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Examining the Effectiveness of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Organizational Recruitment at ZANACO Bank

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Abstract
This thesis examines the effectiveness of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Organizational recruitment at ZANACO Bank in Zambia. AI use in recruitment globally has gained significant traction owing to the use of AI-Powered tools which automate routine tasks. Apart from automation of tasks, the adoption of AI worldwide can be attributed to a number of factors such as improved efficiency, and enhanced candidate interaction. The main objective of this study is to examine the effectiveness of AI in organisational recruitment at ZANACO Bank in Zambia. The specific objectives are to establish the effects of AI in recruitment at ZANACO, examine the effect of AI on recruitment quality by considering candidate fit and performance of candidates, identify limitations of AI in recruitment, and evaluate the effectiveness of AI-driven candidate screening and shortlisting processes in improving efficiency and reducing bias. A mixed methods approach was employed which combined qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis methods. This method was chosen as it allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem by combining the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative methods. The target population included the recruitment staff in ZANACO, and the job applicants who have been end users of the AI-powered recruitment processes. Data collection was by way of questionnaire, secondary data from the internet, and interviews from Focused Group Discussions (FSGs). This data was analyzed using SPSS and Excel programs. The findings of the study reveals that ZANACO management has invested 80% of HR resources to align to AI. This has led to improvements such as reduced time-to-hire, improved the quality of candidates and enhanced recruiter efficiency by over 60%. In addition, challenges in the AI process were discovered and consisted of over-automation which represented 40%, technical challenges, and data quality issues. Some of the limitations faced by ZANACO in AI implementation include resistance to change, biasness of AI systems, and difficulties in integrating AI system with other existing HR systems. The study also established that AI has improved efficiency of recruitment at ZANACO by 50% and enhanced candidate experience by 20%. It has also positively impacted in improved matching of candidates and reduced biasness. The FGDs also revealed that AI has contributed to cost reduction of the recruitment process and contributed to the profitability and positive image of the organisation. The study also revealed that AI has reduced bias in recruitment to about 40% through mitigation of unconscious bias by evaluating candidates based on objective data. The recommendations arising from the study are that organizations ought to invest in continuous AI skills development, improvement of data quality and addressing regulatory compliance concerns to benefit much from AI-driven tools. ZANACO should conduct a thorough analysis of current recruitment processes to identify areas where AI can lead to organization value addition. The findings of the study have contributed to the growing body of knowledge in recruitment as it gives insights to HR practitioners, policy makers and researchers seeking to find out more on AI and its potential in the developing global trends of organisations.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Recruitment, HR Technology, Talent Acquisition

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The use of AI in recruitment has gained great popularity in developed nations (Boudreau & Rice, 2015). The recruitment landscape has undergone a significant transformation with the advent of AI-powered recruitment tools (Kundra & Nichols, 2017). This enables recruiters to focus on more strategic tasks. Additionally, AI-powered chatbots and virtual assistants was

shown to improve personalized support to candidate in a study in Russia, improving their overall experience (Sullivan, 2018). AI tools in Latin America are being employed for vacancy prediction to analyse employees' behavioural data to predict the probability of their resignation (J Dustin, 2021). In a U. S study (Mckinsey & Company, 2022) AI is applied to make suggestions to improve job descriptions and customise the language to attract diverse candidates.

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) in its quest to promote economic integration in the region has taken some key initiatives in efforts to leverage on AI powered tools by developing a regional AI strategy to promote AI adoption and innovation in the region. It has further developed a regional agenda that includes initiatives to promote digital skills, e-commerce, and innovation in the region (SADC News, 2024). The adoption of AI by many countries in the region has however been influenced by regional trends and challenges such as; limited infrastructure in the region which affects internet connectivity and data storage, Skills gap making it difficult for organisations to implement and maintain AI solutions, and data quality affecting the accuracy and reliability of AI systems. Most African specific challenges to do with AI arise from an ethical perspective. Issues have arisen in responsibility and explanation of AI decisions, alignment of machine judgment with human value judgment, moral dilemmas, and AI discrimination (Chisanga C, 2021). For example, AI tools for recruitment are advertised as highly competent and objective decision-making instruments. However, an increasing number of research works reveal discrimination of women and people of colour (UNISA Journal, 2021). Social challenges involve cultural barriers, human rights, unrealistic expectations of AI technology, limited knowledge about the challenges and benefits of AI adoption and a trust deficit in AI. Economic challenges are related to costs and resulting profit. From an organisational and managerial perspective, challenges include lack of AI experts and AI development strategies, fear of replacement of human workforce, monetary factors, and resistance to cooperation [Chisanga, 2019].

AI-powered recruitment tools can also analyze vast amounts of data to provide insights on candidate fit, skills, and potential, enabling better decision-making (Liao *et al*., 2019). Furthermore, AI-powered recruitment tools can reduce recruitment costs by minimizing the need for manual intervention (Bersin, 2018). Despite the growing adoption of AI in recruitment, there are still several challenges and limitations. One of the primary concerns is bias in AI systems, which can perpetuate existing biases if they are trained on biased data (Friedman & Nissenbaum, 1996). Lack of transparency is another challenge, as AI-powered recruitment tools can be opaque, making it difficult for candidates to understand the decision-making process (Bogen & Doshi, 2018).

Zambia is embracing AI to boost its economy and job market. The government has unveiled a national AI strategy plan aiming to regulate the use of AI, improve data protection, create innovation hubs and advance digital skills (ZICTA Report, 2024). This initiative is expected to raise national GDP by 8% by 2030 (ECO Finance, 2024. ZANACO, a financial institution in Zambia, has adopted AI-powered recruitment tools to improve its recruitment. However, there is limited understanding of the effectiveness of these tools in the Zambian context. This study aims to address this knowledge gap by examining the impact of AI on recruitment processes. ZANACO is a commercial bank in Zambia that provides a wide range of financial services to individuals, businesses, and corporations (ZANACO, 2022). The bank was established in 1969 and is headquartered in Lusaka, Zambia. ZANACO has a rich history that dates back to 1969, when it was established as a state-owned bank (Mweene, 2017). The bank's primary objective was to provide financial services to the Zambian government and its agencies. Over the years, ZANACO has undergone significant transformations, including privatization in 2007 (Kabanda, 2010). The bank offers a wide range of financial services, including savings and checking accounts, loans and credit facilities, credit cards, investment products, insurance services, and treasury services (ZANACO, 2022). ZANACO has a strong presence in Zambia, with a network of branches and ATMs across the country. ZANACO has undergone significant digital transformations to modernize its operations and improve its services (Mwila, 2020). The bank has invested heavily in digital technologies, including online banking, mobile banking, and digital payment systems. As part of its digital transformation strategy, ZANACO has adopted Artificial Intelligence (AI) in its recruitment processes. The bank uses AI-powered recruitment tools to streamline its hiring processes, improve candidate experience, and enhance the overall quality of its workforce (Manyika *et al*., 2017). ZANACO has a hierarchical organizational structure, with various departments, including Human Resources, Finance, Operations, Marketing, and Risk Management. The bank has a strong leadership team, with a Managing Director overseeing overall strategy and direction of the bank (ZANACO, 2022). ZANACO is committed to corporate social responsibility and has implemented several initiatives to support the local community such as financial literacy programs, entrepreneurship training, healthcare support (Kapambwe, 2019). Overall, ZANACO is a leading financial institution in Zambia, with a strong commitment to innovation, customer service, and corporate social responsibility.

1.2 Objective

1.2.1 General Objective

To examine the effectiveness of AI in recruitment at ZANACO.

1.2.2 Specific Objectives

1. To establish the effects of AI in recruitment at ZANACO
2. To examine the effect of AI on the quality of recruitment at ZANACO by considering candidate fit, skills, and performance of selected candidates.
3. To Identify the limitations encountered by ZANACO in implementing AI in hiring process as compared to other HR systems.
4. Evaluate the effectiveness of AI-driven candidate screening and shortlisting processes in improving recruiter efficiency and reducing bias.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What are the effects of AI on the recruitment process at ZANACO Bank?
2. How does AI impacted on the quality of recruitment at ZANACO in qualities such as candidate fit, skills, and

performance of selected candidates?
3. What limitations and challenges does ZANACO encounter in implementing AI in hiring process as compared to other HR systems?
4. What is the effectiveness of AI-driven candidate screening and shortlisting processes in improving recruiter efficiency and reducing bias?

1.4 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is grounded in the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis, 1989). TAM explains how users form attitudes and intentions towards using a technology. The model suggests that the perceived usefulness and ease of use of a technology influence its adoption. In the context of this study, TAM is used to examine the adoption of AI-powered recruitment tools by ZANACO. The model is adapted to fit the specific context of the study, with the following constructs: Perceived Usefulness (PU): This refers to the extent to which users believe that AI-powered recruitment tools will improve their recruitment outcomes. PU is influenced by factors such as the ability of the technology to streamline the recruitment process, improve candidate quality, and reduce recruitment costs (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000).

Perceived Ease of Use (PEU): This refers to the extent to which users believe that AI-powered recruitment tools are easy to use. PEU is influenced by factors such as the user-friendliness of the technology, the availability of technical support, and the level of training provided (Davis, 1989). Attitude Towards Using (ATU): This refers to the user's attitude towards using AI-powered recruitment tools. ATU is influenced by factors such as PU and PEU, as well as other external factors such as organizational culture and peer influence (Ajzen, 1991). Behavioural Intention to Use (BI): This refers to the user's intention to use AI-powered recruitment tools. BI is influenced by factors such as ATU, PU, and PEU (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Actual Use (AU): This refers to the actual use of AI-powered recruitment tools. AU is influenced by factors such as BI, as well as other external factors such as organizational support and resources (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000).

The TAM model is chosen for this study because it provides a well-established framework for understanding the adoption of new technologies. By applying the TAM model to the adoption of AI-powered recruitment tools, this study aims to gain a deeper understanding of the factors that influence the adoption of these tools.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study aims to investigate the factors that influence the adoption of AI-powered recruitment tools by ZANACO, thereby providing insights into the organizational and technological factors that facilitate or hinder the adoption of these tools. It also examines the impact of AI-powered recruitment tools on recruitment outcomes thereby providing evidence-based recommendations for improving recruitment processes in the Zambian banking industry. Further it provides insights into the experiences and perceptions of recruitment stakeholders regarding the use of AI-powered recruitment tools. The findings of this study will inform the development of strategies and policies for promoting the adoption and effective use of AI-powered recruitment tools in the Zambian banking industry, thereby contributing to the growth and competitiveness of the industry. The study adds to the existing body of knowledge on the intersection of AI, recruitment, and organizational performance, thereby providing a foundation for future research in this area. In practical terms, the findings of this study will be significant to ZANACO and other organizations in the Zambian banking industry seeking to improve their recruitment processes and outcomes. HR professionals and recruitment practitioners interested in understanding the benefits and drawbacks of AI-powered recruitment tools will also benefit from this study. Finally, researchers and academics interested in the intersection of AI, recruitment, and organizational performance will benefit from this study. This study will also make a significant contribution to the existing body of knowledge on AI-powered recruitment tools, while also providing practical insights and recommendations for improving recruitment processes and outcomes in the Zambian banking industry.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study is focused on examining the adoption and implementation of AI-powered recruitment tools by ZANACO, a leading financial institution in Zambia. Specifically, the study aims to investigate the factors that influence the adoption of AI-powered recruitment tools, the impact of these tools on recruitment outcomes, and the experiences and perceptions of recruitment stakeholders. Geographically, the study is limited to Zambia, with a specific focus on the financial services sector. The study will be conducted within the context of ZANACO's recruitment processes and procedures.

The study will examine the adoption of AI-powered recruitment tools and their impact on recruitment outcomes, including time-to-hire, cost-per-hire, and quality-of-hire. The study will be guided by research questions that explore the factors that influence the adoption of AI-powered recruitment tools, the impact of these tools on recruitment outcomes, and the experiences and perceptions of recruitment stakeholders. By examining the adoption and implementation of AI-powered recruitment tools by ZANACO, this study aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on the use of AI in recruitment, while also providing practical insights and recommendations for improving recruitment processes and outcomes in the Zambian financial services sector.

1.7 Operation definition of Key Terms

Artificial Intelligence (AI): The use of computer systems to perform tasks that typically require human intelligence, such as learning, problem-solving, and decision-making.

Recruitment: The process of attracting, selecting, and hiring candidates for job openings.

Candidate Experience: The perceptions and feelings of job applicants during the recruitment process.

Hiring Outcomes: The results of the recruitment process, including the quality of hire, time-to-hire, and cost-per-hire.

2.1 Thematic Area 1: Factors Influencing the Adoption of AI-Powered Recruitment Tools

The adoption of AI-powered recruitment tools is a complex process that is influenced by a variety of factors. Organizational factors play a significant role in shaping the adoption decision. Top management support is critical for the successful adoption of AI-powered recruitment tools

(Venkatesh & Davis, 2000). This is because top management support provides the necessary resources and infrastructure for the adoption of new technologies. Furthermore, top management support helps to create a culture that is conducive to innovation and experimentation (Davis, 1989).

Organizational culture is another important factor that influences the adoption of AI-powered recruitment tools. An organizational culture that values innovation, experimentation, and risk-taking is more likely to adopt AI-powered recruitment tools (Manyika *et al*., 2017). On the other hand, an organizational culture that is risk-averse and resistant to change may be less likely to adopt AI-powered recruitment tools.

The availability of skilled human resources is also essential for the successful adoption of AI-powered recruitment tools. This includes having IT professionals who can implement and maintain the technology, as well as HR professionals who can use the technology to improve recruitment outcomes (Bersin, 2018).

Environmental factors also play a significant role in shaping the adoption decision. Competitive pressure is a significant driver of the adoption of AI-powered recruitment tools (Manyika *et al*., 2017). This is because organizations are under pressure to improve their recruitment outcomes and stay ahead of the competition. Regulatory requirements can also influence the adoption of AI-powered recruitment tools (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000). Economic conditions can also influence the adoption of AI-powered recruitment tools. For example, during times of economic uncertainty, organizations may be less likely to invest in new technologies (Davis, 1989).

Understanding these factors is essential for the successful adoption of AI-powered recruitment tools by ZANACO. By understanding the organizational, technological, and environmental factors that influence the adoption decision, ZANACO can develop strategies to overcome barriers to adoption and improve recruitment outcomes.

2.2 Thematic Area 2: Impact of AI-Powered Recruitment Tools on Recruitment Outcomes

The impact of AI-powered recruitment tools on recruitment outcomes is a critical area of investigation. Recruitment outcomes refer to the measures used to evaluate the effectiveness of recruitment processes, including time-to-hire, cost-per-hire, and quality-of-hire. Time-to-hire is a critical recruitment outcome that can be significantly impacted by AI-powered recruitment tools. AI-powered recruitment tools can automate many routine tasks, such as screening and shortlisting, which can reduce the time-to-hire (Bersin, 2018). For example, AI-powered chatbots can be used to conduct initial interviews and screen candidates, reducing the need for human recruiters to conduct these tasks. Cost-per-hire is another important recruitment outcome that can be impacted by AI-powered recruitment tools. AI-powered recruitment tools can reduce recruitment costs by automating routine tasks and improving the efficiency of recruitment processes (Sullivan, 2018). For example, AI-powered recruitment tools can be used to analyze large datasets and identify top candidates, reducing the need for recruitment agencies and other third-party providers.

Quality-of-hire is a critical recruitment outcome that can be significantly impacted by AI-powered recruitment tools. AI-powered recruitment tools can improve the quality-of-hire by using machine learning algorithms to analyze candidate data and identify top candidates (Manyika *et al*., 2017). For example, AI-powered recruitment tools can be used to analyze candidate resumes and identify candidates with the required skills and experience. In addition to improving recruitment outcomes, AI-powered recruitment tools can also improve the candidate experience. AI-powered recruitment tools can provide candidates with personalized feedback and updates on their application status, improving the overall candidate experience (Friedman & Nissenbaum, 1996). However, there are also potential drawbacks to using AI-powered recruitment tools. For example, AI-powered recruitment tools can perpetuate biases and discrimination if they are trained on biased data (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000). Therefore, it is critical to ensure that AI-powered recruitment tools are designed and implemented in a way that promotes fairness and equity. AI-powered recruitment tools have the potential to significantly impact recruitment outcomes, including time-to-hire, cost-per-hire, and quality-of-hire. However, it is critical to ensure that these tools are designed and implemented in a way that promotes fairness and equity.

2.3 Thematic Area 3: Experiences and Perceptions of Recruitment Stakeholders

The experiences and perceptions of recruitment stakeholders are a critical aspect of understanding the adoption and implementation of AI-powered recruitment tools. Recruitment stakeholders include recruitment managers, hiring managers, job applicants, and HR professionals. Recruitment managers play a critical role in the adoption and implementation of AI-powered recruitment tools. They are responsible for overseeing the recruitment process and ensuring that AI-powered recruitment tools are used effectively. Research has shown that recruitment managers have mixed views about the use of AI-powered recruitment tools (Sullivan, 2018). Some recruitment managers view AI-powered recruitment tools as a valuable resource for improving recruitment outcomes, while others are concerned about the potential risks and limitations of these tools. Hiring managers are another important group of recruitment stakeholders. They are responsible for making hiring decisions and working with recruitment managers to identify top candidates. Research has shown that hiring managers are often skeptical about the use of AI-powered recruitment tools (Bersin, 2018). They may be concerned about the potential for bias in AI-powered recruitment tools or the lack of human judgment in the recruitment process.

Job applicants are also critical recruitment stakeholders. They are the end-users of the recruitment process and are often the most affected by the use of AI-powered recruitment tools. Research has shown that job applicants have mixed views about the use of AI-powered recruitment tools (Friedman & Nissenbaum, 1996). Some job applicants view AI-powered recruitment tools as a convenient and efficient way to apply for jobs, while others are concerned about the potential for bias and lack of transparency in the recruitment process. HR professionals play a critical role in ensuring that AI-powered recruitment tools are used in a way that is fair and equitable. They are responsible for overseeing the recruitment process and ensuring that AI-powered recruitment tools are used in compliance with relevant laws and regulations. Research has shown that HR

professionals are often concerned about the potential risks and limitations of AI-powered recruitment tools (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000). They may be concerned about the potential for bias, the lack of transparency, and the need for ongoing training and support. The experiences and perceptions of recruitment stakeholders are critical to understanding the adoption and implementation of AI-powered recruitment tools. Recruitment stakeholders have mixed views about the use of AI-powered recruitment tools, and there are concerns about the potential risks and limitations of these tools. Addressing these concerns and ensuring that AI-powered recruitment tools are used in a way that is fair and equitable is critical to their successful adoption.

The public sector workplace is undergoing a fundamental shift that presents both challenges and opportunities to HRPs. Public sector employers are having a problem recruiting and retaining qualified candidates. Public sector organizations require a talented, multigenerational, diverse workforce and multiple occupational skill sets. The shift has changed from a focus on employer needs a decade ago to an employee driven workforce with primarily satisfying employee needs (Davidescu *et al*., 2020). Public sector organizations are faced with budget constraints in competitive total compensation offerings, organizational cultures and norms, traditional behaviours, and limited staff resources. The expectations and essential needs of employees in today's market challenge traditional methods and practices of the conventional workplace and provide an opportunity for innovation in practices and programs linking motivation, morale, total compensation, and performance. The organization desires to focus on high performance work practices (HPWPs), which foster an environment that allows and provides employees the support, tools, and resources necessary to perform services in a manner of best practices and increasing organizational performance (Guerci *et al*., 2019). Organizational best practices embrace efficient, effective, accountable, transparent, and professional delivery of services while maintaining integrity and ethical values. However, in this employee driven talent pool environment, recruiting and retaining employees is challenging because the workforce and working conditions are ever-changing. Events over recent years have changed HRP recruitment and retention strategies. The Great Resignation of 2021 impacted the workforce when millions of U.S. workers resigned voluntarily from their jobs (Tessema *et al*., 2022).

The COVID-19 pandemic changed the dynamics of the workforce in 2020, with 16.3 million U.S. workers separating from voluntary and involuntary employment (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020). To recruit and retain employees in the past decade, it was important that the employee was identified early on and found their place within the corporate culture specific workgroups to meet the organization's objectives and goals. Today's employee driven market supersedes organizational needs, and employees seek positions and positive opportunities that allow them flexibility, autonomy, advancement, competitive pay, engaging work, and a hybrid work environment that is diverse, equitable, and inclusive (Gill *et al*., 2018). Employees' expectations are focused on immediate needs and may not be long term for the organization. The current talent pool of candidates is progressive and independent and requires flexibility and continual change by having autonomy and control of their career (Caggiano, 2022).

The management of human resource (HR) relationships with current and future employees has an impact on the ability of organizations to acquire and retain the knowledge and talents needed to compete in this changing, competitive, economic market (Papa *et al*., 2018). It is up to HRPs within organizations to recognize progressive trends to be competitive in their hiring practices and programs. HRPs must consider innovation in current processes and programs linking motivation, morale, total compensation, and performance to attract and retain qualified individuals while dealing with restrictive public sector budgets. Public sector budgets are limited and strategically used for both organizations and employees to receive the best possible return on their investment through total compensation to increase engagement and retention (Smith, 2012). Analysis conducted on public sector employees showed positives connected to job security and service-based promotions, regardless of employee performance, compared to private sector organizations (Jin & Rainey, 2019). However, this perceived security may not fulfil the needs of the new employee driven workforce.

2.4 Personal Critique of the Literature

The literature review on the adoption and implementation of AI-powered recruitment tools has provided valuable insights into the factors that influence the adoption decision, the impact of AI-powered recruitment tools on recruitment outcomes, and the experiences and perceptions of recruitment stakeholders. However, upon closer examination, several limitations and gaps in the existing literature have been identified. Firstly, the majority of the existing literature on AI-powered recruitment tools has focused on the technological and organizational factors that influence the adoption decision, with limited attention paid to the environmental and social factors. For example, the literature has largely ignored the impact of AI-powered recruitment tools on marginalized groups, such as women and minorities. Secondly, the existing literature has relied heavily on quantitative methods, with limited use of qualitative methods. This has resulted in a lack of depth and richness in the data, and has limited our understanding of the complex social and organizational processes involved in the adoption and implementation of AI-powered recruitment tools.

Thirdly, the literature has focused primarily on the adoption and implementation of AI-powered recruitment tools in large organizations, with limited attention paid to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). This is a significant gap, given that SMEs are a critical component of many economies. Fourthly, the literature has largely ignored the ethical implications of AI-powered recruitment tools. For example, the use of AI-powered recruitment tools raises important questions about bias, transparency, and accountability.

2.5 Established research gaps

The literature review has identified several research gaps that need to be addressed in order to advance our understanding of the adoption and implementation of AI-powered recruitment tools. These research gaps are summarized below:

Gap 1: Limited understanding of the impact of AI-powered recruitment tools on marginalized groups.
The literature review has highlighted the need for more research on the impact of AI-powered recruitment tools on marginalized groups, such as women and minorities. This is a significant gap, given that AI-powered recruitment tools have the potential to exacerbate existing biases and inequalities.
Gap 2: Lack of qualitative research on the adoption and implementation of AI-powered recruitment tools.
The literature review has highlighted the need for more qualitative research on the adoption and implementation of AI-powered recruitment tools. This is a significant gap, given that qualitative research can provide a more nuanced and detailed understanding of the complex social and organizational processes involved in the adoption and implementation of AI-powered recruitment tools.
Gap 3: Limited understanding of the long-term consequences of AI-powered recruitment tools.
The literature review has highlighted the need for more research on the long-term consequences of AI-powered recruitment tools. This is a significant gap, given that the adoption and implementation of AI-powered recruitment tools is likely to have far-reaching consequences for organizations, employees, and society as a whole.
The literature review has identified several research gaps that need to be addressed in order to advance our understanding of the adoption and implementation of AI-powered recruitment tools. These research gaps provide a foundation for future research and can help to inform the development of effective strategies for the adoption and implementation of AI-powered recruitment tools.

3. Introduction
This chapter outlines the research methodology used to investigate the adoption and implementation of AI-powered recruitment tools in ZANACO. The research design, target population, sampling design, sample size determination, data collection methods, data analysis, triangulation, limitations of the study, and ethical considerations are all discussed.

3.1 Research Design
This study employed a mixed-methods research design, combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches (Creswell, 2014). The mixed-methods design was chosen because it allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem by combining the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative methods (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). The qualitative approach was used to gather in-depth information on the experiences and perceptions of recruitment stakeholders (Kumar, 2019). This approach involved collecting data through semi-structured interviews and focus groups. The qualitative data was analyzed using thematic analysis, which involved identifying and coding themes and patterns in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The quantitative approach was used to analyze the impact of AI-powered recruitment tools on recruitment outcomes (Manyika *et al*., 2017). This approach involved collecting data through surveys and analyzing it using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The quantitative data was used to test hypotheses and make inferences about the population.
The mixed-methods design was used to combine the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative methods (Creswell, 2014). This design involved collecting and analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data, and then integrating the findings to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem.
The mixed-methods design has several advantages, including providing a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem by combining the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative methods (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). It allows for the collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data, and enables the integration of findings to provide a more nuanced understanding of the research problem.
However, the mixed-methods design also has several limitations, including requiring significant resources and time to collect and analyze both qualitative and quantitative data (Kumar, 2019). It requires expertise in both qualitative and quantitative methods, and potentially leads to conflicting findings between the qualitative and quantitative data.

3.2 Target Population
The target population for this study consisted of recruitment stakeholders in ZANACO, including recruitment managers, hiring managers, job applicants, and HR professionals (Kumar, 2019). Recruitment managers are individuals responsible for overseeing the recruitment process in ZANACO. They play a critical role in the adoption and implementation of AI-powered recruitment tools (Creswell, 2014). Hiring managers are individuals responsible for making hiring decisions in ZANACO. They work closely with recruitment managers to identify top candidates and make hiring decisions (Manyika *et al*., 2017).
Job applicants are individuals who apply for jobs in ZANACO. They are the end-users of the recruitment process and are directly impacted by the adoption and implementation of AI-powered recruitment tools (Bersin, 2018). HR professionals are individuals responsible for overseeing HR functions in ZANACO, including recruitment, talent management, and employee development. They play a critical role in the adoption and implementation of AI-powered recruitment tools (Kumar, 2019).
The target population was selected because they have first-hand experience with the adoption and implementation of AI-powered recruitment tools in ZANACO. They are also critical stakeholders in the recruitment process and can provide valuable insights into the impact of AI-powered recruitment tools on recruitment outcomes (Creswell, 2014).
Inclusion criteria for the study included recruitment stakeholders in ZANACO, individuals with experience with AI-powered recruitment tools, and individuals willing to participate in the study. Exclusion criteria for the study included recruitment stakeholders outside of ZANACO, individuals without experience with AI-powered recruitment tools, and individuals unwilling to participate in the study.

3.3 Sampling Design
The sampling design for this study will be a non-probability sampling design, specifically a purposive sampling design (Kumar, 2019). This design will be chosen because it will allow for the selection of participants who are

knowledgeable about the adoption and implementation of AI-powered recruitment tools in ZANACO. Purposive sampling will be a type of non-probability sampling where participants will be selected based on their expertise or experience with the research topic (Creswell, 2014). This design will be particularly useful when the research topic is complex and requires in-depth knowledge and expertise.

The purposive sampling design will be used to select recruitment stakeholders in ZANACO who have experience with AI-powered recruitment tools. The selection criteria will include recruitment stakeholders in ZANACO, individuals with experience with AI-powered recruitment tools, and individuals willing to participate in the study. The sampling frame for this study will consist of recruitment stakeholders in ZANACO who meet the selection criteria. The sampling frame will be identified through a review of ZANACO's organizational chart and through recommendations from key informants (Kumar, 2019).

A total of 20 participants will be selected for this study, including 5 recruitment managers, 5 hiring managers, 5 job applicants, and 5 HR professionals. The participants will be selected based on their expertise and experience with AI-powered recruitment tools, as well as their willingness to participate in the study.

3.4 Sampling Size Determination

The sampling size for this study was determined using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. The goal was to select a sample size that was sufficient to provide reliable and valid results, while also being mindful of the resources and time constraints of the study.

Quantitative Method:

For the quantitative component of the study, the sampling size was determined using the formula for calculating the sample size for a population (Kumar, 2019). The formula is:

n = (Z^2 * p * (1-p)) / E^2

Where:

n = sample size
Z = Z-score corresponding to the desired confidence level
p = proportion of the population
E = margin of error

Using this formula, a sample size of 100 participants will calculated to be sufficient to provide reliable and valid results for the quantitative component of the study.

Qualitative Method:

For the qualitative component of the study, the concept of saturation was considered (Creswell, 2014). However, given the large sample size required for the quantitative component, it was decided to use the same sample size for the qualitative component.

Final Sample Size:

Based on the calculations and considerations above, a final sample size of 100 participants was selected for this study. This sample size was deemed sufficient to provide reliable and valid results for both the quantitative and qualitative components of the study.

3.5 Data Collection Method

The data collection method for this study will be a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. The goal is to collect data that is reliable, valid, and relevant to the research questions (Creswell, 2014). For the quantitative component of the study, data will be collected through an online survey. The survey will be designed using a standardized questionnaire and will be administered to a sample of 100 participants. The survey will include questions on demographic characteristics, experience with AI-powered recruitment tools, and perceptions of the effectiveness of these tools (Kumar, 2019).

The survey will be pilot-tested with a small group of participants to ensure that the questions are clear and concise, and that the survey can be completed within a reasonable amount of time. For the qualitative component of the study, data will be collected through in-depth interviews with a subset of 100 participants. The interviews will be conducted via video conferencing or phone calls, and will be recorded with the participant's consent. The interviews will be semi-structured, with a set of open-ended questions designed to gather detailed information on the participants' experiences and perceptions of AI-powered recruitment tools.

The online survey software will be used to collect quantitative data, while semi-structured interview guides and audio recording equipment will be used to collect qualitative data. To ensure the quality of the data, the survey and interview guide will be pilot-tested, data collectors will be trained, data will be cleaned and edited, and data will be validated for quantitative data (Kumar, 2019).

3.5.1 Questionnaires

Ghosh (2013:246) further contends that through a questionnaire "… a large sample may be drawn and all groups of people can easily be covered and contacted. The questionnaire will be designed in such a way that questions will be categorised according to themes which will be derived from the research questions and objectives. The researcher will administer questionnaires directly to the participants and they will be given adequate opportunity to complete the questionnaire.

3.5.2 Interviews

Sidhu (2005:145) confirms that "an interview is generally adopted as a method to offset the limitations of the questionnaire." The researcher will employ a focus group guide and semi-structured individual interview guide. Therefore, primary data will be collected through open interviews guides for the study to capture specific and detailed information from the respondents' narrations, opinions, views and comments. Morris (2015:3) indicates that in-depth interviews "…involves a researcher asking questions and following up on the responses of the interviewee in an endeavour to extract as much information as possible from a person (the interviewee) who has expertise on the topic/s the interviewer is interested in."

Kitzinger (1995:299) opine that "The idea behind the focus group method is that group processes can help people to explore and clarify their views in ways that would be less easily accessible in a one to one interview.When group dynamics work well the participants work alongside the researcher, taking the research in new and often unexpected directions."

3.6 Data Analysis

According to Matula *et al*. (2018:117), data analysis "can be defined as the process of systematically organising, summarizing and scrutinizing responses obtained from

respondents, whether in text format (qualitative research) or numbers (quantitative research), in order to make conclusion."

Analysis of data was done using SPSS version 23. In particular, data which were obtained from questionnaires were analysed quantitatively using descriptive analysis. The market situation of locally made products was determined using the SWOT analysis. Qualitative data were analysed through thematic and content analysis. This data were transcribed and coded. Emerging categories from the data were then be coded data and thereafter recurring and emergent themes were identified and presented. The questionnaire data were coded and summarized. Essentially, the researcher was looking at the themes which emerged from the participants in the interview and questionnaire filling. The following steps were however taken when analysing the data.

Familiarisation with the data: This involved reading and re-reading the data, to become immersed and intimately familiar with the content.

Coding: This involved generating succinct labels (codes) that identified important features of the data that was relevant to answering the research question. It also involved coding the entire dataset, and thereafter, collating all the codes and all relevant data extracts, together for later stages of analysis.

Searching for themes: This involved examining the data to identify significant broader patterns of meaning in potential themes. It then involved collating data relevant to each candidate theme, so that the researcher could work with the data and review the viability of each potential theme.

Reviewing themes: This involved checking the themes against the dataset, to determine that they told a convincing story of the data, and one that answered the research question. In this phase, themes were typically refined, which sometimes involved them being split, combined, or discarded all together.

Defining and naming of themes: The stage involved developing a detailed analysis of each theme, working out the scope and focus of each theme, determining the 'story' of each one of them.

3.7 Triangulation

Triangulation is a research technique used to increase the validity and reliability of research findings by combining multiple data sources, methods, or investigators (Denzin, 1978; Kumar, 2019). In this study, triangulation will be used to validate the findings by combining quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods. Data triangulation involves combining multiple data sources to validate findings (Kumar, 2019). In this study, data triangulation will be achieved by collecting data through online surveys and in-depth interviews. The survey data will provide quantitative insights into the experiences and perceptions of recruitment stakeholders, while the interview data will provide rich, qualitative insights into their experiences and perceptions (Creswell, 2014).

Methodological triangulation involves combining multiple research methods to validate findings (Creswell, 2014). In this study, methodological triangulation will be achieved by combining quantitative and qualitative research methods. The quantitative method will involve analysing survey data using statistical software, while the qualitative method will involve analysing interview data using thematic analysis.

Investigator triangulation involves having multiple investigators analyse the data to validate findings (Denzin, 1978). In this study, investigator triangulation will be achieved by having multiple researchers analyse the data and interpret the findings.

By using triangulation, this study aims to increase the validity and reliability of its findings and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the research topic (Kumar, 2019).

3.8 Limitations of the Study

The study has several limitations that may impact the validity and reliability of the findings. Firstly, the study uses a non-probability sampling method, which may not be representative of the entire population of recruitment stakeholders in ZANACO (Kumar, 2019). This may limit the generalizability of the findings to other contexts.

Secondly, the study relies on self-reported data from participants, which may be subject to biases and inaccuracies (Creswell, 2014). Participants may provide socially desirable responses or may not accurately recall their experiences and perceptions.

Thirdly, the study uses a cross-sectional design, which only provides a snapshot of the experiences and perceptions of recruitment stakeholders at a single point in time (Kumar, 2019). This may not capture the complexities and nuances of the phenomenon being studied.

Fourthly, the study only focuses on the experiences and perceptions of recruitment stakeholders in ZANACO, which may not be representative of other organizations or contexts (Creswell, 2014). This may limit the transferability of the findings to other settings.

Lastly, the study's reliance on quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods may not capture the full range of experiences and perceptions of recruitment stakeholders (Kumar, 2019). This may limit the validity and reliability of the findings.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

The study will be conducted in accordance with the principles of ethical research, as outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki and the American Psychological Association's Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct (APA, 2017; World Medical Association, 2013).

Informed Consent:

Participants will be fully informed about the purpose, procedures, and risks of the study before providing their consent to participate. The informed consent form will be provided to participants before the survey or interview, and they will be given the opportunity to ask questions and withdraw from the study at any time.

Confidentiality and Anonymity:

To ensure confidentiality and anonymity, participants' personal information will be kept confidential and will not be disclosed to anyone without their consent. The survey and interview data will be anonymized, and participants will be assigned a unique identifier to protect their identity.

Right to Withdraw:

Participants will have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. They will be informed of this right before providing their consent to participate.

Data Protection:
The study data will be stored securely on a password-protected computer, and only authorized personnel will have access to the data. The data will be kept for a period of five years after the completion of the study, after which it will be destroyed.

Potential Risks and Benefits:
The study will pose minimal risks to participants, as it will only involve completing a survey or participating in an interview. However, participants may experience emotional discomfort or distress when discussing their experiences with AI-powered recruitment tools. The benefits of the study will include contributing to the advancement of knowledge on AI-powered recruitment tools and potentially informing the development of more effective recruitment strategies.

4. Introduction

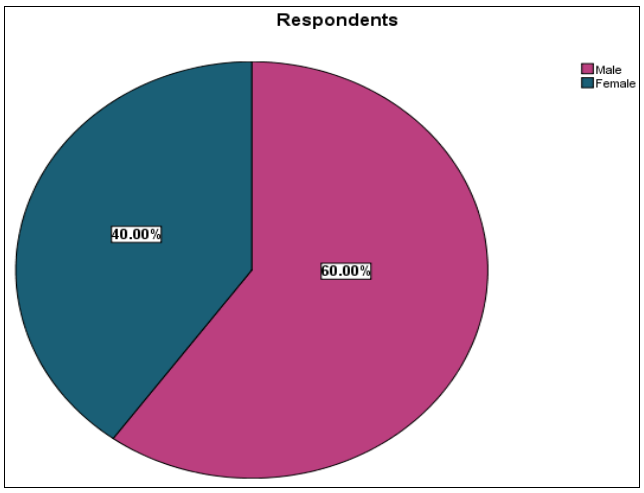
This chapter discusses the interpretation and presentation of the findings.

4.1 Characteristics of Respondents

This section covered the general information on the characteristics of the respondents in terms of their age, sex, and employment status.

4.1.1 Gender of Respondents

Figure 2: below shows that data collected from respondents comprised of 60 (60%) males and 40 (40%) females.



4.1.2 Level of Education

Table 4.1.1: Level of education

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Certificate	5	5.0	5.0	5.0
	Diploma	15	15.0	15.0	20.0
	Undergraduate degree	70	70.0	70.0	90.0
	Master's Degree	10	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Compiled by Author 2025

Table 4.1.2 indicates that 5 (5%) of the participants attained certificate level of education, 15 (15%) of the participants attained Diploma level of education, 70 (70%) of the participants attained Undergraduate degree level of education and 10 (10%) attained Master's level of education.

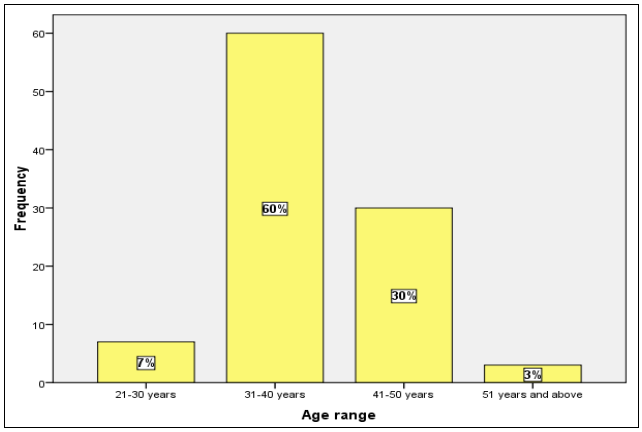
4.1.2 Respondents by Age

Table 4.1.2

	Age range	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	21-30 years	7	7.0	7.0	7.0
	31-40 years	60	60.0	60.0	67.0
	41-50 years	30	30.0	30.0	97.0
	51 years and above	3	3.0	3.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Compiled by Author 2025

Data gathered from respondents shows that 7(7%) of the participants were aged between 21-30 years, 60 (60%) were aged between 31-40 years, 30 (30%) were aged between 41-50 years and 3 (3%) of the respondents were 51 years and above. This information is also shown on the bar graph below.



4.1.3 Marital Status of respondents

Table 4.1.3

	Marital Status	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Married	50	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Single	20	20.0	20.0	70.0
	Divorced	5	5.0	5.0	75.0
	Widow	15	15.0	15.0	90.0
	Separated	10	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Compiled by Author 2025

Table 4.1.4 shows that 50 (50%) of the respondents were married, 20 (20%) were single, 5 (5%) were divorced, 15 (15%) were widowed while 10 (10%) were separated.

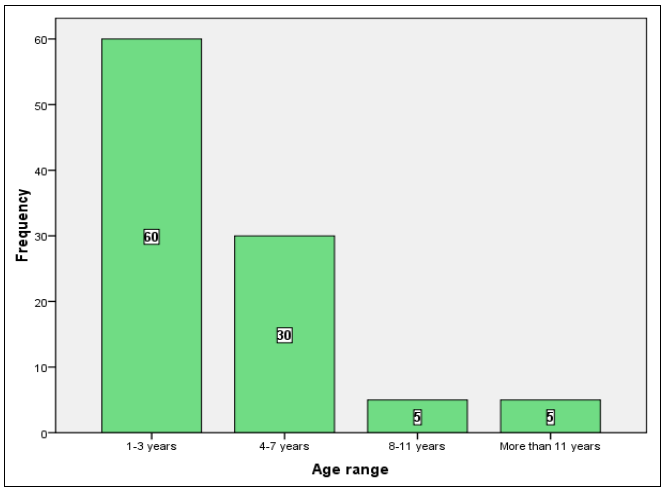
4.1.4 Length of service at ZANACO

Table 4.1.4

	Years (range)	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1-3 years	60	60.0	60.0	60.0
	4-7 years	30	30.0	30.0	90.0
	8-11 years	5	5.0	5.0	95.0
	More than 11 years	5	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	

Source: Compiled by Author 2025

Table 4.1.4 above shows that 60 (60%) of respondents served 1-3 years at ZANACO, 30(30%) served 4-7 years, 5(5%) served 8-11 years and 5 (5%) served more than 11 years in the institution. The above information is also shown on the bar graph below.



4.1.5 Job title of respondents

Table 4.1.5 shows that 30 (30%) of the respondents were managers while 70 (70%) were juniors.

Table 4.1.5

	Job Title	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Managers	30	30.0	30.0	30.0
	Juniors	70	70.0	70.0	100.0
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	

Source: Compiled by Author 2025

4.1.6 Nature of Position

Table 4.1.6 below shows that 90 (90%) of the respondents occupied full time positions while 10 (10%) occupied part time positions.

Table 4.1.6

	Nature of position	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Full time	90	90.0	90.0	90.0
	Part Time	10	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	

Source: Compiled by Author 2025

4.1.7 Length of current position

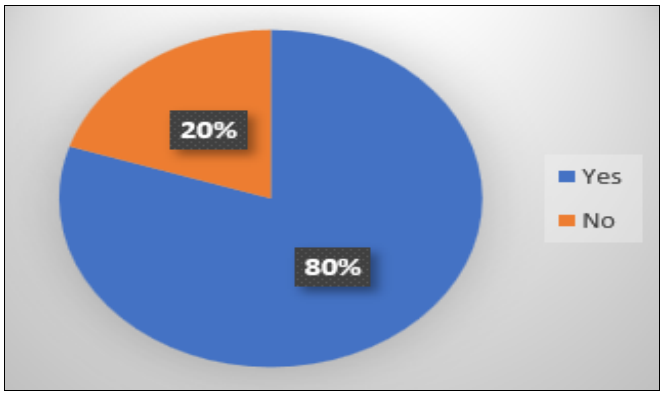
Table 4.1.8 shows that 60 (60%) of respondents occupied the current positions for 1-3 years, 20 (20%) occupied the current positions for 4-7 years, 15 (15%) occupied the current positions for 8-11 years while 5 (5%) occupied the current positions for more than 11 years.

Table 4.1.7

	Years (range)	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1-3 years	60	60.0	60.0	60.0
	4-7 years	20	20.0	20.0	80.0
	8-11 years	15	15.0	15.0	95.0
	More than 11 years	5	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	

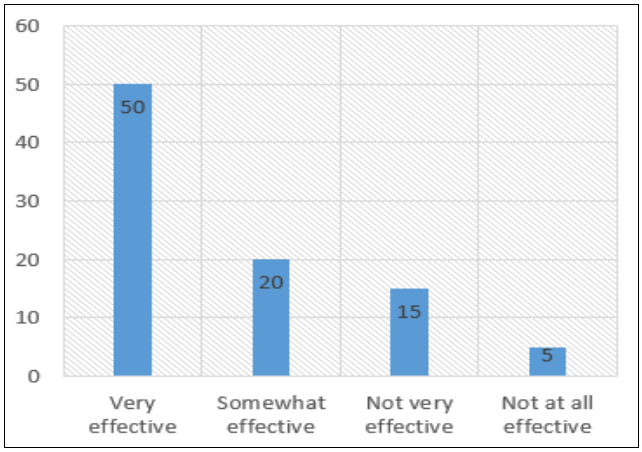
Source: Compiled by Author 2025

4.2.1 Has your organization implemented AI-powered recruitment tools?



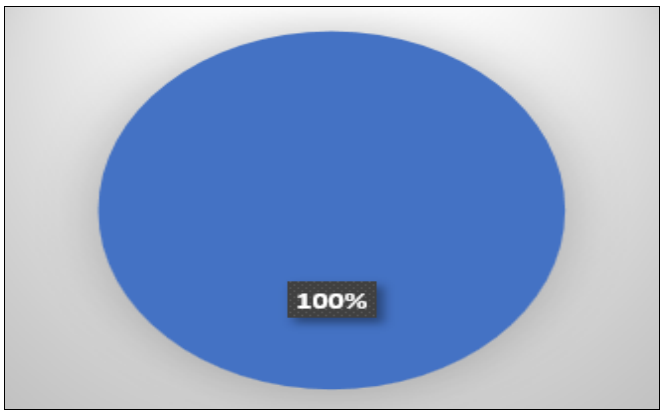
From the data above, 90% of the respondents said the organization implemented AI-powered recruitment tools while 20% of the respondents said the organization has not implemented AI-powered recruitment tools.

4.2.2 How effective do you think AI-powered recruitment tools are improving the recruitment process?



From the data above, 50% of the respondents said the AI-powered recruitment tools in improving the recruitment process is effective, 20% said it is somewhat effective 15% said it is not very effective while 5% of the respondents said it is not all effective.

4.3 What negative impact does technology specifically AI recruitment process bring?



From data above one major noticeable negative impact of technology in Jobs is loss of jobs because technology replaces humanity when it comes to employment.

4.4 Discussion of Respondents

The impact of AI-powered recruitment tools on recruitment outcomes is significant, with various statistics highlighting their benefits and challenges. Approximately 87% of companies use AI for their recruitment process, indicating widespread adoption across industries. About 65% of recruiters have used AI to hire people, and 24% of companies specifically utilize AI to attract talented employees. Furthermore, 44% of HR executives have started incorporating AI into their recruiting and hiring processes. The primary benefits of AI in recruitment include saving time, reducing bias, and improving candidate sourcing. Around 67% of hiring decision-makers believe that the main advantage of using AI in recruitment is its ability to save time. AI tools can process large amounts of data quickly, enabling recruiters to focus on strategic tasks. About 58% of recruiters find AI most useful for candidate sourcing, while 56% appreciate its role in screening candidates.

However, concerns exist regarding AI's potential to perpetuate biases if not properly managed. Only 31% of recruiters believe AI will ultimately replace human judgment in hiring decisions. Some 35% of recruiters worry that AI may exclude candidates with unique skills and experiences. Moreover, 66% of adults in the United States say they would not apply for a job that uses AI to help make hiring decisions, citing concerns about fairness and potential biases. The future of AI recruitment looks promising, with the global market size of the AI recruitment industry valued at $661.56 million in 2023 and projected to reach $1.12 billion by 2030, growing at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 6.78%. This growth indicates increasing investment in AI-powered recruitment tools, particularly in candidate sourcing and screening. Environmental factors also play a significant role in shaping the adoption decision. Competitive pressure is a significant driver of the adoption of AI-powered recruitment tools (Manyika *et al*., 2017). This is because organizations are under pressure to improve their recruitment outcomes and stay ahead of the competition. Regulatory requirements can also influence the adoption of AI-powered recruitment tools (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000). Economic conditions can also influence the adoption of AI-powered recruitment tools. For example, during times of economic uncertainty, organizations may be less likely to invest in new technologies (Davis, 1989).

Understanding these factors is essential for the successful adoption of AI-powered recruitment tools by ZANACO. By understanding the organizational, technological, and environmental factors that influence the adoption decision, ZANACO can develop strategies to overcome barriers to adoption and improve recruitment outcomes.

For the last few decades, digitalization in recruitment processes has been rapidly accelerating (Baykal, 2020). Nowadays, companies need to handle huge amounts of applications and data, and conventional tools are no longer efficient (Chapman and Webster, 2006). In this sense, digitalization creates great potential for saving costs, increasing the efficiency in the hiring process, and avoiding biases in the selection of the candidates (Chapman and Webster, 2006). An important driver of this digitalization process is Artificial Intelligence (AI) (Rodríguez Espíndola *et al*., 2020). Interestingly, from an industry-level perspective, although AI recruitment is gaining momentum, HR industry is still lagging behind with investments in those new technologies (Pillai and Sivathanu, 2020). To understand the causes that are slowing down the adoption of these technologies, this study investigates the market factors that impact the pace of adoption of AI specifically for recruitment. Also, specifically, recruitment is selected due to inefficient traditional recruitment processes and expanding influence on AI in recruitment and the opportunities that it brings (Wright and Atkinson, 2016)). When it comes to existing literature, to our knowledge, the literature generally focuses only on one aspect at the time, missing a broader and inclusive discussion embracing several factors at once, to disclose the interconnections between them. Also, the results from the studies taking diverse perspectives at different levels, including those of end users, customers and AI solution providers, are not always coherent. For example, while customer companies believe that AI technologies are too biased, the AI solution providers often claim that AI is less biased than any human recruiter (Bersin and Chamorro-Premuzic, 2019; Tambe *et al*., 2019). From a preliminary interview with Fredrik Östgren, the CEO of our external partner Hubert AI, there is a need for understanding where perspectives diverge, and which factors contribute shaping such perspectives. In line with this direction, to support both the external partner's aims and fill the academic gaps, several bodies of literature have been investigated including those on market dynamics, strategic planning, AI recruitment market, recruitment market and recruitment processes.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

This chapter looked at the conclusion and recommendations.

5.1 Conclusion

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in recruitment processes, as examined through the case study of ZANACO, presents a transformative opportunity to revolutionize the way organizations attract, select, and hire talent. By leveraging AI-powered tools and technologies, ZANACO can significantly enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of its recruitment processes, reducing time-to-hire, improving candidate quality, and minimizing biases. The strategic adoption of AI in recruitment can also enable ZANACO to stay competitive in a rapidly evolving job market, where top talent is increasingly sought after by multiple organizations. By harnessing the power of AI, ZANACO can gain a competitive edge in attracting and retaining top performers, driving business growth, and achieving its strategic objectives. However, it is crucial for ZANACO to approach AI adoption in recruitment with caution, ensuring that the technology is implemented in a way that complements human judgment and oversight. This includes regular audits to prevent biases, transparent communication with candidates, and ongoing training for recruiters to work effectively with AI tools.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the case study of ZANACO, the following recommendations are proposed to effectively leverage Artificial Intelligence (AI) in recruitment: Conduct a thorough analysis of current recruitment processes to identify areas where AI can bring the most value, such as

candidate sourcing, resume screening, or interview scheduling. Select suitable AI-powered recruitment tools that align with ZANACO's specific needs and goals, and ensure they integrate seamlessly with existing HR systems. Develop a comprehensive implementation plan outlining clear objectives, timelines, and resource allocation for AI adoption in recruitment. Provide training for recruiters and HR staff to ensure they understand how to effectively work with AI tools and interpret results. Regularly audit AI systems for bias and fairness, implementing measures to detect and mitigate biases in AI algorithms, ensuring fairness and equity in the recruitment process.

Continuously monitor and evaluate AI performance, tracking key metrics such as time-to-hire, candidate satisfaction, and quality of hire, to assess the effectiveness of AI in recruitment. Foster a culture of innovation and experimentation, encouraging recruiters and HR staff to explore new AI-powered tools and techniques, and providing opportunities for professional development. Develop a robust data governance framework, ensuring candidate data is handled securely and complying with relevant data protection regulations. Integrate AI with existing HR strategies, aligning AI adoption in recruitment with broader HR initiatives such as diversity and inclusion, talent development, and employee engagement. Develop a candidate-centric approach, using AI to enhance the candidate experience, providing personalized communication, and streamlining the application process. Emphasize transparency and communication, clearly communicating the use of AI in recruitment to candidates, and providing explanations for AI-driven decisions. Encourage human oversight and judgment, ensuring AI is used as a tool to support, rather than replace, human recruiters and hiring managers.

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