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An Empirical Assessment of the Effectiveness of E-Recruitment Portals in Facilitating Employment Opportunities

Dr. Dimple Singh Gaur[1], Anushka Paliwal[2]

[1]Assistant Professor, Bhupal Nobles University, Udaipur
[2]Research Scholar, Bhupal Nobles University, Udaipur

Abstract:
E-recruitment portals allow job seekers to identify vacancies, submit applications and communicate with potential employers, but their usefulness also depends on the employment outcomes experienced by users. This research assessed job seekers' perceived effectiveness of e-recruitment portals, compared perceptions across employment-outcome groups and examined their association with the highest outcome attained. A cross-sectional descriptive and analytical design was adopted in Udaipur City. Data were collected from 165 portal users through printed and online questionnaires using purposive sampling. Overall Portal Effectiveness was measured through eight five-point Likert statements, while experienced outcomes were classified hierarchically from no employer response to employment obtained. The scale demonstrated good internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha of 0.816. Respondents who achieved a meaningful employment outcome reported a higher perceived-effectiveness score ($M = 3.68$, $SD = 0.47$) than those who did not ($M = 3.13$, $SD = 0.49$). The difference was statistically significant, $t(163) = -7.31$, $p < .001$. Perceived effectiveness also had a moderate positive association with employment-outcome level, $r_s = .553$, $p < .001$. Both null hypotheses were rejected. The results indicate that respondents attaining more advanced outcomes generally viewed e-recruitment portals more favourably. These findings may help portal operators and employers improve application facilities, vacancy information and applicant communication. The geographical scope, purposive sampling and reliance on self-reported responses limit wider generalisation.

Keywords: E-recruitment portals; portal effectiveness; employment outcomes; job seekers; digital recruitment

INTRODUCTION

E-recruitment portals allow job seekers to identify vacancies, review employment requirements and submit applications in one place. Users can search according to their qualifications, experience and employment preferences. However, effectiveness depends not only on vacancy availability and convenient access but also on the usefulness of the portal's features and the progress made through submitted applications.

Job seekers may evaluate a portal through its search facilities, vacancy information, application process and job notifications. Even a portal with numerous vacancies may be viewed unfavourably when information is unclear, search results are unsuitable or applications are difficult to complete.

Applicants may receive an employer response, attend an interview, obtain a job offer or secure employment, while others may receive no response. These outcomes represent different levels of progress. Perceived effectiveness reflects users' assessment of a portal, whereas an employment outcome represents the highest stage attained through its use.

The study focuses on job seekers in Udaipur City who have used e-recruitment portals to search or apply for employment. It assesses perceived portal effectiveness, compares respondents who achieved a meaningful employment outcome with those who did not and examines the association between perceived effectiveness and the highest outcome attained.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Çelik Ertuğrul and Bitirim (2025) reviewed the development, application and evaluation of job recommender systems used in recruitment. Following a systematic search protocol, the authors examined 57 research papers published between 2010 and 2023. Content-based, collaborative, hybrid and knowledge-based filtering were commonly used, while reciprocal and context-aware systems received less attention. The review also identified concerns regarding data privacy, algorithmic bias, transparency and fair recommendations. The work is relevant because the effectiveness of an e-recruitment portal partly depends on its ability to present appropriate opportunities and create a trustworthy experience for job seekers.

Boldi et al. (2025) investigated job seekers' privacy behaviour while using a transparent web-based job board. The qualitative research involved 20 Italian participants who used a simulated job-matching system while researchers employed direct observation, a think-aloud procedure and interviews. Participants were generally willing to disclose information but remained cautious about sharing identity-related details. Features explaining how personal data would be used and allowing control over privacy settings were positively evaluated. The research demonstrates that transparency and user control can influence engagement with e-recruitment platforms, adding an important dimension to the assessment of portal effectiveness.

Lo Piccolo et al. (2024) examined how procedural fairness experienced through a corporate recruitment website influenced job seekers' intentions to apply. Data were collected from 260 postgraduate students using an online questionnaire after they had explored a recruitment website. The analysis showed that an applicant's opportunity to present relevant abilities contributed to perceptions of organisational attractiveness and subsequently influenced application intention. The findings indicate that the design and perceived fairness of an online recruitment process shape users' responses before an application is completed. This is relevant to understanding why ease of application, clarity of information and the overall portal experience matter to job seekers.

Kelley et al. (2024) evaluated whether access to a digital job platform improved employment and job-search outcomes among vocational training graduates in India. A randomised controlled trial was used in which selected graduates were uploaded to a job portal, while some participants also received frequent text messages about vacancies. Platform access did not automatically produce improved employment outcomes. Some job seekers increased their reservation wages and worked less while expecting better opportunities, although these expectations changed when suitable offers did not materialise. The research shows that access to a portal and favourable expectations about its usefulness may not always translate directly into employment.

Kissi (2023) examined the factors shaping job seekers' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with existing e-recruitment systems. The research adopted a longitudinal cohort design and used survey responses from 265 job seekers together with interviews involving seven human resource personnel. Expectations, perceived performance, confirmation, perceived e-recruitment fraud and portal brand quality influenced satisfaction. Expectations, performance and confirmation were positively associated with satisfaction, whereas concerns about fraudulent recruitment weakened users' evaluations. The respondents were generally dissatisfied when system performance did not meet their expectations. These results support the assessment of portal effectiveness through user experience, information quality and perceived practical value.

Laukkarinen (2023) explored how social media supported active job applications and recruitment initiated by employers. The analysis used data from a nationally representative sample of Finnish social media users. Strategic networking and the publication of professional content increased the likelihood of successfully applying for and being recruited to jobs through social media. LinkedIn users were also more likely to receive recruitment approaches. Although success in applying did not vary substantially across socioeconomic groups, recruitment through social media was more common among users from higher socioeconomic groups. The findings connect online job-search behaviour with actual employment outcomes rather than relying only on perceptions of digital platforms.

Horodyski (2023) studied applicants' perceptions of artificial intelligence within digital recruitment processes. An online questionnaire was administered to 552 participants representing 12 nationalities and more than 20 industries. Applicants generally considered AI-based recruitment facilities useful and easy to use, particularly because they could reduce response time and make parts of the recruitment process more efficient. Concerns remained about the absence of human judgement, low accuracy, limited transparency, privacy and possible bias. The study demonstrates that favourable perceptions of digital recruitment depend on both convenience and confidence in the system, which are also relevant to the broader evaluation of e-recruitment portals.

Kucherov and Tsybova (2022) assessed the relationship between e-recruitment practices and e-recruitment outcomes among 449 Russian companies. Using a quantitative survey design, the researchers examined internet-based recruitment practices and internal technology-supported recruitment arrangements within the broader digitalisation of human resource management. E-recruitment practices were positively related to recruitment outcomes, although the extent of system usage did not mediate this relationship. The

findings suggest that effectiveness depends on the quality and organisation of recruitment practices rather than the mere presence or frequent use of digital tools. This organisational perspective complements the evaluation of effectiveness from the viewpoint of job seekers.

Karaoglu et al. (2022) examined inequality in online job searching and the role of digital job-search skills. The research used national survey data from the United States to analyse how job seekers used the internet and social media when searching and applying for employment. Online job-search behaviour varied according to age, race, education, income, social media use and digital skills. Greater digital job-search capability was associated with more active use of online employment resources. The findings indicate that access to an e-recruitment platform alone may not ensure comparable benefits because users differ in their ability to search, evaluate information and complete digital employment activities.

Amanova et al. (2021) assessed the user experience of an online job-search engine through surveys, interviews and direct observation. The study considered how individuals interacted with the platform and made decisions while searching for career opportunities. Its interface and features were found to be insufficiently intuitive, creating usability difficulties that were likely to be greater among inexperienced users. The authors concluded that job-search engines required improvement in their usability and user guidance. This research directly supports the inclusion of convenience, search facilities, information adequacy and ease of application when assessing job seekers' perceptions of e-recruitment portal effectiveness.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Objectives

The research objectives were as follows:

1. To assess job seekers' perceived effectiveness of e-recruitment portals in facilitating relevant and timely employment opportunities.
2. To compare the perceived effectiveness of e-recruitment portals between job seekers who achieved a meaningful employment outcome and those who did not achieve a meaningful employment outcome.
3. To examine the association between the perceived effectiveness of e-recruitment portals and the highest employment-outcome level attained by job seekers.

Research Design

The study adopted a cross-sectional descriptive and analytical research design. The descriptive component was used to assess job seekers' perceptions of the effectiveness of e-recruitment portals and describe their experienced employment outcomes. The analytical component enabled the comparison of perceived-effectiveness scores between two independent employment-outcome groups and the examination of the association between perceived portal effectiveness and the highest employment-outcome level attained. The cross-sectional design was suitable because the required information was obtained from respondents at a particular point in time.

Research Approach

A quantitative research approach was adopted. Respondents' perceptions were measured through Likert-scale statements, while their employment experiences were recorded using factual and categorically coded

outcome variables. The quantitative approach supported the calculation of frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations, as well as the application of an independent-samples t-test and Spearman's rank-order correlation.

Population and Sample

The study was conducted in Udaipur City. The target population comprised individuals who had used an e-recruitment portal to search or apply for employment during the preceding 12 months. It included unemployed job seekers, recent graduates, final-year students applying for jobs, competitive-examination aspirants, employed persons seeking a new or better opportunity, and individuals searching for internships, contractual work or part-time employment.

A screening question was used to confirm whether respondents had used an e-recruitment portal during the specified period. Only those reporting relevant portal-use experience were included. The final sample consisted of 165 respondents.

Purposive sampling was employed because participation required prior experience of using an e-recruitment portal. This technique enabled the inclusion of respondents who could meaningfully evaluate portal effectiveness and report the employment outcomes they had experienced. The sample provided an adequate number of observations for the planned descriptive analysis, comparison of two independent groups and correlation analysis.

Instrument Development and Measurement

A structured questionnaire was used to collect the required information. The first part included the eligibility question and respondents' demographic and portal-use characteristics. These covered gender, age group, educational qualification, primary job-seeking status, most frequently used portal, frequency of portal use and duration of portal use.

The second part contained eight statements measuring Overall Portal Effectiveness. These statements covered convenience, access to employment opportunities, usefulness of search and filtering facilities, reduction in job-search time and effort, adequacy of vacancy information, ease of submitting applications, usefulness of job notifications and the overall effectiveness of e-recruitment portals.

Responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 for Strongly Disagree to 5 for Strongly Agree. All eight statements were positively worded; therefore, reverse coding was not required.

The third part recorded respondents' experienced employment outcomes through factual questions. Respondents were asked:

1. Approximately how many jobs did you apply for through e-recruitment portals during the preceding 12 months?
2. How many employer responses did you receive?
3. How many interview invitations did you receive?
4. How many job offers did you receive?
5. Did you obtain employment through an e-recruitment portal?

An experienced employment-outcome level was derived according to the highest employment stage attained by each respondent.

Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected through both printed and online questionnaires. Before participation, respondents were screened to confirm that they had used an e-recruitment portal to search or apply for employment during the preceding 12 months. The same questions, response alternatives and coding structure were maintained across the printed and online formats to preserve consistency in data collection. Completed responses were examined for eligibility and completeness before being included in the analysis.

Reliability Testing

Table 1.1: Reliability testing

Construct	Number of statements	Cronbach's alpha
Overall Portal Effectiveness	8	0.816

Cronbach's alpha for the eight-item scale was 0.816. Since the coefficient exceeded the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70, the statements demonstrated good internal consistency.

Statistical Tools and Techniques

Cronbach's alpha assessed the internal consistency of the eight-item scale.

For the first null hypothesis, an independent-samples t-test compared the mean perceived-effectiveness scores of respondents who achieved a meaningful employment outcome with those who did not.

For the second null hypothesis, Spearman's rank-order correlation was used to examine the association between perceived portal effectiveness and the experienced employment-outcome level. Spearman's correlation was selected instead of Pearson's correlation because the outcome variable was ordinal. Although outcome levels 0 to 4 followed a meaningful order, equal numerical distances between consecutive levels could not be assumed.

SPSS ranked both variables automatically from lower to higher values. Lower perceived-effectiveness scores and outcome levels received lower ranks, while higher values received higher ranks. Tied observations were assigned average ranks by the software. A positive coefficient indicated that higher perceived-effectiveness scores were associated with more advanced employment outcomes. The analysis assessed the direction and strength of the association but did not establish causation.

LIKERT-SCALE STATEMENT ANALYSIS FOR PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS OF E-RECRUITMENT PORTALS

Table 1.2: Likert-Scale Statement Analysis

	Likert Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	$\overline{X}$	σ
1	E-recruitment portals make searching for employment opportunities more convenient.	2	13	71	63	16	3.47	0.82
2	E-recruitment portals provide easy access to a wide range of employment opportunities.	1	17	61	65	21	3.53	0.87
3	The search and filtering facilities help me identify suitable employment opportunities.	0	29	72	52	12	3.28	0.84
4	E-recruitment portals reduce the time and effort required to search for employment.	2	18	70	60	15	3.41	0.85
5	The information provided on e-recruitment portals helps me evaluate employment opportunities.	1	25	75	52	12	3.30	0.84
6	The application process through e-recruitment portals is easy to understand and complete.	2	26	74	56	7	3.24	0.81
7	Job notifications received through e-recruitment portals support my employment search.	2	23	75	53	12	3.30	0.84
8	Overall, e-recruitment portals are an effective means of facilitating employment opportunities.	0	17	61	68	19	3.54	0.83

Respondents expressed a moderately favourable perception of e-recruitment portals. Overall effectiveness, access to employment opportunities and convenience received comparatively stronger agreement. Search and filtering facilities, vacancy information, job notifications and reduction in search effort received moderate evaluations. Ease of completing applications recorded the lowest mean, indicating that respondents experienced some practical difficulty while using portal application systems.

DERIVATION AND CLASSIFICATION OF EXPERIENCED EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES

Experienced-Outcome Coding Procedure

The factual employment-outcome questions were measured in different units and were therefore not averaged directly with the Likert-scale scores. Instead, each respondent was classified according to the highest employment stage attained through an e-recruitment portal. The progression began with applying through a portal and continued through employer response, interview invitation, job offer and employment obtained. An "X" in Table 1.3 indicates that respondents classified at a particular outcome level reached the corresponding stage. A dash indicates that the stage was not reached.

Table 1.3: Classification and Progression of Respondents by Experienced-Outcome Level

Group	Classification of outcome	Outcome level	Frequency	Applied through portal	Employer response	Interview invitation	Job offer	Employment obtained
Group 1	No meaningful outcome	0	49	X	—	—	—	—
Group 1	No meaningful outcome	1	40	X	X	—	—	—
Group 2	Meaningful outcome achieved	2	52	X	X	X	—	—
Group 2	Meaningful outcome achieved	3	7	X	X	X	X	—
Group 2	Meaningful outcome achieved	4	17	X	X	X	X	X
	Cumulative number of respondents		**165**	**165**	**116**	**76**	**24**	**17**

X indicates that respondents at the respective outcome level reached that stage. The bottom-row figures show the cumulative number of respondents reaching each stage. "Applied through portal" represents the number of respondents who used a portal to apply; it does not represent the total number of applications submitted.

Outcome level 0 included 49 respondents who applied through an e-recruitment portal but received no employer response. Outcome level 1 comprised 40 respondents who received an employer response but did not progress to an interview. Outcome level 2 included 52 respondents who reached the interview stage but did not receive a job offer. Outcome level 3 consisted of seven respondents who received a job offer but did not obtain employment. Outcome level 4 comprised 17 respondents who obtained employment through an e-recruitment portal. Each respondent was counted only once, according to the highest outcome attained, even though respondents at the higher levels necessarily passed through the preceding stages.

Calculation of Cumulative Progression

The cumulative figures were derived by adding all respondents who reached a particular stage or progressed beyond it. Since all 165 respondents were eligible e-recruitment portal users who had applied

through a portal, the first stage included the complete sample. The remaining cumulative totals were calculated as follows:

Table 1.4: Calculation of Cumulative Progression

Progression stage	Calculation	Cumulative respondents
Applied through portal	49 + 40 + 52 + 7 + 17	165
Received an employer response	40 + 52 + 7 + 17	116
Received an interview invitation	52 + 7 + 17	76
Received a job offer	7 + 17	24
Obtained employment	17	17

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

H_{01}: There is no significant difference in the mean perceived-effectiveness scores of e-recruitment portals between job seekers who achieved a meaningful employment outcome and those who did not achieve a meaningful employment outcome.

For testing H_{01}, employment-outcome group was used as the independent grouping variable, while the composite mean score for perceived effectiveness of e-recruitment portals was used as the dependent variable. Respondents at outcome levels 0 and 1 formed the no meaningful outcome group, whereas those at levels 2, 3 and 4 formed the meaningful outcome group.

An independent-samples t-test was applied to determine whether the mean perceived-effectiveness scores differed significantly between respondents who achieved a meaningful employment outcome and those who did not.

Table 1.5: Descriptive Statistics

		n	Mean	Std. Deviation
Composite mean score for perceived effectiveness	No meaningful outcome	89	3.13	0.49
	Meaningful outcome	76	3.68	0.47

Respondents who achieved a meaningful employment outcome reported a higher mean perceived-effectiveness score (M = 3.68, SD = 0.47, n = 76) than respondents who did not achieve a meaningful outcome (M = 3.13, SD = 0.49, n = 89).

Table 1.6: Equality of Variances

Test	F	df1	df2	p
Levene's Test (Mean)	0.01	1	163	.922

Levene's test was not statistically significant, F(1, 163) = 0.01, p = .922. Therefore, the assumption of equality of variances was satisfied, and the equal-variances t-test result was interpreted.

Table 1.7: Independent-Samples t-Test

	Variance	t	df	p
Composite mean score for perceived effectiveness	Equal variances	-7.31	163.00	<.001
	Unequal variances	-7.33	160.66	<.001

The independent-samples t-test revealed a statistically significant difference in perceived-effectiveness scores between the two groups, $t(163) = -7.31$, $p < .001$. The negative sign of the t-value resulted from the order in which the groups were entered and does not indicate an unfavourable relationship. The group means show that respondents who attained an interview, received a job offer or obtained employment perceived e-recruitment portals as more effective than those who received either no employer response or only an initial response.

Decision

H_{01} was examined using an independent-samples t-test. Since the difference between the two employment-outcome groups was statistically significant at the 5 per cent level, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Finding

Job seekers who achieved a meaningful employment outcome reported more favourable perceptions of e-recruitment portals than those who did not achieve such an outcome. This suggests that respondents who progressed to an interview or a later employment stage generally considered these portals more effective in facilitating employment opportunities.

Hypothesis Conclusion

Since the null hypothesis is rejected, the researcher concludes that there is a significant difference in the perceived effectiveness of e-recruitment portals between job seekers who achieved a meaningful employment outcome and those who did not achieve a meaningful employment outcome.

H_{02}: There is no significant association between job seekers' perceived-effectiveness scores of e-recruitment portals and the experienced employment-outcome level attained by them.

For testing H_{02}, the composite mean score for perceived effectiveness of e-recruitment portals and the experienced employment-outcome level coded from 0 to 4 were used as the two variables under examination. As the analysis concerned an association, these variables were not treated strictly as independent and dependent variables.

Spearman's rank-order correlation was applied to examine the direction, strength and statistical significance of the association between perceived portal effectiveness and the highest employment-outcome level attained by respondents.

Table 1.8: Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation Analysis

		Composite mean score for perceived effectiveness	Highest experienced employment-outcome level
Composite mean score for perceived effectiveness	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.553**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	165	165

Spearman's rank-order correlation revealed a statistically significant positive association between perceived portal effectiveness and the experienced employment-outcome level, $r_s = .553, p < .001, N = 165$. The coefficient indicated a moderate positive association between the two variables.

The positive direction shows that higher perceived-effectiveness scores were generally associated with more advanced employment outcomes. Thus, respondents who progressed from receiving no employer response towards an interview, job offer or employment tended to report more favourable perceptions of e-recruitment portals. The result establishes an association between the variables but does not demonstrate that perceived portal effectiveness caused respondents to attain higher employment outcomes.

Decision

H_{02} was examined using Spearman's rank-order correlation. Since the association was statistically significant at the 5 per cent level, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Finding

Respondents reporting greater perceived effectiveness of e-recruitment portals generally attained more advanced employment-outcome levels. This suggests that favourable perceptions of portal effectiveness were positively associated with respondents' progression through the employment process.

Hypothesis Conclusion

Since the null hypothesis is rejected, the researcher concludes that there is a significant association between job seekers' perceived-effectiveness scores of e-recruitment portals and the experienced employment-outcome level attained by them.

OVERALL CONCLUSION

The study assessed job seekers' perceptions of e-recruitment portals and examined whether these perceptions were related to the employment outcomes attained through them. The findings indicate that respondents generally viewed these portals as useful for accessing employment opportunities, making job searches more convenient and supporting the application process. However, perceptions were not uniformly strong across all aspects. Application procedures, search facilities, vacancy information and job notifications offer scope for further improvement.

Respondents who achieved a meaningful employment outcome reported significantly higher perceived-effectiveness scores than those who did not achieve such an outcome. Perceived portal effectiveness was also positively associated with the highest employment-outcome level attained. These findings suggest

that job seekers who progressed to interviews, job offers or employment tended to evaluate e-recruitment portals more favourably. The results establish an association rather than causation, but they highlight the importance of both the quality of the user experience and the practical employment outcomes facilitated through these platforms.

SUGGESTIONS BASED ON FINDINGS

The following suggestions are based on the findings:

1. Repeated fields and avoidable steps make applications unnecessarily tiring, especially for first-time users. Information already saved in a candidate's profile should appear automatically wherever possible.
2. Search results need to match what applicants are actually looking for. Qualifications, experience, skills, location, salary expectations and employment preferences should all influence the vacancies and recommendations shown to them.
3. Many applicants decide whether to apply after reading the vacancy details. Job responsibilities, eligibility, experience requirements, location, salary and selection stages should therefore be stated clearly. Advertisements must also be removed once a position is closed or filled.
4. After submitting an application, candidates should be able to see whether it has been received, reviewed, shortlisted or rejected, instead of waiting without any information from the portal or employer.
5. Some users may require help while creating a profile, uploading documents or completing an application. Brief instructions at the relevant stage would be more useful than placing all the guidance on a separate page. The same facilities should work properly on mobile phones.
6. Verification of employers and vacancies requires greater attention because fraudulent, misleading or duplicate advertisements can quickly reduce confidence in a portal.
7. Portal operators should examine why applicants leave forms incomplete or fail to progress further. The reason may be a technical problem, an unclear requirement, a lengthy form or a delayed response. Feedback from applicants can help identify the actual difficulty.
8. Registrations, page visits and submitted applications provide only a limited picture of portal performance; employer responses, interviews, job offers and employment secured offer stronger evidence of whether it is creating meaningful opportunities.

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