offers valuable data for subsequent quantitative analysis by providing a detailed picture of respondents' perceptions and opinions. The data collection was subsequently structured and processed using SPSS software, which will enable the exploration of the relationships between the variables considered and the testing of the research hypotheses formulated.

2.2.2 ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The quantitative research results offer key insights into the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) tools on employer branding and the efficacy of their application in recruitment processes. The research findings are employed to provide these insights. Initially, an investigation is conducted to ascertain the nature of the relationship between the independent variable (X), which is the utilization of artificial intelligence tools, and the dependent variable (Y), which is the perception of employer branding. The relationship between these two variables is the bedrock of our research model, as the results of our research can directly impact the investment strategies of businesses. The potential impact of the implementation of artificial intelligence in selection processes on the company's perception as an employer is significant. This could potentially affect the company's ability to recruit talent and its attractiveness. This is despite the fact that it has the potential to enhance the accuracy and efficacy of business decisions.

Examinations that have been conducted verified that there is a significant correlation between employer branding and the adoption of AI tools. The Independent-samples T-Test, which was conducted to compare the averages of the two opposing scenarios to which the respondents were exposed, yielded highly significant results ($t=14.550$; $p<0.001$). In the scenario in which the company implements AI tools, the mean was 5.83, whereas the mean in the opposite scenario, in which the company does not employ AI, was 2.41, resulting in a discrepancy of 3.42. The data indicates that the perception of the company as an employer is significantly enhanced by the implementation of AI in selection processes, thereby verifying the initial research hypothesis (H1) that employer branding is positively impacted using AI tools.

Table 2. Independent-samples t-test: as p is less than 0.001, the test is significant and the H1 hypothesis is confirmed.

| Test campioni indipendenti | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|------------------------------|------|-------|--------|--------|--------------------------------------|--------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---|-----------|
| Test di Levene per l'uguaglianza delle varianze | | | | | | Test t per l'uguaglianza delle medie | | | | | |
| | | F | Sign. | t | gl | Significatività P unilaterale | P bilaterale | Differenza della media | Differenza errore std. | Intervallo di confidenza della differenza di 95% | |
| | | | | | | | | | | Inferiore | Superiore |
| EMPLOYERBRANDING | Varianze uguali presunte | ,691 | ,408 | 14,550 | 86 | <,001 | <,001 | 3,42125 | ,23514 | 2,95381 | 3,88870 |
| | Varianze uguali non presunte | | | 14,515 | 84,124 | <,001 | <,001 | 3,42125 | ,23570 | 2,95255 | 3,88996 |

Next, the moderator variable (Z) was analyzed, which denotes the degree of transparency with which the company discloses the utilization of AI tools in the selection process. In order to evaluate the impact of moderation, a TWO-WAY ANOVA was implemented to compare the means of X, Y, and Z. In this context, the variable Z was made dichotomous, classifying responses with a mean score of 3.5 or higher as "transparency=yes" and those with a score of 3.5 or lower as "transparency=no." The ANOVA results indicated that moderation was not statistically significant ($F(1,87)=0.41$; $p=0.84>0.05$), suggesting that the impact of AI adoption on employer branding is not significantly influenced by transparency in communicating AI adoption. As a result, the third research hypothesis (H3) was not verified: the relationship between AI adoption and employer branding is not substantially influenced by transparency in the adoption of AI tools.

Table 3. Two-way ANOVA: in the fifth column from the top we see that p is greater than 0.001 (p=0,840). Hypothesis H3 is not confirmed.

| Test di effetti tra soggetti | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|----|------------------|---------|-------|
| Variabile dipendente: EMPBRAND | | | | | |
| Origine | Somma dei quadrati di tipo III | df | Media quadratica | F | Sig. |
| Modello corretto | 290,807 ^a | 3 | 96,936 | 114,481 | <,001 |
| Intercepta | 497,942 | 1 | 497,942 | 588,070 | <,001 |
| TRANSP | 28,517 | 1 | 28,517 | 33,679 | <,001 |
| SCENARIO | 28,321 | 1 | 28,321 | 33,448 | <,001 |
| TRANSP * SCENARIO | ,035 | 1 | ,035 | ,041 | ,840 |
| Errore | 71,126 | 84 | ,847 | | |
| Totale | 1883,952 | 88 | | | |
| Totale corretto | 361,933 | 87 | | | |
| a. R-quadrato = ,803 (R-quadrato adattato = ,796) | | | | | |

Lastly, the mediator variable (M), which is represented by equity and inclusion (D&I), was investigated. The results of the analysis indicate that mediation is significant (C.I.=2.58-3.74; $p=0.0000<0.001$), indicating that the M variable partially explains the relationship between AI adoption and perceived employer branding. In other words, the incorporation of AI in selection processes enhances employer branding in part by fostering a more inclusive and equitable environment. Consequently, the second research hypothesis (H2) has been verified: the relationship between AI adoption and employer branding is mediated by equity and inclusion.

Table 4. Made with Process: in the Model Summary, the p is less than 0.001 (p=0.000). In addition, the coefficients of the confidence intervals are both positive. Hypothesis H2 is confirmed.

| | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|--------|--------|----------|--------|---------|--------|--|
| ***** | | | | | | | |
| OUTCOME VARIABLE: | | | | | | | |
| EQUITA | | | | | | | |
| Model Summary | | | | | | | |
| R | R-sq | MSE | F | df1 | df2 | p | |
| ,7607 | ,5787 | 1,8617 | 118,1457 | 1,0000 | 86,0000 | ,0000 | |
| Model | | | | | | | |
| | coeff | se | t | p | LLCI | ULCI | |
| constant | 2,5872 | ,2081 | 12,4338 | ,0000 | 2,1736 | 3,0009 | |
| SCENARIO | 3,1628 | ,2910 | 10,8695 | ,0000 | 2,5843 | 3,7412 | |

In summary, the findings verify the research model's overall accuracy, as the data collected supports all of the primary hypotheses (with the exception of H3). The impact

of AI adoption on selection processes is emphasized by the significance of the relationships among key variables in the model, which is mediated by perceptions of fairness and inclusion. This highlights the positive implications of AI for employer branding. These insights provide valuable guidance for companies seeking to invest in advanced technologies, emphasizing the significance of strategic and informed AI implementation to enhance their appeal as employers.

CHAPTER III

3.1 THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

This research makes substantial theoretical contributions to several areas of academic literature, particularly in the context of artificial intelligence (AI) applied to human resource management, employer branding theory, and diversity and inclusion (D&I) practices. This study makes several important theoretical contributions, one of the most important of which is the empirical proof of the positive association between the adoption of AI technologies in selection processes and the organization's image as an employer. Even though most of the previous research has been on the operational and efficiency elements associated with artificial intelligence (Stone et al., 2015), the findings of this study broaden the scope of the discussion by showing the ways in which such tools can also favorably influence the external perception of the firm. The importance of this cannot be overstated in a highly competitive climate, where businesses are always looking for ways to entice and keep the best employees. According to Berthon, Ewing, and Hah (2005), the incorporation of artificial intelligence not only optimizes recruiting processes, hence lowering the amount of time and associated expenses, but it also offers an image of innovation and modernity to the organization, which makes it more appealing to potential candidates from the perspective of the company.

An additional substantial theoretical contribution of this study pertains to the implementation of artificial intelligence (AI) in recruitment procedures and the significance of transparency in communicating its implementation. For an extended period, transparency has been regarded as an essential element in the cultivation of a positive perception of companies and the preservation of candidate trust. Transparency is a critical factor in the development of stakeholder relationships, particularly in situations where trust and open communication are essential (Rawlins, 2008). This has been the subject of numerous studies in the field of organizational communication. Typically, it has been recommended that a company's reputation be reinforced by explicitly communicating the use of AI in recruitment, thereby enhancing perceived fairness and trustworthiness. Nevertheless, the results of our research provide a more nuanced perspective, challenging the presumed importance of transparency in this context. Our findings indicate that employer branding is not substantially influenced by transparency in recruitment AI usage, as the moderator variable (Z) associated with transparency was not statistically significant. This undermines the notion that transparency alone is sufficient to cultivate favorable perceptions of AI-driven processes. Rather, the findings indicate that candidates' perceptions may be more significantly influenced by other factors, such as the impartiality and inclusivity offered by AI tools, than by the transparency with which the tools are communicated to them.

The conventional belief that transparency is essential for preserving trust in automated processes may not be applicable to AI in recruitment. In reality, candidates may be less concerned with their awareness of AI's utilization and more concerned with the efficacy of these tools in achieving a fair, inclusive hiring process and reducing biases (Langer et al., 2020). This suggests that candidates' perceptions of a company may be more influenced by the perceived functionality of AI systems, particularly their capacity to produce impartial and equitable results, than the transparency with which AI is disclosed. For example, Unilever and IBM have implemented AI tools in recruitment without placing an excessive emphasis on transparency regarding every technical detail, instead accentuating the optimization of fairness and efficiency through AI (Upadhyay & Khandelwal, 2018). The focus is on the role of AI in enhancing recruitment outcomes, which candidates may prioritize over the explicitness of the AI utilization. This discovery

underscores the necessity of additional research to determine whether other factors, such as ethical design, fairness algorithms, or AI's influence on diversity and inclusion (D&I), are more influential in influencing perceptions of employer branding than transparency alone. The more general conclusion of this discovery is that transparency, while still significant, may not be the sole determinant of employer branding in the context of AI. This contradicts the frequently generalized presumption in the literature that increased transparency consistently results in superior outcomes (Tursunbayeva et al., 2018). Alternatively, candidates may prioritize transparency regarding the objectives of AI deployment—such as the reduction of bias and the promotion of inclusivity—over transparency regarding the sheer use of AI. This new perspective posits that companies should prioritize the perception of AI systems in terms of fairness and efficacy over the provision of exhaustive technical explanations about their implementation.

One of the most significant contributions that this study has made is the demonstration of the function that diversity and inclusion (D&I) policies play as mediators in the relationship between the adoption of artificial intelligence and employer branding. In accordance with the increased academic attention on the potential of diversity and inclusion strategies to improve organizational performance and employee well-being (Nishii, 2013), this finding is consistent with academic research. Our research, on the other hand, broadens this perspective by highlighting how diversity and inclusion (D&I) can be perceived as a tool that helps generate a more equitable and inclusive work environment, if it is done with the purpose of reducing bias and boosting equality. By stating that AI-based technologies, which are frequently attacked for the potential inherent biases they may possess (Raghavan et al., 2020), might help to a more inclusive corporate culture if they are employed in an ethical and responsible manner, this contributes to the enrichment of the existing body of literature. Considering the growing concerns over the influence of artificial intelligence (AI) on discrimination and fairness in selection processes (Dastin, 2018; Caliskan, Bryson, & Narayanan, 2017), this topic is one that is particularly pertinent. Furthermore, the research offers significant empirical validation for the hypothesis that modern technologies such as artificial intelligence can serve as a strategic lever to increase not just the operational efficiency of companies but also the competitive position of those companies in the labor market. It is argued that the incorporation of artificial intelligence (AI) into selection processes has the potential to

broaden the concept of employer branding, which should now include the adoption and incorporation of innovative technologies as factors in attracting talent (Bondarouk & Brewster, 2016). This suggestion is relevant to the academic debate on the transformative role that technology plays in human resource management practices. This study highlights the importance for businesses to communicate not only the career opportunities and the work environment, but also their commitment to adopting cutting-edge technologies in an ethical manner. This is particularly important in an era in which the reputation of corporations is becoming increasingly linked to perceptions of innovation and social responsibility.

Finally, the theoretical model that was proposed in this research contributes to a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the modern dynamics that influence the attractiveness of companies as employers. This model incorporates the adoption of artificial intelligence (AI), transparency, and diversity and inclusion practices into the analysis of employer branding. The model that has been proposed not only provides evidence that multidimensional approaches to the study of employer branding are valid, but it also provides new directions for future research that could further investigate the specific conditions under which transparency and diversity and inclusion practices may moderate or mediate the impact that artificial intelligence technologies have on the outcomes of organizations. The findings of this study not only validate and broaden the scope of previously established ideas, but they also introduce novel avenues of investigation for academic research. As a result, it provides a more profound and nuanced comprehension of the ways in which technology, organizational practices, and corporate reputation interact with one another. The findings provide a solid platform for future study as well as for the construction of corporate strategies that take into consideration the appropriate usage of artificial intelligence as an integral aspect of employer branding and diversity and inclusion management policies.

3.2 MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

This research has significant management implications for organizations aiming to sustain a competitive edge in a rapidly evolving and technologically sophisticated labor market. The findings of our study unequivocally indicate that the incorporation of artificial intelligence (AI) tools in recruitment procedures enhances operational efficiency and significantly influences business branding. Organizations that proficiently deploy AI can diminish the duration allocated to manual task administration, enhance their talent acquisition strategies, and concurrently bolster their status as contemporary and inventive employers. A crucial consideration for managers and HR experts is AI's capacity to impact company brand perception. Historically, literature has primarily focused on the potential of AI to enhance efficiency through the automation of repetitive tasks, such as CV screening, candidate matching, and interview scheduling (Stone et al., 2015). The study findings underscore the significant influence of AI on an organization's reputation, especially concerning transparency, inclusivity, and innovation. Contemporary applicants are progressively drawn to organizations that exhibit technical prowess and use new human resource methods. The implementation of AI tools can signify advanced and innovative management practices (Upadhyay & Khandelwal, 2018). Unilever and IBM have integrated AI tools in their recruitment procedures, yielding favorable outcomes in efficiency and branding (Cappelli, 2019). These organizations have successfully optimized internal procedures and effectively communicated their use of AI, enhancing their reputation as pioneers in technological innovation and employee well-being. This example illustrates how AI, beyond enhancing efficiency, may serve as a crucial instrument to bolster a company's competitive stance in the talent market. Nonetheless, the efficacy of AI transcends simple process improvement. Managers must evaluate the influence of these tools on the applicant experience and the company's external reputation. Contemporary candidates anticipate a transparent and seamless selection process, wherein AI can significantly contribute. Chatbots and automated video interview platforms offer prompt responses and streamline the selection process, enhancing the candidate experience and contributing to a contemporary and innovative corporate image (Garg & Sangwan, 2020).

However, the implementation of AI requires meticulous management. HR workers must receive sufficient training to identify and address the biases inherent in algorithms. The discussion with Paolo Traisci, CEO of Alisped Logistic SRL, emphasized the necessity of pairing the implementation of new technology with appropriate training programs, particularly for generations of workers less familiar with technological advancements. In the absence of specialized training, there exists a risk that AI technologies may be employed ineffectively or unethically, so jeopardizing the company's branding. Integrating AI with diversity and inclusion (D&I) efforts is also crucial. The implementation of AI technologies can enhance the inclusivity of selection processes, contingent upon the continuous monitoring of algorithms to prevent the persistence of unconscious biases. Organizations that implement a proactive strategy for inclusion and leverage AI to enhance diversity can elevate their standing as inclusive and responsible employers (Langer et al., 2020). D&I strategies must be integrated into every phase of the selection process to guarantee equitable chances for all candidates, irrespective of their background, thereby reinforcing the company's reputation as a just and inclusive workplace. Furthermore, managers had to contemplate the significance of transparency in the utilization of AI. Research indicates that transparency surrounding AI utilization does not directly influence employer branding; rather, it is crucial for organizations to implement a clear and accessible communication plan concerning these tools (Rawlins, 2008). Furnishing candidates with clear and comprehensible information on the AI employed in the selection process can enhance trust and augment the perceived equity of the procedure. Nonetheless, as emphasized in the interview with Alpha Sonko of Fater, it is imperative to equilibrate transparency with preserving a "human touch" in recruitment procedures. Excessive dependence on impersonal, automated technology may estrange applicants, whereas a phone call or personal interaction can significantly improve the candidate experience and strengthen business branding. Ultimately, the use of AI must be aligned with a robust diversity and inclusion (D&I) policy. Research indicates that AI can enhance the inclusivity of selection processes, provided that algorithms are consistently checked to prevent unconscious prejudice that may reject specific candidate groups. Organizations that adopt a proactive stance on inclusion by merging AI with robust diversity and inclusion strategies can enhance their reputation as inclusive and responsible employers (Langer et al., 2020). Consequently, educating HR professionals

is crucial to ensuring that new technologies align with the company's diversity and inclusion objectives, thereby fostering a diverse and motivating workplace.

Training is also essential for managers aiming to properly incorporate artificial intelligence (AI) into their recruitment procedures while reducing cognitive biases that may undermine fairness. The initial domain of intervention pertains to the ethics of artificial intelligence. Algorithms, while intended to enhance efficiency, can perpetuate unconscious prejudices inherent in the training data, as evidenced by previous instances, including Amazon's selection tool, which consistently eliminated women's resumes (Dastin, 2018). In this environment, it is imperative for managers to allocate resources to training programs designed to inform HR personnel about potential algorithmic biases, enabling them to identify and address these issues. This form of ethical training equips individuals with the necessary tools to continuously assess and refine algorithms, so guaranteeing that recruiting procedures are equitable and inclusive (Raghavan et al., 2020). Simultaneously, technical training is necessary for HR professionals to comprehensively grasp the functionality of the AI systems they employ. Recruiters must accurately analyze the data produced by these systems, oversee automated procedures, and intervene when required. Companies like Google and Microsoft provide targeted training programs for their staff to promote the mindful application of AI technologies in corporate environments (Jeske & Shultz, 2016). Another crucial issue is the cultivation of transversal abilities. While AI can enhance numerous operational facets, it cannot entirely supplant the significance of the "human touch" in candidate encounters. The utilization of chatbots or video interview platforms can expedite the management of extensive application volumes; however, it is crucial for HR personnel to discern when to personally engage to preserve human interaction. This was emphasized in the interview with Alpha Sonko, who underscored the significance of integrating AI with human interactions to enhance the candidate experience and bolster employer branding. Indeed, facilitating a favorable experience for applicants through personal interactions is a crucial element in establishing a robust and appealing company image (Cappelli, 2019).

Ultimately, managers must contemplate change management. The interview with Paolo Traisci, CEO of Alisped Logistic SRL, revealed that numerous employees, particularly those from generations less familiar with sophisticated technology, may exhibit resistance

to the adoption of AI tools. Consequently, it is imperative to provide training programs that equip personnel with technical abilities while also preparing them to navigate change and adapt to novel work methodologies. This training mitigates fear and resistance to new technology, promoting a more seamless and sustainable transition. Integrating AI into selection processes necessitates a comprehensive training approach that encompasses technical, ethical, and relational dimensions. Managers may ensure the effective and responsible use of AI, enhancing operational efficiency, corporate image, and candidate experience, just through a planned investment in ongoing training.

3.3 LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Although the current study provides valuable insights into the intersection of employer branding and the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in recruitment processes, it is important to consider several limitations to properly interpret the findings and guide future research efforts. The sample size and composition are among the most significant constraints. The study captures the perspectives of a portion of the working population, notably those who are at the beginning or in the middle stages of their careers, with a sample of approximately 90 participants aged 23 to 40 years. Nevertheless, this age range may not include valuable insights from elderly generations, who may have varying perspectives on the integration of AI in recruitment, or from younger participants, who may have varying expectations of an employer in terms of technology and branding (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Moreover, the findings may be restricted in their generalizability to a broader population due to the relatively small sample size. Future research should prioritize the utilization of a more extensive and diverse sample, which should include participants from a diverse range of socio-cultural contexts, industries, and age groups, to resolve this constraint. This would not only guarantee increased representativeness but also offer a

more profound comprehension of the degree to which various demographics perceive the use of AI in recruitment, particularly in terms of transparency and impartiality (Jeske & Calvard, 2020). Incorporating cultural diversity would also illuminate the way employer branding is perceived in various global contexts, as branding strategies and responses to technology adoption can differ across cultures (Reiche et al., 2019).

The study's methodological approach, which was dependent on self-reported questionnaires, is another limitation. Surveys are frequently employed in research; however, they are susceptible to fallacies such as self-selection bias and social desirability bias. Participants may respond in a manner that they deem to be socially acceptable or desirable, rather than offering candid reflections of their genuine perceptions. Additionally, self-reported data may result in inaccurate or skewed responses, particularly when participants are dubious about the intricacies of AI technologies being used in the recruitment process or when dealing with complex subjects like AI (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Mixed-method approaches that integrate qualitative techniques, such as in-depth interviews or focus groups, with quantitative surveys should be taken into account in future research to mitigate these biases. Such methods would enable researchers to collect richer data, allowing participants to explain their perspectives in greater detail, particularly on sensitive issues such as transparency and fairness in the use of AI (Spector, 1992). Additionally, experimental or field studies could offer a more nuanced perspective on the influence of AI on recruitment outcomes by providing additional insights into the consistency between reported attitudes and actual behavior (Stone et al., 2015).

Moreover, the research concentrates on the immediate perceptions of AI and employer branding, but it does not consider the long-term implications. Employer branding undergoes a process of evolution that is influenced by both internal organizational changes and external market factors. In order to comprehend the potential evolution of perceptions of AI in recruitment and the effects of sustained use of AI tools on both employer branding and the equity and inclusion of the workforce, future research should utilize a longitudinal approach (Nishii, 2013). For instance, long-term research could examine whether the initial enthusiasm for AI tools in recruitment diminishes as candidates encounter its limitations, or whether organizations that implement

transparency measures in their AI applications can sustain a favorable brand image over time (Rawlins, 2008). The current research is also significantly limited by the dichotomization of the Z variable, which pertains to transparency in reporting AI use. The study may lose valuable insights that could have been captured through a more sensitive analysis by oversimplifying a multifaceted and complex construct by converting a nuanced Likert scale into a simple binary variable (i.e., "transparency=yes" or "transparency=no"). Although the Likert scale is frequently employed in social research, it is intended to capture gradations of opinion or perception. The dichotomous format of the Likert scale eliminates the subtleties in respondents' emotions and attitudes toward corporate transparency (Rawlins, 2008).

For example, the concept of transparency may not be a binary "yes" or "no" for all respondents. A participant may perceive that a company is transparent in certain aspects of its AI use, but not in others. These variations are challenging to capture in a dichotomous variable, as the subtleties of "partial" transparency or mixed emotions are not fully represented. Furthermore, the power of the test is diminished and the capacity to identify differences in the impact of transparency on employer branding across various levels of perception is restricted when a binary variable is employed in statistical analysis (Spector, 1992). Future research should prioritize the preservation of the continuous nature of the Likert scale in order to resolve this constraint. This method enables a more comprehensive and exhaustive examination of the impact of varying degrees of perceived transparency on critical outcomes, including employer branding and candidate trust in AI-based recruitment processes (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Researchers can investigate the gradient of responses and identify more subtle effects by retaining the complete range of responses and employing more sophisticated statistical methods, such as regression analysis. Rather than converting the scale to a binary format, future research could incorporate more refined categorizations of transparency, such as grouping responses into three or more levels (e.g., "low transparency," "moderate transparency," and "high transparency"). This method would preserve a greater degree of the variability of the original data while still allowing for comparisons between groups, thereby providing a more optimal equilibrium between sensitivity and simplicity. For instance, Rawlins' (2008) perceived transparency scale can be further deconstructed into a variety of

dimensions, including accessibility of information, honesty, and clarity of communication. This would facilitate a more comprehensive comprehension of the various ways in which each of these components influences the overall perceptions of an organization's transparency and, as a result, its brand among candidates.

Although our research concentrated on the comprehensive influence of AI tools on employer branding, it did not explore the specific categories or types of AI technologies employed in recruitment. This limitation is significant because the efficacy of selection procedures and the diverse effects that various AI tools can have on candidate perceptions are both emphasized in prior literature. For instance, Stone et al. (2015) and Tursunbayeva et al. (2018) have demonstrated that recruitment outcomes are influenced by several AI technologies, including chatbots, automated video interviews, and machine learning-based CV screening algorithms, in distinctive ways. This implies that a more detailed approach is required to comprehend the extent to which each instrument contributes to employer branding and inclusion initiatives. Variations in the way candidates perceive an employer's impartiality, transparency, and overall attractiveness may result from the specific AI tools that are implemented during recruitment processes. For example, chatbots enhance candidate interaction by offering immediate feedback and guidance; however, there are reservations about their limited ability to handle intricate, human-like interactions. Chatbot technologies have been effectively integrated into the recruitment processes of companies such as L'Oréal and PwC to improve candidate engagement and simplify early-stage selection (Garg & Sangwan, 2020). Nevertheless, chatbots have the potential to reduce the administrative responsibilities of recruiters; however, if they are not implemented effectively, they may depersonalize the candidate experience, thereby influencing the employer brand's perceptions.

Another AI tool that has demonstrated both potential and obstacles is automated video interviews. AI is employed by platforms such as HireVue to analyze the facial expressions, body language, and tone of voice of candidates, thereby facilitating a standardized initial screening. This technology enables recruiters to efficiently assess many candidates. Nevertheless, the process's credibility may be compromised by concerns regarding algorithmic bias and the potential for misinterpretation of non-verbal

signals, particularly in the context of diverse cultural contexts (Langer et al., 2020). For example, HireVue's automated interviews have been the subject of criticism due to a lack of transparency in the AI's evaluation of candidates, which has raised concerns about inclusivity and impartiality (Cappelli, 2019). Another widely used tool is machine learning algorithms for CV screening, which reduce unconscious bias by concentrating solely on pertinent qualifications and experience. IBM and Unilever are among the numerous organizations that have implemented these algorithms, which facilitate the rapid and impartial selection of candidates according to job-related criteria (Upadhyay & Khandelwal, 2018). However, the perpetuation of existing biases can occur when these algorithms are trained using past hiring data, particularly if the data reflects historical inequalities. This underscores the necessity of ongoing supervision and recalibration of AI tools to guarantee that they facilitate more equitable hiring practices (Raghavan et al., 2020).

Consequently, future research could be enhanced by examining the individual effects of these tools on critical variables, including diversity, inclusion, and employer branding. Researchers can gain a more precise understanding of the impact of each tool on candidate experiences and organizational outcomes by analyzing specific AI technologies, such as chatbots, automated interviews, or machine learning. This method would offer practical suggestions for organizations that are striving to strike a balance between ethical and inclusive hiring practices and technological efficacy. This line of inquiry could also investigate the intersection of these technologies with transparency practices, thereby further refining our comprehension of the way candidates communicate and perceive the adoption of AI (Rawlins, 2008). Additionally, the research is constrained by its specific geographical and cultural context. Since the study was predominantly conducted in Italy, the findings are inherently tied to the distinct characteristics of the Italian cultural and labor market environment. Cultural context plays a crucial role in shaping perceptions of technology, including artificial intelligence (AI), as well as attitudes toward employer branding and diversity and inclusion initiatives. As noted by Langer et al. (2020), individuals from different cultural backgrounds may interpret the fairness and efficiency of AI tools in varying ways. For instance, in Italy, where face-to-face interactions and personal relationships are often highly valued in professional contexts, the

implementation of AI in recruitment might be perceived with more skepticism compared to countries with a stronger tradition of technological integration in human resource practices.

The Italian labor market also has its specific regulatory frameworks and organizational norms that could influence the adoption and perception of AI tools. Cultural values, such as the emphasis on human-centric interactions and concerns about data privacy, may shape how both employers and candidates approach the use of technology in hiring. As a result, attitudes towards the use of AI in selection processes might be more cautious in Italy, where there could be greater concern about the potential for AI to depersonalize recruitment and decision-making processes (Stone et al., 2015). On the other hand, in countries where technological innovations are more embedded in everyday business practices, such as the United States or the United Kingdom, AI-based recruitment may be perceived more positively as a means of enhancing efficiency and objectivity (Upadhyay & Khandelwal, 2018). This limitation suggests that the findings of this study may not be fully generalizable to other contexts where cultural values, regulatory standards, and technological adoption differ. For example, in countries with a stronger focus on technological advancement, the adoption of AI tools may be more readily embraced by both employers and job applicants, potentially leading to different outcomes in terms of employer branding and perceptions of inclusion and transparency. Additionally, research by Jeske & Shultz (2016) points out that the perception of transparency and fairness in AI-driven recruitment processes can vary significantly depending on regional and cultural expectations about technology's role in society. Future research should, therefore, aim to extend this analysis by exploring the relationships examined in this study across multiple cultural contexts. Comparative studies that collect data from diverse geographic regions would help elucidate the extent to which cultural factors influence perceptions of AI in recruitment, as well as its impact on employer branding, diversity, and inclusion efforts. Expanding the scope of the research to global settings could reveal important cultural differences in how AI is utilized and communicated in recruitment processes. For instance, while transparency in AI usage may be critical in some cultural contexts, in others, the focus may shift towards how AI aligns with local values of equity and personal interaction (Rawlins, 2008). Such a comparative approach could provide businesses with valuable insights into how to adapt their use of AI tools for recruitment in different

cultural contexts, ensuring that their employer branding strategies remain effective across diverse markets. This would also contribute to a more nuanced understanding of how AI can be leveraged to support diversity and inclusion efforts globally, by recognizing the unique challenges and opportunities that cultural differences present.

While this research does give vital insights into the influence that artificial intelligence has on selection processes and employer branding, it is important to note that further research is required to address the limitations that have been highlighted and to investigate new avenues of research. Just a few of the potential future approaches that might further deepen our understanding of this intricate and essential field of research include the investigation of cultural dynamics, the use of mixed methodologies, and the examination of various artificial intelligence technologies.

3.4 APPENDIX

The incorporation of digital technology has become crucial for the survival and prosperity of modern enterprises, irrespective of their scale. Previously constrained by restricted access to modern technology resources, small and medium-sized firms (SMEs) are now embracing tools such as artificial intelligence (AI), blockchain, cloud computing, and big data. These tools were previously exclusive to huge multinational corporations. This modification not only enhances operational efficiency, but also has substantial effects on corporate marketing, employer branding, and the overall image of the firm. SMEs can enhance their production processes, minimize expenses, and enhance the management of human resources and company operations by implementing this modern technology. Furthermore, apart from the practical advantages, digitization offers firms a novel means to enhance their brand image. By leveraging AI and big data analytics, firms may enhance their comprehension of client preferences and requirements, enabling them to tailor their offerings and communications accordingly. This strategy not only enhances the satisfaction of customers, but also reinforces the company's reputation as a forward-thinking pioneer that swiftly adjusts to evolving

market demands. Adidas is a notable example of a company that has made significant investments in blockchain technology to guarantee transparency in its supply chain. Adidas has utilized blockchain technology to monitor and verify the source and environmental friendliness of the materials used in its products. This has not only affected the operations but has also enhanced the brand's image as being responsible and focused on sustainability. These qualities are crucial in appealing to a new generation of consumers who are increasingly concerned about environmental and social matters. Investing in transparency not only enhances operational efficiency but also cultivates a favorable and forward-thinking reputation that has a beneficial impact on employer branding. Microsoft serves as a prominent illustration of how sophisticated technologies can have a beneficial impact on business branding. The organization has utilized AI tools to enhance internal processes, provide more sustainable solutions, and enhance its public image. By employing ethical and responsible marketing strategies focused on innovation, Microsoft has successfully established itself as a frontrunner in sustainability and digital transformation (Gillespie et al., 2020). This demonstrates the deliberate utilization of technological innovation to enhance brand reputation and appeal to highly skilled individuals who perceive this innovation as a chance for career advancement.

Moreover, Patagonia, a brand renowned for its ethical and environmental dedication, has implemented digital technologies to monitor the sustainability of its supply chain, enhancing its reputation as a frontrunner in the outdoor industry and in the realm of social responsibility. This approach has not only enhanced the way environmentally conscious consumers perceive the business but has also drawn in staff who hold similar beliefs (Stone et al., 2015). The use of cutting-edge technology like blockchain has facilitated the company's ability to clearly showcase the source and sustainability of the materials utilized. This additional benefit has directly influenced the company's reputation. By strategically utilizing digital solutions that maximize personnel management and corporate culture, companies can enhance their reputation among current and prospective employees, thereby improving their overall image. Google is leading the way in utilizing artificial intelligence to oversee the productivity of its staff. Google utilizes sophisticated data analytics technologies to gather data on individual

and group performance, examining both employee performance and work patterns. Based on the provided data, the organization creates personalized training programs that are designed to meet the individual requirements of employees, therefore enhancing their abilities and fostering both personal and professional development. This method not only enhances employee satisfaction and motivation, but also aids in reducing turnover, so ensuring better talent retention.

The implementation of these technologies extends beyond mere operational efficiency, as it facilitates the development of a corporate culture centered around innovation and meritocracy. Companies that exhibit a commitment to the development and advancement of their employees enhance their employer branding, making themselves more appealing to top talent in the market. An employment setting that utilizes artificial intelligence to enhance professional growth is seen as dynamic, merit-based, and innovative, which can have an impact on the competition for new skilled workers, particularly in high-tech sectors. Furthermore, technology advancement greatly enhances the advantages of corporate marketing. By utilizing digital technologies, organizations may collect vital data on consumer behavior, monitor market trends, and promptly adjust their marketing strategy. Coca-Cola is a notable example of a company that use artificial intelligence (AI) to analyze the emotion expressed on social media. This enables them to gather vital insights about how their brand is regarded and adjust their marketing strategy appropriately (Strohmeier & Piazza, 2013). The capacity to promptly react to market circumstances empowers organizations to uphold a robust and competitive position, while also enhancing consumer confidence. An essential factor is the influence of digitization in constructing and upholding a coherent brand storyline. Companies that allocate resources to cutting-edge technologies demonstrate a forward-thinking mindset, projecting an impression of vitality and contemporary relevance that is much appreciated by both consumers and prospective employees. This is particularly accurate in businesses where technological advancement is regarded as a sign of dominance, as exemplified by Apple, which has established a significant part of its brand identity on the concept of being at the forefront of technological innovation.

To summarize, digital transformation offers the chance to enhance internal operations

and cut expenses, while also serving as a potent means to bolster business reputation and attract skilled individuals. Companies that embrace these technologies are regarded as more inventive, accountable, and adaptable to market fluctuations, rendering them more appealing to both consumers and staff. Digitization is not just about improving operational efficiency, but also serves as a strategic tool for marketing and employer branding. It has the potential to establish the organization as a leader in its field.

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