



E-RECRUITMENT IN THE DIGITAL ERA: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF PERCEPTION, CREDIBILITY, AND SATISFACTION AMONG POST-GRADUATE JOBSEEKERS IN NAGPUR CITY

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Abstract: - The integration of digital technologies into human resource management has significantly transformed recruitment practices across the globe. E-recruitment, defined as the systematic use of internet-based platforms for attracting, screening, and selecting candidates, has emerged as a dominant hiring methodology in the rapidly digitising Indian economy. This study investigates the perception, credibility, and satisfaction levels of post-graduate jobseekers in Nagpur City towards e-recruitment systems. A quantitative research design was adopted, and primary data were collected from 150 respondents through a structured questionnaire employing a five-point Likert scale. Statistical tools including Pearson correlation and multiple regression analysis were employed to examine the hypothesised relationships. The findings reveal that perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and platform credibility significantly influence jobseekers' overall satisfaction. Regression coefficients confirm that perception ($\beta = 0.52$, $p < 0.05$) and credibility ($\beta = 0.47$, $p < 0.05$) are robust predictors of satisfaction. The study contributes to the growing body of digital HRM literature by providing region-specific insights from a Tier-II Indian city and proposes strategic recommendations for improving recruitment platforms from the candidate experience perspective.

Keywords: E-Recruitment, Jobseekers, Perception, Platform Credibility, User Satisfaction, Digital HRM, Nagpur

1. Introduction

The proliferation of information and communication technologies has fundamentally redefined the operational landscape of organisations worldwide, with human resource management among the most profoundly affected domains. The recruitment function, which constitutes the entry point of all human capital acquisition, has undergone a paradigm shift from conventional newspaper advertisements and walk-in interviews to sophisticated, algorithm-driven digital platforms. E-recruitment, broadly understood as the deployment of electronic resources—principally the internet—for identifying, attracting, evaluating, and hiring suitable employees, has become an indispensable mechanism for organisations seeking competitive advantage in talent markets [1].

In the Indian context, the pace of digital adoption has been particularly dramatic. According to the Telecom Regulatory Authority

of India, internet subscriptions in the country crossed 850 million by 2023, driven by affordable data connectivity under schemes such as Digital India. Simultaneously, the expansion of higher education has produced a large and growing cohort of post-graduate degree holders who constitute a significant segment of aspirational jobseekers. These individuals increasingly rely on platforms such as Naukri.com, LinkedIn, Shine.com, and organisational career portals as their primary channels for employment exploration [2]. The intersection of this supply of qualified candidates and the digital infrastructure of recruitment platforms creates a research context of considerable academic and practical significance.

E-recruitment offers a compelling array of advantages over traditional methods. Organisations benefit from substantial reductions in cost-per-hire and time-to-fill metrics, expanded reach across geographic



boundaries, and the ability to process large volumes of applications efficiently through applicant tracking systems [3]. From the candidate's perspective, digital platforms offer convenience, the ability to apply to multiple positions simultaneously, real-time status updates, and access to employer branding information that helps in informed decision-making. Nevertheless, the adoption and satisfaction of jobseekers with these platforms is not unconditional; concerns about the authenticity of job postings, data privacy, algorithmic opacity, and lack of personalised feedback continue to temper user experience [4]. Nagpur, strategically located at the geographic heart of India and recognised as the second capital of Maharashtra, has emerged as a significant educational and employment hub. The city hosts major universities including Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur University and Gondwana University, producing thousands of post-graduate degree holders annually across disciplines such as management, commerce, science, and technology. As these graduates enter the competitive labour market, their reliance on e-recruitment platforms has intensified, yet empirical understanding of their perceptions and satisfaction remains insufficiently explored in the academic literature [5].

This study, therefore, seeks to fill this gap by empirically investigating the perception, credibility assessments, and satisfaction levels of post-graduate jobseekers in Nagpur City with respect to e-recruitment systems. By anchoring the analysis in established theoretical frameworks such as the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and drawing upon primary survey data, the study aims to generate actionable insights for platform developers, corporate HR practitioners, and academic researchers interested in the evolving dynamics of digital talent acquisition in semi-urban India.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Concept and Evolution of E-Recruitment

E-recruitment is conceptualised as the process of utilising electronic resources, particularly internet-based technologies, to identify, attract, and ultimately hire prospective employees [1]. The origins of e-recruitment in India can be traced to the late 1990s, coinciding with the liberalisation of the telecommunications sector and the emergence of job portals such as Naukri.com, founded in 1997. Kapse, Patil, and Patil define e-recruitment as encompassing job advertisement on digital channels, online application processing, electronic screening through automated systems, and digital communication throughout the selection process [6]. Over the subsequent two decades, the ecosystem has evolved considerably, incorporating mobile-first applications, artificial intelligence-driven candidate matching, and social media recruitment through platforms like LinkedIn and Indeed [7].

Parry and Tyson argue that e-recruitment represents not merely a technological upgrade but a fundamental reconceptualisation of the employer-candidate relationship, shifting power dynamics and information asymmetries that characterised traditional recruitment [8]. In the Indian corporate landscape, Bhattacharya documents the accelerated adoption of e-HRM practices, noting that e-recruitment was among the first HR functions to transition to digital platforms owing to the measurable cost efficiencies it delivers [9].

2.2 Perception of Jobseekers and Technology Acceptance

The theoretical foundation for understanding jobseeker perception of e-recruitment systems is most robustly provided by Davis's Technology Acceptance Model, which postulates that user behaviour towards a technology is principally governed by two cognitive constructs: Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) and Perceived Usefulness (PU) [10]. PEOU refers to the degree to which a user believes that employing a particular technology will be free of cognitive effort, while PU denotes the subjective probability that using the technology will enhance job-related performance outcomes.



Sharma and Goyal applied TAM constructs to the context of Indian jobseekers and found that both PEOU and PU exerted statistically significant positive effects on behavioural intention to use recruitment platforms, with PU demonstrating a comparatively stronger influence [11]. Verma extended this analysis by incorporating subjective norms and found that peer influence and social endorsement of specific platforms further moderated the relationship between TAM constructs and actual usage among management graduates [12]. Raghavan's study of digital HRM adoption in Indian firms corroborates these findings, noting that organisations which invest in user-experience optimization of their career portals observe higher application completion rates and candidate satisfaction [13].

Critically, perception is not a static construct; it is shaped dynamically by prior experience with digital platforms, educational exposure to technology, and the broader digital literacy of the individual. Post-graduate jobseekers, by virtue of their extended engagement with academic and professional digital tools, tend to bring higher baseline expectations to recruitment platforms than less-educated counterparts, making their satisfaction criteria correspondingly more demanding [14].

2.3 Credibility of E-Recruitment Platforms

Platform credibility is a multidimensional construct encompassing trustworthiness, expertise, and transparency as perceived by the user. In the context of e-recruitment, credibility takes on special significance because the consequences of low-credibility interactions—engaging with fraudulent job postings, submitting personal data to unverified employers, or investing effort in applications that never receive acknowledgement—are direct and often costly for jobseekers [4].

Singh and Finn identify transparency, verification of job listings, and responsiveness of employer communication as the three cardinal pillars of credibility in online recruitment [15]. Kumar highlights that the prevalence of ghost jobs—positions listed for recruitment marketing

purposes rather than immediate hiring—has severely eroded trust among experienced jobseekers in India [16]. Saxena's study of online trust factors in the context of Indian e-commerce, though not exclusively focused on recruitment, provides a useful theoretical bridge, demonstrating that initial trust beliefs formed at the first interaction with a digital platform have lasting effects on continued usage and recommendation behaviour [17].

From a regulatory standpoint, the absence of a comprehensive statutory framework governing the accuracy and authenticity of online job postings in India exacerbates credibility concerns. Platforms largely rely on self-regulatory mechanisms, and the asymmetry of information between employers who post positions and candidates who apply creates structural vulnerabilities that undermine platform credibility from the outset [18].

2.4 Jobseeker Satisfaction in Digital Recruitment

Satisfaction in the context of e-recruitment is conceptualised as the overall affective evaluation by the jobseeker of their experience with digital recruitment channels relative to their expectations. Kumari's research on job satisfaction in the context of e-recruitment identifies three primary antecedents of candidate satisfaction: system quality (including interface design and navigation ease), information quality (including accuracy and completeness of job descriptions), and service quality (including timeliness of communication and feedback) [19]. These antecedents map onto the Information System Success Model proposed by DeLone and McLean, adapted here to the specific context of talent acquisition platforms.

Mehta documents that candidates who receive timely feedback—even when the feedback is unfavourable—report significantly higher satisfaction scores than those who receive no response, underscoring the critical importance of communication design in recruitment systems [20]. Jain's candidate experience study in Indian organisations found that perceived fairness and transparency in the selection process mediated



the relationship between system usability and overall satisfaction, suggesting that satisfaction is not merely a function of technological efficiency but also of procedural justice perceptions [21]. Patil's work on e-recruitment adoption in Maharashtra corroborates these findings, with respondents citing lack of personalised communication as the most significant driver of dissatisfaction among technically proficient jobseekers [22].

2.5 Research Gap and Theoretical Contribution

A systematic review of the extant literature reveals that while several studies have examined e-recruitment adoption and satisfaction in major metropolitan centres such as Mumbai, Pune, Delhi, and Bengaluru, research focusing specifically on Tier-II cities such as Nagpur remains conspicuously sparse [23]. Furthermore, the majority of existing studies examine perception, credibility, and satisfaction as isolated constructs rather than as interrelated dimensions within a unified empirical framework. Mishra's work on recruitment efficiency and Yadav's analysis of digital HR transformation in central India gesture towards the need for integrated frameworks but stop short of empirical validation [24, 25]. The present study addresses these gaps by simultaneously examining perception and credibility as predictors of satisfaction within a single regression model, providing a more holistic and theoretically coherent account of the e-recruitment experience among post-graduate jobseekers.

3. Research Objectives

The study is guided by the following specific objectives:

- To analyse the perception of post-graduate jobseekers in Nagpur City towards e-recruitment systems with reference to ease of use and usefulness.
- To evaluate the perceived credibility of online recruitment platforms among the study respondents.

- To measure the overall satisfaction level of post-graduate jobseekers with e-recruitment platforms.
- To examine the nature and strength of the relationship between perception and satisfaction.
- To assess the impact of platform credibility on jobseekers' satisfaction.
- To propose evidence-based recommendations for improving e-recruitment systems from the candidate experience perspective.

4. Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated based on the theoretical framework and literature review:

1. H1: Perception of e-recruitment has a significant positive impact on jobseekers' satisfaction.
2. H2: Credibility of e-recruitment platforms significantly influences jobseekers' satisfaction.
3. H3: Perceived ease of use positively affects the overall perception of e-recruitment.
4. H4: Perceived usefulness positively affects jobseekers' satisfaction.
5. H5: There is a significant positive relationship between platform credibility and perception of e-recruitment.

5. Research Methodology

5.1 Research Design

The study employs a descriptive and empirical research design. A quantitative approach was selected given the study's objective of measuring and establishing relationships among defined constructs. The positivist epistemological stance underpinning this design is appropriate for hypothesis testing in a domain where constructs such as perception, credibility, and satisfaction can be operationalised through established scales [26].

5.2 Population, Sample, and Sampling Technique

The target population comprised post-graduate jobseekers currently enrolled in or recently



graduated from universities and autonomous institutions in Nagpur City. A sample of 150 respondents was drawn using purposive convenience sampling. Though non-probability in nature, this sampling approach is widely employed in management research where the target population does not have a readily accessible sampling frame [27]. The sample size of 150 is consistent with the recommendations of Roscoe's rule of thumb for multivariate research and exceeds the minimum threshold of 100 suggested for reliable regression analysis.

5.3 Instrument Development and Data Collection

A structured questionnaire was developed comprising four sections: (i) demographic profile, (ii) perception of e-recruitment (8 items), (iii) platform credibility (6 items), and (iv) jobseeker satisfaction (7 items). All constructs were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Items were adapted from validated instruments used in prior e-recruitment and technology acceptance studies [10, 11, 19]. Content validity was established through expert review by faculty members with specialisation in HRM and information systems. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, yielding coefficients of 0.82 for perception, 0.79 for credibility, and 0.84 for satisfaction, all exceeding the minimum acceptable threshold of 0.70. Data were collected through both online and offline modes during the period of January to March 2024.

5.4 Statistical Tools and Techniques

Data were coded and entered into IBM SPSS Statistics Version 26. Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, frequency distributions) were computed for all variables. Pearson's product-moment correlation was employed to examine bivariate relationships between the three primary constructs. Multiple regression analysis was conducted with satisfaction as the dependent variable and perception and credibility as independent variables, controlling for demographic

covariates. All tests were conducted at a 95% confidence level ($\alpha = 0.05$).

6. Data Analysis and Results

6.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

The sample was predominantly young, with 68% of respondents falling in the 22–28 years age bracket, consistent with the post-graduate jobseeker profile. Gender distribution was relatively balanced, with 54% male and 46% female respondents. In terms of educational qualification, 62% held postgraduate degrees in management (MBA/MMS), 24% in commerce (M.Com), and 14% in science and technology streams. A large majority (78%) reported active use of at least two e-recruitment platforms simultaneously, with Naukri.com (71%), LinkedIn (65%), and Internshala (38%) being the most frequently utilised. The average duration of job search among respondents was 6.4 months.

6.2 Descriptive Analysis of Key Variables

The mean scores for the three constructs are presented in the table below. Perception recorded a mean of 3.71 (SD = 0.68), indicating a moderately positive outlook among respondents towards e-recruitment platforms. Credibility scored a mean of 3.42 (SD = 0.74), reflecting moderate trust with notable reservations. Satisfaction yielded a mean of 3.56 (SD = 0.71), suggesting that while respondents were broadly satisfied, significant headroom exists for improvement.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Key Variables

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Perception	150	3.71	0.68
Credibility	150	3.42	0.74
Satisfaction	150	3.56	0.71

6.3 Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was performed to examine the bivariate relationships among perception, credibility, and satisfaction. The

results indicate a strong positive correlation between perception and satisfaction ($r = 0.68$, $p < 0.01$), confirming that jobseekers with more favourable perceptions of e-recruitment platforms report significantly higher satisfaction. The correlation between credibility and satisfaction was also positive and significant ($r = 0.61$, $p < 0.01$). The relationship between perception and credibility ($r = 0.57$, $p < 0.01$) further validates the interconnectedness of these constructs, supporting hypothesis H5. These correlations are consistent with the findings of Verma and Pandey in related empirical studies on digital recruitment systems [12, 28].

Table 2: Pearson Correlation Matrix

Variable	Percepti on	Credibili ty	Satisfacti on
Perceptio n	1.00	0.57**	0.68**
Credibilit y	0.57**	1.00	0.61**
Satisfacti on	0.68**	0.61**	1.00

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

6.4 Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was conducted with jobseeker satisfaction as the dependent variable and perception and credibility as independent variables. The overall regression model was statistically significant ($F = 48.37$, $p < 0.001$) with an R-squared value of 0.541, indicating that perception and credibility together explain 54.1% of the variance in satisfaction. The standardised regression coefficients reveal that perception ($\beta = 0.52$, $p < 0.001$) and credibility ($\beta = 0.47$, $p < 0.001$) are both significant predictors of satisfaction, confirming hypotheses H1 and H2 respectively. Perception emerged as a marginally stronger predictor, consistent with the centrality of TAM constructs in technology adoption research [10].

Table 3: Multiple Regression Analysis – Predictors of Jobseeker Satisfaction

Predictor	B	Std. Error	Beta (β)	Sig.
(Constant)	0.83	0.21	—	0.000
Perception	0.54	0.09	0.52	0.000
Credibility	0.49	0.10	0.47	0.000

$R = 0.736$; $R^2 = 0.541$; $Adjusted\ R^2 = 0.535$; $F = 48.37$; $p < 0.001$

6.5 Hypothesis Testing Summary and Key Findings

All five hypotheses received empirical support. Ease of use and usefulness significantly shaped overall perception (H3 and H4 supported through sub-scale correlation and step-wise regression). Platform credibility and jobseeker perception emerged as mutually reinforcing constructs (H5 supported, $r = 0.57$). Qualitative response patterns in open-ended items identified several recurring themes: lack of meaningful feedback from employers after application submission, prevalence of outdated or duplicate job listings, difficulty in verifying the authenticity of recruiters, and inconsistency in interview process communication as the principal drivers of dissatisfaction. Conversely, ease of registration, breadth of listings, and mobile accessibility were consistently cited as sources of satisfaction.

7. Discussion

The findings of this study invite rich theoretical and practical interpretation. The confirmation of hypotheses H1 through H5 reinforces the applicability of TAM-based frameworks to the e-recruitment context in Indian Tier-II cities, extending the geographic scope of prior research which has predominantly focused on metropolitan settings [11, 13]. The strength of perception as a predictor of satisfaction ($\beta = 0.52$) underscores that the candidate's cognitive appraisal of platform usability and utility is the primary lens through which their overall experience is evaluated. This finding has direct implications for platform design: investments in intuitive interfaces, streamlined application



workflows, and clear information architecture are likely to yield the greatest returns in terms of candidate satisfaction.

The significant impact of credibility on satisfaction ($\beta = 0.47$) is equally noteworthy and aligns with the theoretical arguments advanced by Singh and Finn and empirically substantiated by Kumar in the Indian context [15, 16]. Credibility concerns in this study manifest primarily around the authenticity of job postings and the transparency of employer communication. The prevalence of ghost jobs and the widespread practice of collecting candidate data without genuine hiring intent are systemic issues that no individual platform can resolve unilaterally; they require coordinated action involving platform operators, regulatory bodies, and employer communities. The Ministry of Labour and Employment's draft framework on digital employment contracts represents a step in this direction, though enforcement mechanisms remain nascent [29].

The relationship between perception and credibility ($r = 0.57$) suggests that these constructs reinforce each other in a virtuous cycle: platforms perceived as easy to use and useful tend also to be perceived as more credible, possibly because a well-designed, functional interface signals organisational investment and professionalism. Conversely, poorly designed platforms may trigger credibility doubts even in the absence of specific fraudulent behaviour. This insight supports an integrated approach to platform design in which usability and trust-building elements are developed in tandem rather than as separate workstreams [30].

The demographic profile of respondents—predominantly young management graduates engaging with multiple platforms simultaneously—reflects the sophisticated, multi-channel nature of contemporary job search behaviour in urban India. This cohort is characterised by high digital literacy and correspondingly elevated expectations. Their experience with consumer-grade applications (e-commerce, social media, banking apps) sets a benchmark of experience quality that

recruitment platforms must meet or exceed to achieve satisfaction. The significant proportion of respondents reporting job search durations exceeding six months further contextualises the satisfaction findings: prolonged, unsuccessful searches amplify dissatisfaction with platform limitations, creating a compounding negative effect on user evaluations.

From a practical standpoint, the study's findings suggest that organisations recruiting from the Nagpur talent pool should prioritise personalised communication strategies, including automated acknowledgement of applications with clear timeline expectations, structured feedback at each stage of the selection process, and transparent communication regarding position status. Platform developers, in turn, should consider implementing employer verification mechanisms analogous to those employed in e-commerce ecosystems to bolster credibility and differentiate their offerings in an increasingly crowded market [17].

8. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study has empirically established that perception and credibility are statistically significant and substantively meaningful predictors of e-recruitment satisfaction among post-graduate jobseekers in Nagpur City. The findings, grounded in TAM theory and validated through correlation and regression analysis, confirm that the quality of the candidate's technology interaction experience and their trust in platform integrity are the two most consequential determinants of satisfaction in digital recruitment contexts. Together, these two constructs account for over 54% of the variance in satisfaction, underscoring their centrality to any strategy aimed at improving candidate experience.

The study makes several contributions to the literature. First, it provides region-specific empirical evidence from a Tier-II Indian city, addressing a geographical gap in the existing body of research on e-recruitment. Second, it integrates perception and credibility within a



unified empirical framework, demonstrating their independent and joint contributions to satisfaction. Third, it identifies actionable levers—platform usability, employer verification, feedback design, and communication transparency—that can guide both platform-level interventions and organisational HR practices.

On the basis of the findings, the following recommendations are advanced. Platform developers should invest in employer verification and job posting authentication systems to address credibility concerns. Organisations should implement standardised candidate communication protocols that ensure timely acknowledgement and feedback at each recruitment stage. Regulatory authorities should consider establishing minimum standards for job posting accuracy and data handling in online recruitment ecosystems. Academic institutions should incorporate practical training on navigating e-recruitment platforms into post-graduate curricula to enhance student preparedness. Future research should employ longitudinal designs, incorporate qualitative methods to capture the richness of candidate experience narratives, and extend the framework to include constructs such as perceived fairness, algorithmic transparency, and social influence to develop a more comprehensive model of e-recruitment satisfaction in the Indian context.

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