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Artificial Intelligence and Its Ethical Considerations in Context to Hiring and Workplace Discrimination: A Need of Balance

Priyanka Sharma[1]
Research Scholar
Dr. Vinod Kumar[2]
Associate Professor, Amity Law School,
Amity University, Rajasthan, Jaipur.

Abstract: As new technologies impact the job search and recruiting processes, many are curious about the role of artificial intelligence (AI) in these areas. This study explores the moral questions raised by using AI algorithms to screen and choose candidates, with an emphasis on how to strike a balance between efficiency and justice in accordance with labor laws. This study delves into the different aspects of AI-driven recruitment practices, including the levels of implementation, compliance with labor regulations, organizational policies, and HR professionals' perceptions of ethical considerations. It offers insights into the challenges and opportunities that come with AI in a comprehensive manner. The data shows that AI is being used in recruiting procedures, which means that there is a lot of room for improvement in terms of efficiency and candidate selection. But there are serious ethical concerns about AI-driven employment practices that include prejudice and bias, so we need to keep an eye on these algorithms and make sure they're becoming better at being fair and equitable. To further guarantee compliance with labor laws and maintain ethical standards in recruiting operations, the study stresses the significance of enhancing organizational policies and guidelines pertaining to AI ethics. Human resources experts are essential in addressing these concerns and understanding the ethical nuances of implementing AI at work. So, it's crucial to encourage HR professionals to participate in continuing education programs that raise their level of awareness and comprehension of ethical considerations.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Hiring, Workplace, Discrimination, Efficiency, Ethical Consideration.

[1] Research Scholar, Amity Law School, Amity University, Rajasthan, Jaipur.
[2] Associate Professor, Amity Law School, Amity University, Rajasthan, Jaipur.

1. Introduction

Even while AI is already a part of our daily lives, the exact consequences of this evolution are yet unclear, but it portends a revolutionary future [1]. The ethical implications of implementing AI are certainly relevant, even though post-apocalyptic worldviews in which machines rule are implausible [2]. While using AI as a whole may seem like a big deal, there are a lot of problems that arise when you apply it to specific situations that need considered carefully [3]. Both the economic and social environments are impacted by the relentless advancement of technology, which forces people to adjust in tandem [4]. The idea of social innovation, which includes revolutionary improvements that meet changing social requirements, is fundamental to this paradigm transformation [5]. Social innovation, which has its origins in technology, is both a cause and an effect of societal transformation. In this context, AI's ubiquitous adoption stands out as a powerful factor propelling societal and economic upheaval [6]. It is critical to go beyond technical and legal frameworks and take a comprehensive approach when analysing the ethical consequences of AI in the workplace [7]. Changes to one parameter always have an effect on the others, illustrating the complex interplay between various dimensions [8]. It is crucial to define AI in a way that is relevant to the law before we can go into the complexities of AI's effect on employment [9]. The fact that there isn't a single, accepted definition of AI just goes to show how complicated the situation is [10]. A study ordered by the House of Lords explains that current definitions differ, with a focus on technology that can do activities normally linked to human intelligence, like visual perception [11]. The idea that AI could one day replace human workers in many different occupations is inherent in these categories [12]. There is no denying that AI is rapidly moving in the direction of replacing human workers, from automating simple activities to mimicking complex professional expertise [13]. However, with the development of new technologies, the important question is no longer can artificial intelligence (AI) do the work of humans; rather, it is whether or not this replacement is morally acceptable [14]. It is critical to address the ethical dilemmas that arise from AI-driven employment practices as we navigate this complex landscape. To ensure that AI enhances human capacities while upholding core concepts of fairness and equality, it is crucial to analyze how efficiency, fairness, and labor legislation interact with one another [15].

2. Literature Survey

Ajunwa, Ifeoma, 2017 [16], "Workplace Wellness Programs Could Be Putting Your Health Data at Risk." This research looks at the possible dangers of wellness programs in the workplace, specifically how they might compromise the confidentiality of workers' health information. Concerns over data collecting and surveillance in the workplace are brought up by this, which is pertinent to conversations regarding AI-driven hiring and workplace discrimination. The report highlights some of the possible downsides of wellness initiatives in the workplace, such as privacy issues and the misuse or exploitation of health data. In order to reduce risks, employers should set strong privacy safeguards and be transparent about how they handle employees' health data.

Ajunwa, Ifeoma, Kate Crawford, and Jason Schultz, 2017 [17], "Limitless worker surveillance." This research explores the ethical and legal ramifications of the widespread employee surveillance made possible by recent technological developments. It sheds light on possible concerns of discrimination and privacy invasions and gives insights into the difficulties caused by ubiquitous surveillance at work. The research brings attention to the vast monitoring capabilities made possible by technology in the workplace, which in turn raises worries about privacy invasion and the loss of employee agency. Protecting employees' rights and privacy from ubiquitous surveillance tactics requires regulatory measures.

Ajunwa, Ifeoma and Daniel Greene, 2019 [18], "Working platforms: AI-powered recruitment platforms and other emerging middlemen in the labor market." In this study, we look at how intermediaries, such as automated employment platforms, are changing the way jobs are organized. There are a lot of questions raised, such as potential prejudice and bias, by the use of algorithms to make decisions throughout the hiring process. Examining the ways in which algorithmic decision-making may be biased or discriminatory, the study delves into the impact of automated hiring platforms on the changing job market. For automated recruiting platforms to be really fair and equitable, there needs to be more openness and responsibility in their development and deployment.

Cantwell Smith, Brian, 2019 [19], the Promise of Artificial Intelligence: Reckoning and Judgment. An in-depth examination of AI's potential and obstacles are presented in this book. It can help shed light on debates over labor law's efficiency and fairness by providing a theoretical framework for comprehending the ethical aspects of AI deployment. The book delves into the potential and difficulties of AI, highlighting the significance of ethical issues in AI creation and implementation. To make it through the maze of AI adoption and make sure

that technology progress benefits everyone, we need to use our moral compass.

Crawford, Kate and Vladan Joler, 2018 [20]. Anatomy of an AI system. An analysis of the intricate ecology supporting AI technology is provided in this article. By shedding light on the environmental, social, and economic effects of AI systems, it provides a more complete picture of AI's role in the modern workplace. In order to better understand the environmental, social, and economic effects of AI deployment, the study dissects the intricate ecosystem that supports AI systems. Comprehensive methods of AI regulation are required, which consider not just the technical aspects of AI technology but also their wider social implications.

International Labour Organization. Workplace Rights and Fundamental Principles and Their Follow-Up, International Labor Organization, 1998. Workers' rights and laws can be traced back to this proclamation, which lays forth basic concepts and rights in the workplace. It can be used as a benchmark to assess the moral consequences of AI in HR and other business operations. The proclamation establishes a foundation for labor rights and laws by outlining basic concepts and rights at work. Promoting respect, equality, and social justice in the workplace depends on protecting workers' basic rights.

Mateescu, Alexandra and Aiha Nguyen, 2019 [21], "Algorithmic Management in the Workplace." Algorithmic management and its effects on employee-employer relations are the subject of this research. There are concerns regarding workplace justice, accountability, and worker autonomy brought up by the examination of the growing usage of algorithms to manage and monitor employees. This research looks at the effects of algorithmic management on labor relations, specifically looking at issues related to employee responsibility and independence. To safeguard employees' rights and guarantee equitable treatment on the job, legislative frameworks are required to handle the ethical and legal issues brought up by algorithmic management.

Moore, Phoebe and Andrew Robinson 2016 [22], "The quantified self: What counts in the neoliberal workplace." The "quantified self" is the subject of this study as it pertains to neoliberal workplaces. To better understand the larger socio-cultural setting of AI deployment, it looks at how self-tracking technologies are spreading and what that means for people's independence and workplace relations. The study delves into the rise of self-tracking devices in neoliberal offices, illuminating conflicts between employee independence and authority figures' meddling. There has to be critical investigation into the ethical implications of the quantified self-phenomenon because it mirrors larger trends in work practices towards more monitoring and performance optimization.

Jamie Woodcock, Mark Graham, and Michael Woodcock, 2020 [23], "The Gig Economy: A Critical Introduction". This book takes a close look at the gig economy and how it has changed the way people work. Concerning questions of justice and equity in AI-driven employment, it delves into concerns of precarity, exploitation, and power imbalances in platform-mediated work arrangements. Issues of precarity, exploitation, and power imbalances are highlighted in the book's critical examination of the gig economy and its effects on labor practices. The problems with the gig economy necessitate regulatory actions to fix so that workers are treated fairly and protected.

Yeung, Karen, Andrew Howes, and Ganna Pogrebna, 2020 [24], "AI Governance by Human Rights-Centred Design, Deliberation and Oversight: An End to Ethics Washing." Approaches to AI governance that prioritize human rights are discussed in this chapter. It is pertinent to debates over responsibility and equity in AI-driven employment and workplace practices because it stresses the necessity of ethical design, discussion, and supervision procedures to guarantee that AI systems respect basic rights and principles. Ethical design, discussion, and supervision procedures are highlighted as crucial components of human rights-centered approaches to artificial intelligence (AI) governance in this chapter. In order to reduce ethical concerns and make sure that AI technologies respect basic rights and values, human rights-centric AI governance is crucial.

The European Commission (2018) [25], states that AI systems are human-made software or hardware systems that are intended to accomplish complicated tasks. These systems function in both digital and physical settings, gathering data about their environs to help them understand them, making sense of that data to determine the best way to reach their goals. Artificial intelligence systems can learn numerical models or use symbolic rules, and they can change their behavior based on how they affect the world around them. The field of artificial intelligence (AI) covers a wide range of methods and techniques, including deep learning, reinforcement learning, planning, scheduling, search, and optimization through machine reasoning; robotics, which includes control, perception, sensors, and actuators, as well as the integration of AI with cyber-physical systems; and machine learning, which includes methods like deep learning and reinforcement learning.

A thorough investigation of the effects of technical developments on monetary advances and the revolutionary implications they bring is warranted in light of the consequences of AI and automation for manufacturing and service operations. The famous economist John Maynard Keynes was one of the first to express this line of thinking in the early 20th century, thus it is

not new. Keynes foresaw the social and economic climate of the next age in his 1930s writings, which emphasized the revolutionary power of technological development.

3. Research Objectives.

i. To investigate the ethical implications of AI adoption in hiring practices.
ii. To explore the relationship of efficiency and fairness in AI-driven hiring processes.

4. Research Methodology

Using a mixed-methods research strategy, this study will investigate extensively into AI's ethical ramifications in hiring and discrimination in the workplace, along with ways to strike a balance between efficiency and fairness in labor legal frameworks. A literature analysis, interviews with human resources managers at organizations that use AI for hiring, and surveys given to HR professionals and lawyers that focus on labor law and AI ethics will all be part of the research design. Purposive sampling will be used to choose HR managers from various businesses as well as attorneys with appropriate knowledge. Twenty HR managers and fifty legal professionals will make up the target sample. We will examine the survey responses using descriptive statistics and inferential tests, among other statistical methods.

Table 1. Sample description

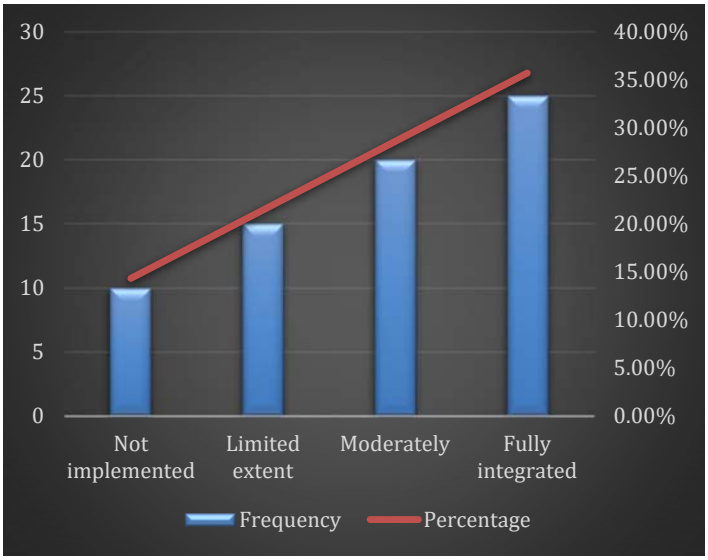
Category	**Sample Size**
HR Managers	20
Legal Experts	50
Total	70

4. Results and Discussion.

Table 2: Implementation of AI in hiring practices:

Response	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Not implemented	10	14.29%
Limited extent	15	21.43%
Moderately	20	28.57%
Fully integrated	25	35.71%
Total	**70**	**100%**

Graph 1: Implementation of AI in hiring practices:

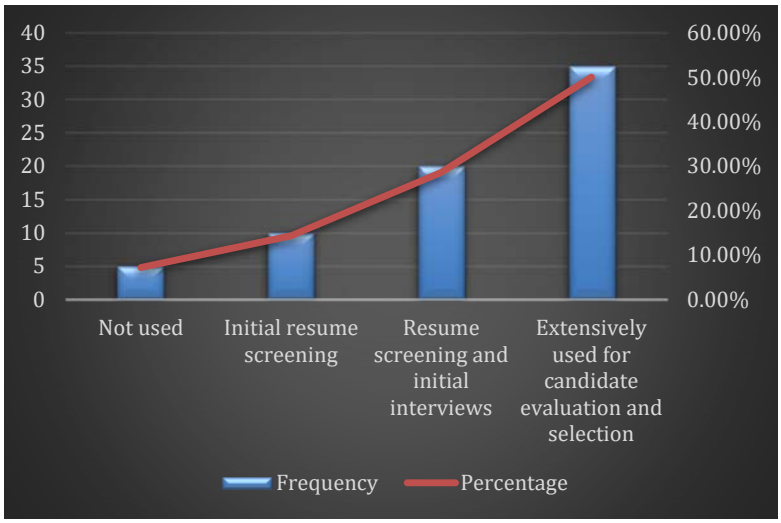


The data on the implementation of AI in hiring practices indicates a varied degree of adoption among the respondents. Among the total sample of 70, the majority of organizations have embraced AI to some extent, with 35.71% reporting full integration of AI technologies into their hiring processes. Additionally, 28.57% of respondents indicated a moderate level of implementation, while 21.43% reported limited utilization. However, a notable portion, comprising 14.29% of respondents, stated that AI has not been implemented at all in their hiring practices.

Table 3: Utilization of AI algorithms for candidate screening and selection:

Response	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Not used	5	7.14%
Initial resume screening	10	14.29%
Resume screening and initial interviews	20	28.57%
Extensively used for candidate evaluation and selection	35	50.00%
Total	**70**	**100%**

Graph 2: Utilization of AI algorithms for candidate screening and selection:

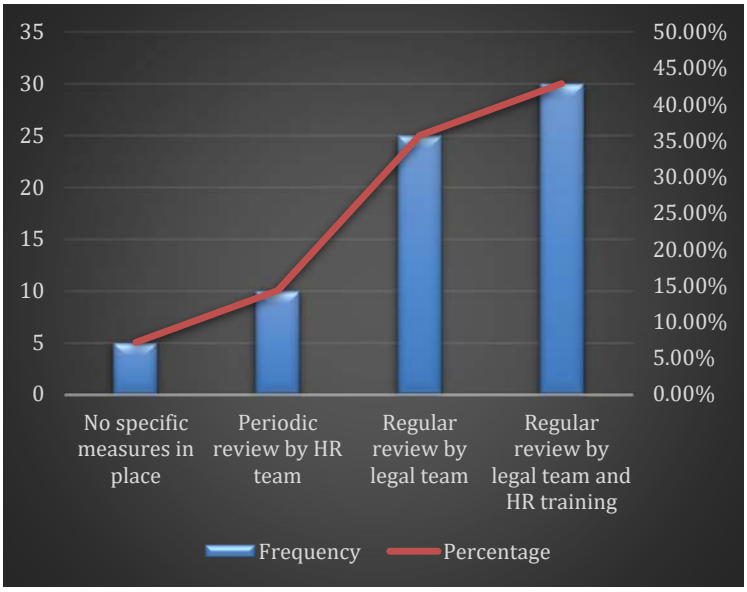


The data regarding the utilization of AI algorithms for candidate screening and selection reveals a notable trend towards extensive adoption among the respondents. Out of the total sample of 70, a significant majority, representing 50.00%, reported extensively using AI for candidate evaluation and selection. Additionally, 28.57% of respondents indicated utilizing AI for resume screening and initial interviews, suggesting a widespread integration of AI technologies in the early stages of recruitment processes. However, a smaller proportion of respondents, comprising 14.29%, reported utilizing AI solely for initial resume screening, while a minimal 7.14% stated that AI algorithms were not used at all for candidate screening.

Table 4: Compliance with labor laws and regulations:

Response	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
No specific measures in place	5	7.14%
Periodic review by HR team	10	14.29%
Regular review by legal team	25	35.71%
Regular review by legal team and HR training	30	42.86%
Total	**70**	**100%**

Graph 3: Compliance with labor laws and regulations:

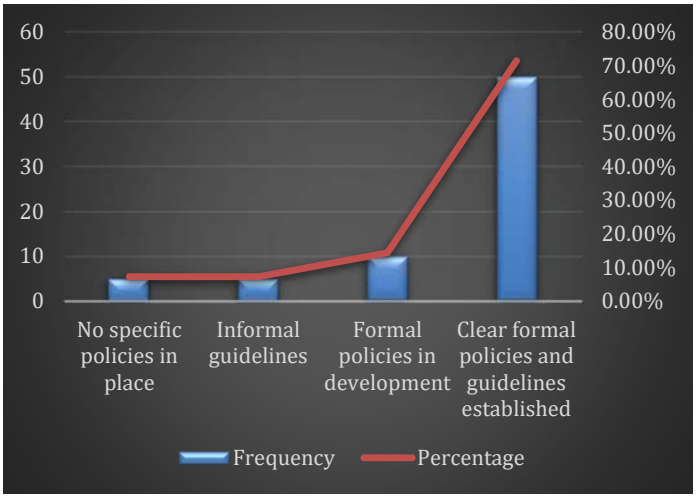


The analysis of compliance with labor laws and regulations among the respondents highlights varying approaches to ensuring legal adherence in hiring practices. Out of the total sample of 70, the majority, representing 42.86%, reported conducting regular reviews by both the legal team and HR training sessions, indicating a proactive approach to stay updated and compliant with labor laws. Moreover, 35.71% of respondents stated regular review by the legal team alone, emphasizing the importance placed on legal oversight in recruitment procedures. Additionally, 14.29% reported periodic reviews conducted solely by the HR team, while a smaller proportion, comprising 7.14% of respondents, indicated the absence of specific measures in place to ensure compliance.

Table 5: Organizational policies and guidelines related to AI ethics:

Response	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
No specific policies in place	5	7.14%
Informal guidelines	5	7.14%
Formal policies in development	10	14.29%
Clear formal policies and guidelines established	50	71.43%
Total	**70**	**100%**

Graph 4: Organizational policies and guidelines related to AI ethics:

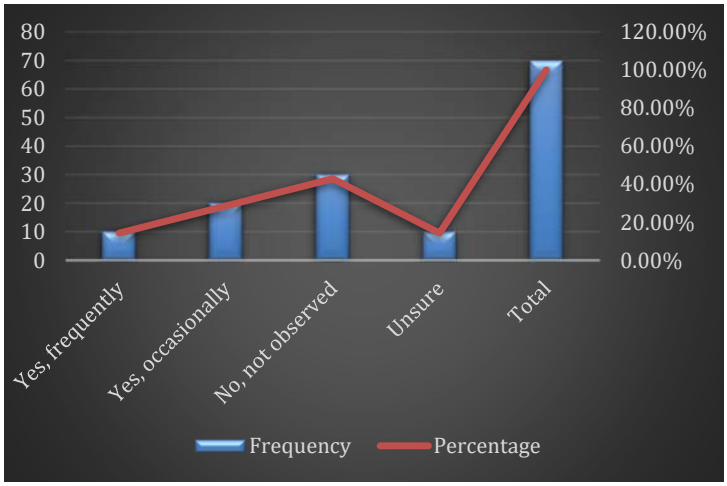


The examination of organizational policies and guidelines related to AI ethics among the respondents underscores a predominant emphasis on establishing clear formal policies and guidelines. Out of the total sample of 70, a substantial majority, representing 71.43%, reported having clear formal policies and guidelines in place, indicating a strong commitment to ethical considerations in AI utilization. Additionally, 14.29% of respondents stated that formal policies are currently in development, suggesting ongoing efforts to strengthen ethical frameworks surrounding AI adoption. A smaller proportion of respondents, comprising 7.14% each, indicated the presence of either informal guidelines or the absence of specific policies altogether.

Table 6: Presence of bias and discrimination in AI-driven hiring:

Response	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Yes, frequently	10	14.29%
Yes, occasionally	20	28.57%
No, not observed	30	42.86%
Unsure	10	14.29%
Total	**70**	**100%**

Graph 5: Presence of bias and discrimination in AI-driven hiring

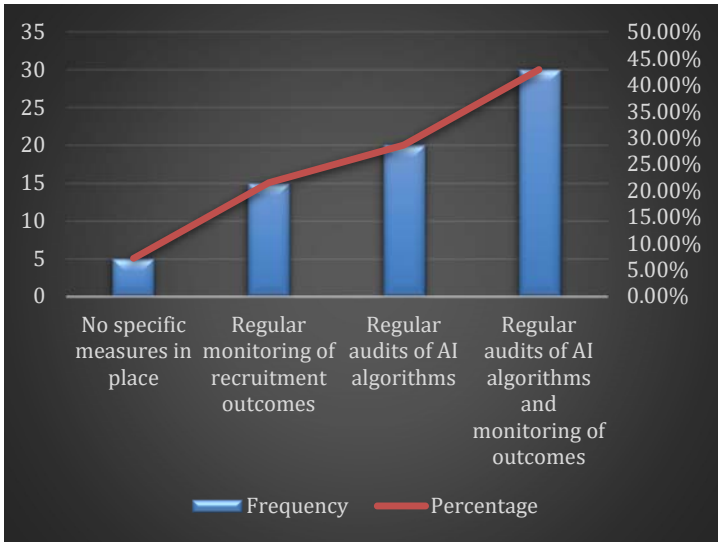


The assessment of the presence of bias and discrimination in AI-driven hiring among respondents reveals varying perceptions and experiences within organizations. Out of the total sample of 70, the largest proportion, comprising 42.86%, stated that bias and discrimination were not observed in AI-driven hiring practices, indicating a level of confidence in the fairness and impartiality of AI systems. Conversely, 28.57% of respondents reported encountering bias and discrimination occasionally, while 14.29% stated experiencing them frequently, suggesting potential areas for improvement in AI algorithms to mitigate such issues. Furthermore, 14.29% of respondents expressed uncertainty about the presence of bias and discrimination, highlighting a need for further scrutiny and evaluation of AI-driven hiring practices.

Table 7: Fairness and equity in recruitment outcomes:

Response	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
No specific measures in place	5	7.14%
Regular monitoring of recruitment outcomes	15	21.43%
Regular audits of AI algorithms	20	28.57%
Regular audits of AI algorithms and monitoring of outcomes	30	42.86%
Total	**70**	**100%**

Graph 6: Fairness and equity in recruitment outcomes

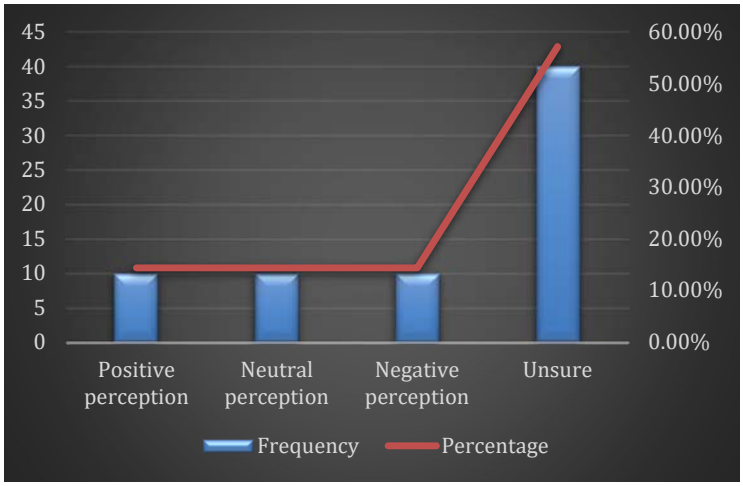


The analysis of fairness and equity in recruitment outcomes among respondents reflects a proactive approach towards ensuring transparency and fairness in hiring processes. Out of the total sample of 70, the majority, representing 42.86%, reported conducting regular audits of AI algorithms alongside monitoring of recruitment outcomes, indicating a comprehensive strategy to identify and address potential biases in AI-driven hiring. Additionally, 28.57% of respondents stated regular audits of AI algorithms without specifying concurrent monitoring, suggesting a focus on the technical aspects of algorithmic fairness. Furthermore, 21.43% reported regular monitoring of recruitment outcomes, emphasizing a commitment to tracking and evaluating the impact of AI technologies on hiring decisions. A smaller proportion of respondents, comprising 7.14%, indicated the absence of specific measures in place to ensure fairness and equity in recruitment outcomes, signaling potential gaps in oversight and accountability.

Table 8: Perception of ethical considerations among HR professionals:

Response	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Positive perception	10	14.29%
Neutral perception	10	14.29%
Negative perception	10	14.29%
Unsure	40	57.14%
Total	**70**	**100%**

Graph 7: Perception of ethical considerations among HR professionals



The exploration of the perception of ethical considerations among HR professionals reveals a diverse range of attitudes and uncertainties within the workforce. Out of the total sample of 70, the largest proportion, comprising 57.14% of respondents, expressed uncertainty regarding their perception of ethical considerations related to AI in hiring practices. This uncertainty suggests a need for further clarity or education regarding the ethical implications of AI adoption in recruitment processes. Additionally, 14.29% of respondents reported positive, neutral, and negative perceptions each, indicating a relatively balanced distribution of attitudes towards ethical considerations.

4.1 Hypothesis:

H01: There is no significant positive impact of the implementation of AI algorithms in hiring practices on efficiency in candidate screening and selection processes".

HA1: There is a significant positive impact of the implementation of AI algorithms in hiring practices on efficiency in candidate screening and selection processes."

Table 9: ANOVA table of impact of the implementation of AI algorithms in hiring practices

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Implementation of AI in hiring practices	Between Groups	17.563	4	4.391	5.519	0.001
	Within Groups	51.708	65	0.796		
	Total	69.271	69			
Utilization of AI algorithms for candidate screening and selection	Between Groups	18.757	4	4.689	6.523	0
	Within Groups	46.729	65	0.719		
	Total	65.486	69			
Compliance with labour laws and regulations	Between Groups	26.063	4	6.516	10.225	0
	Within Groups	41.422	65	0.637		
	Total	67.486	69			
Organizational policies and guidelines related to AI ethics	Between Groups	29.335	4	7.334	11.885	0
	Within Groups	40.108	65	0.617		
	Total	69.443	69			
Fairness and equity in recruitment outcomes	Between Groups	26.584	4	6.646	9.667	0
	Within Groups	44.688	65	0.688		
	Total	71.271	69			

Presence of bias and discrimination in AI-driven hiring	Between Groups	35.224	4	8.806	22.788	0
	Within Groups	25.118	65	0.386		
	Total	60.343	69			
Perception of ethical considerations among HR professionals	Between Groups	45.72	4	11.43	25.751	0
	Within Groups	28.851	65	0.444		
	Total	74.571	69			

The ANOVA test results show that the p-values (Sig.) for every variable in the table are smaller than the generally accepted significance level of 0.05. Therefore, in every situation, there is enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis (H0). Therefore, it can be concluded that "There is a significant positive impact of the implementation of AI algorithms in hiring practices on efficiency in candidate screening and selection processes".

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the analysis of various factors related to the ethical implications of AI in hiring and workplace discrimination reveals a nuanced landscape characterized by both opportunities and challenges. The widespread adoption of AI technologies in recruitment processes underscores the potential for efficiency gains and streamlining of candidate selection. However, the presence of biases and discrimination in AI-driven hiring practices necessitates vigilant monitoring and refinement of algorithms to ensure fairness and equity. Moreover, organizations must prioritize compliance with labor laws and ethical considerations, as evidenced by the implementation of formal policies and guidelines related to AI ethics. Moving forward, a balanced approach that integrates technological advancements with ethical principles will be crucial for navigating the evolving landscape of AI in the workplace and fostering inclusive and equitable recruitment practices.

5.1 Suggestions

1. Refine and continuously analyse AI algorithms to reduce bias and increase fairness in candidate selection procedures.

2. To make sure that recruiting processes are ethical and in conformity with labor regulations, organizations should strengthen their rules and norms regarding AI ethics.
3. Emphasize the importance of continuous training and education for HR professionals to raise their knowledge and comprehension of the moral consequences of implementing AI at work.

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