

# AI Recruitment: Explaining job seekers' acceptance of automation in human resource management

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**Abstract.** Organizations are increasingly adopting automation in human resource management (HRM). Subsumed under the term “AI recruitment” organizations try to restructure HRM and apply innovative technologies to achieve a higher level of efficiency. Considering the ongoing “war for talent”, it is also crucial to discuss candidates' expectations regarding these automated recruiting methods. In this research, we develop a research model explaining the acceptance of AI-based recruiting methods by job seekers. Based on UTAUT2 as a theoretical lens and 23 semi-structured interviews we discuss factors that influence job seekers' acceptance of automation in HRM. The proposed model addresses research gaps in acceptance research in general and the use of technologies in the recruiting process in particular. We also discuss implications for technology acceptance research and provide some suggestions for the examination of a more passive use of IT.

**Keywords:** AI recruitment, e-HRM, automation in HRM, UTAUT2

## 1 Introduction

The increasing demand for information technologies (IT) within the field of human resource management (HRM) changes the way organizations handle human resource (HR) [1, 2]. Organizations have early recognized that HRM benefits from the use of new IT [3] as it increases labor productivity [4] and shifts the organizational role of HRM to a more strategic one [3, 5–7]. Thus, organizations make huge efforts to push electronic HRM (e-HRM). In this regard, artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly addressed [8–10] and automated recruiting of candidates gains in importance as it offers various advantages from the organization's perspective, e.g. increased speed of application handling [10, 11]. However, application of AI in recruiting has also its dark sides [12]. One of the most recent negative example is Amazon's recruiting engine. Headlines like “*Amazon scraps 'sexist AI' recruitment tool*” [13] dominated the news for a while, stain the company's reputation and make job seekers aware of the consequences of AI-based recruiting methods. In this particular case, the company developed an AI-based hiring tool to scan resumes of job candidates automatically. The underlying algorithm privileged men over women in the recruiting process [14].

Given these challenges and considering that “people factors” like user acceptance gain in importance for the successful adoption of e-HRM [15] it is crucial to discuss job seekers’ perspective on the use of AI in recruiting [16, 17]. Especially in relation to the “war for talent” [18] it is important to understand whether the use of AI and job seekers’ attitude toward the use of AI influences their behavior. Given the Amazon case, it might be that the negative discussion of the AI tool used has an impact on job seekers’ intention to apply for a job at Amazon. Therefore, from an organizational point of view, it is important to understand what factors influence job seekers’ acceptance of AI in recruiting and whether job seekers’ attitude toward AI in recruiting influences their behavior. Therefore, we intend to answer the following research question: **Why and under which circumstances do job seekers accept AI recruitment methods used by organizations?**

We focus on technology acceptance research and especially on the unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT2) for a consumer context [19]. This theoretical framework is used as job seekers can be seen as sort of a customer in a recruiting context as organizations usually try to marketing themselves as attractive employers and interesting job providers [20]. Based on UTAUT2 we develop a model to explain job seekers’ acceptance of automation in recruiting. From a theoretical perspective, the focus on a technology that is used by organizations, but only passively by individuals as their data is screened and evaluated by the technology, revealed that technology acceptance is not only important to explain user behavior, but also to explain other types of behaviors (e.g. the intention to apply for a job). The analysis therefore contributes to the discussion of acceptance of AI technologies [21] that not only the active use decision matters, but also the passive use of these technologies and how an evaluation of the passive use influences individual behavior. Moreover, we discuss the potential of UTAUT2 for passive IT use. From a methodology perspective, we derive this conclusion by conducting 23 interviews, as we will discuss in the following.

## **2 Related Work**

In this section, we will summarize related work on AI recruitment and technology acceptance research to highlight the specific research gap that our approach is intended to fill.

### **2.1 Artificial Intelligence Recruitment used by organizations**

The term automated recruiting is often directly linked to AI recruitment [10], whereby AI means any intelligent agent that automates activities by acting rational [22]. In the recruiting context, two different types of AI-based systems are discussed. First, job recommender systems that match a user profile and the various available job opportunities and then prioritize job opportunities for the job seeker. In this case, the job seeker uses the system actively. Second, CV recommender systems that match one job opportunity with user profiles to identify the most appropriate candidates for a

specific vacancy [16, 23]. In this case, the job seeker is a passive user, as he does not make an active use decision. Instead, the CV or job seeker's data is used by the organization to make a recommendation [11]. In this regard, the search for suitable candidates is supported by knowledge based search engines to pre-select potential candidates by automatizing search task and offering semantic information about job seekers [9]. Besides this web based information extraction, CV data acquisition ("CV parsing") constitutes another option to analyze resumes of applicants. Software that enables CV parsing ranks candidates according to their skills and decides on its own what candidates should be preferred for a certain job [24]. As CVs are normally semi-structured text documents, the automatic identification of information is feasible to implement and relieves recruiters in the search for talents by extracting and processing relevant data automatically [25, 26]. Additionally, behavioral and physiological characteristics (e.g. biometrics) can be considered to select a suitable candidate [10].

Review of literature shows that academic research evaluates e-HRM predominantly positive [15, 27, 28] although AI recruiting algorithms might be biased and arouse discrimination [29]. However, little is known about its consequences for job seekers [10], especially when job seekers are only passive users of these types of technologies. Accordingly, the understanding of how organizations can proactively influence and reshape job seekers' acceptance towards new IT remains limited. Hence, the objective of this paper is to analyze job seekers' attitude toward the use of new IT within the recruitment process that is primarily used by organization and the job seeker is only a passive user, e.g. when application data is automatically processed by an AI recruitment tool [9, 10].

## **2.2 Technology acceptance**

To examine job seekers' acceptance of AI recruitment methods, we build on the research stream of technology acceptance that links user's intentions to the use of a technology. To explain individual technology adoption, several models have been proposed, generalized, contextualized and reviewed [30]. These models contain the unified theory of acceptance and use of technology for the consumer context (UTAUT2), which is the latest extension of UTAUT and theorizes consumer adoption and use of technology in a private context [19, 30].

As the focus of this paper is on a private (job) context as well and we strive to analyze consumers' (job seekers') acceptance of IT in HRM, UTAUT2 seems to be the most appropriate starting point to develop a model explaining job seekers' attitude toward the use of new technologies. Another reason is that UTAUT2 has been successfully applied several times to the HRM context [31, 32] and is recommended as the most recent theoretical advancement for investigating technology acceptance [33].

However, research has neither discussed the application of UTAUT2 in a context that is characterized by the passive use of IT nor the conceptualization of a framework that considers the acceptance of passive IT use. Applying for a job and thereby being exposed to technologies, which enable automated HR processes, might result in a distinct user acceptance model. We will introduce UTAUT2 in the following as our

theoretical basis to develop such a model that explains the attitude toward the indicated passive use of IT. By doing so, we define attitude as representation of an individual's evaluation of a certain object, thereby considering that an individual's attitude toward an object directly influences behavioral intentions [34].

In general, UTAUT2 explains consumer's voluntary adoption of a technology by a consumer's intention to use this technology and theorizes the factors displayed in Table 1 to ascertain the intention to use IT:

**Table 1.** UTAUT2 factors [19]

<i>Factor</i>	<i>Definition</i>
<i>Performance Expectancy</i>	"The degree to which using a technology will provide benefits to consumers in performing certain activities" [19].
<i>Effort Expectancy</i>	"The degree of ease associated with consumers' use of technology" [19].
<i>Social Influence</i>	"The extent to which consumers perceive that important others believe they should use a particular technology"[19].
<i>Facilitation conditions</i>	"Consumers' perceptions of the resources and support available to perform a behaviour" [19].
<i>Hedonic motivations</i>	"The fun or pleasure derived from using a technology" [19].
<i>Price values</i>	"Consumers' cognitive trade-off between the perceived benefits of the applications and the monetary cost for using them" [19].
<i>Habits</i>	"Extent to which people tend to perform behaviours automatically because of learning" [19].

### 3 Methodology

The overall aim of this paper is to adopt UTAUT2 for explaining job seekers' acceptance of automated recruiting approaches thereby identifying strengths and weakness of the model for the passive use of IT. To reveal job seekers' attitude toward AI in HR we use a qualitative method, which we will introduce in the following.

#### 3.1 Study Design

Overall, 23 interviews with respondents from the Generation Y ("Millennials") who are currently or have recently been (<six months) in the job-seeking process were conducted to reveal crucial beliefs and fears regarding the use of AI in organizational HRM. Millennials are born between 1981 and 1991, belong nowadays to the group of graduates or young professionals and are the first generation to be exposed to digital technologies throughout their lives [35]. Hence, they are often seen as "Digital Natives" and are more likely to be exposed to innovative recruiting technologies [36]. Therefore, millennials are an appropriate target group when examining job seekers' attitude toward AI in HRM. Table 2 illustrates the demographic characteristics.

**Table 2.** Demographics (N=23)

<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>Attribute</i>	<i>share in %</i>
Gender	Male	56.5%
	Female	43.5%
Age	20-24	47.8%
	25-29	47.8%
	30-34	4.4%
Job Status	Student	87.0%
	PhD Student	4.3%
	Professional	8.7%

Data collection was completed once it became apparent that additional interviews would not provide new insights as subsequent interviews lead to redundant aspects mentioned by respondents [37]. Concurrently, we ensured that our sample is above the recommended quantity of twelve interviews for a homogeneous group of respondents [38]. Recruitment of interviewees took place through personal network (e.g. business contacts) and interviews were conducted exclusively in person. We recruited potential respondents via a personal invitation (e.g. by E-Mail). To reduce a possible response bias and encourage expressions in both positive and negative directions, the authors assured to treat all answers anonymous and strictly confidential. To ensure that the respondents receive sufficient freedom to describe their overall attitude toward the use of organizational AI recruitment as well as to expound their expectations regarding automation in HRM, we conduct an interview guideline. We considered questions regarding the evaluation of AI recruiting methods, acceptance of technology use in HRM, job seekers' concerns and expectations as well as questions based on UTAUT2 factors that match passive IT use (e.g. expected output of AI recruiting, group pressure). The interview guideline follows a semi-structured format to allow for consistency across the various interviews and enable the interviewer to explain specific and new aspects in the dialogue and to elucidate indistinct or ambiguous answers by requesting [12, 39]. The interviews lasted on average 14:30 minutes and we transcribed eighty text pages. Following this approach UTAUT2 factors can be analyzed by simultaneously unveiling factors that might be adjusted in order to answer the initial research question.

### **3.2 Interview analysis**

To ensure that all thematic aspects are considered in the analysis, the transcription in preparation for the data analysis was carried out after each interview. The systematic analysis and categorization of the insights from the interviews followed the method of

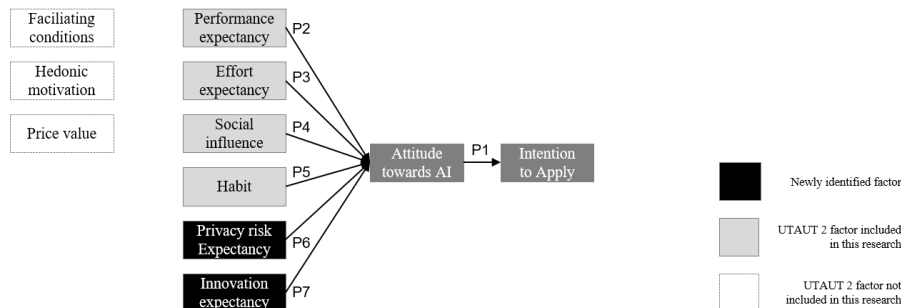
qualitative content analysis [40]. This approach enables to pursue existing research in the field of acceptance research and to generate new propositions from the interviews.

The coding of the interviews followed a two-pronged approach, in which deductive and inductive coding has been conducted for the continuous adaption of interview-based code categories (see [41] for a similar approach). The deductive coding considered the theoretical foundation of acceptance research as we searched for statements that reflect factors proposed by UTAUT2. In comparison, the inductive coding focused on the disclosure of factors that might explain the acceptance of AI recruitment but are not mentioned by UTAUT2 so far. In this case, new codes were identified and both grouped and defined afterwards [42].

In avoidance of relying biased on existing theory accompanied by missing flexibility in the development of new theoretical insights, we apply an approach that allows interpolation within the process of theory formation by simultaneously relating existing theoretical considerations to the empirical data [43]. Therefore, we coded and analyzed data in the first step. If the inductive coding revealed a new factor, we have taken previous research that deals with this factor in a different context into account, thereby deriving propositions explaining job seekers acceptance of AI recruitment. In the following, we present the results of this approach.

## **4 Research Results**

In our analysis, we identified UTAUT2 factors that can be adopted to explain the behavioral intention to accept the use of a certain technology. However, it becomes apparent that the model needs adjustments to explain a job seekers attitude toward the passive use of IT. The greatest challenge is that the intention of UTAUT2 (and corresponding models) is to reveal constructs that influence the intention to use a technology actively. When it comes to AI recruitment, job seekers are typically exposed to the technology an organization uses. Hence, it is crucial that job seekers accept the technologies used by organizations as missing acceptance might negatively influence the intention to apply for a job or to disclose data. More precisely, in this specific context it is not important to understand factors that influence the active use of IT, but to theorize constructs that affect the passive acceptance of IT, as the user does only indirectly use the technology. In summary, a synthesis of the acceptance factors for AI recruitment results in the research model shown in Figure 1. In the following subchapters, we will describe the resulting implications in more detail.



**Figure 1.** Acceptance of AI recruitment

#### 4.1 Intention and Behavior

To explain job seekers' acceptance toward AI recruitment we have to adjust the originally UTAUT2 model. Prior research considered the behavioral intention to mediate in the influence of perceptions on use behavior, and searched for factors that explain the intention to use a particular technology [19]. As job seekers' use of IT in the recruitment process is characterized by passivity, it is crucial to redefine the dependent variable. The conducted interviews emphasizes that the attitude toward AI has an impact on the intention to apply, as the following statements show:

*"That [use of AI recruiting] makes this company more attractive to me. It's easier to apply, so it's more pleasant. I prefer to apply for such jobs and those companies, because they are more modern." (#10)*

Moreover, the interviews indicate that the extent to which job seekers expect AI-based recruiting methods depends on their general attitude toward progressive technologies:

*"The companies [that are using new technologies in the recruitment process] definitely appear more attractive to me. Mostly I rather look for companies which do it, because the application process then often is easier for me." (#11)*

However, a more hesitant attitude toward the use of new technologies might negatively influence the intention to apply:

*"As long as it is not a robot that will do the interview in the end or something like that, I think it's good to have new technologies, but I think you still have to keep some of the old ways of doing things." (#15)*

Hence, we argue that in a passive use context the attitude toward a technology should be considered as a mediating variable that explains the influence of several perceptions about the IT on the corresponding behavior. In comparison to the use behavior suggested as a dependent variable by UTAUT2, the intention to apply results from a positive evaluation of new technologies in our research context. Therefore, we conclude that in the recruiting context behavior should be seen in relation to the technology but not with the indeed use of the technology, such that we assume:

**Proposition 1:** The better (worse) the job seekers' attitude toward automation in HRM the higher (lower) the intention to apply for a job at an organization that uses automation in HRM.

## 4.2 UTAUT2 Factors

### Performance expectancy

The interviews show that job seekers' acceptance of AI recruiting highly depends on performance expectancy as the expected output determines the evaluation of new recruiting methods. Interviewees believe that use of technology in HRM could lead to a faster application process in general and faster response times in particular:

*"My expectation would then be to receive a quick answer, as the application from my side is sent quickly and therefore you also want to have feedback more quickly, so you know where you stand, because often, you have several applications at the same time open."* (#7)

A factor regularly mentioned in the interviews is the neutrality of the recruiters. Job seekers want recruiters to be open minded and unbiased [44]. To ensure this degree of impartial behavior interviewees believe that AI-based recruitment methods can be a convenient option, which the following response elucidates:

*"I think if you just look at the rationale level, AI recruitment can do a better job because in many aspects they don't have the prejudices which you maybe have against some people if you know certain things."* (#13)

More particular, respondents expect an increase in fairness of the recruiting process when organizations use AI-based recruiting methods:

*"A machine is fairer than a human. I think that a machine is more objective and does not judge according to appearance, gender or skin color."* (#18)

These observations outline that the benefits candidates expect from using a technology influence the acceptance of automated recruiting, such that we propose:

**Proposition 2:** The better (worse) the performance expectancy the better (worse) is the job seekers' attitude toward automation in HRM.

### Effort expectancy

Regarding the factor effort expectancy it becomes apparent that millennials associate a high degree of ease with recruiter's use of AI-based recruiting methods. Interviewees have the perception that the recruiting process is much easier and applying companies are more attractive, which is underlined by the following statement:

*"For me it [use of new technology in the recruiting process] is important. This makes the whole process easier for me, I think."* (#8)

In general, respondents can imagine that artificial intelligence will change the entire application process in the future. CV parsing and processing of candidate's personal data can lead to a more convenient process that eliminates unpleasant activities, like writing a motivational letter:

*"And I like when you're applying for a job where you don't have to write recommendation letters and all this kind of things and you can just upload your CV and you apply for a job instantly. It [if a company applies AI recruiting] is super easy and for me more convenient."* (#10)



Besides the mentioned benefits, organization's use of AI recruiting can present job seekers with new challenges, as they have to rethink their resumes and make it more convenient for automated scanning processes:

*"When I know that a company uses AI in its recruiting process, I would change my application to include as many keywords as I can." (#19)*

The interviews illustrate that effort expectancy is an important factor for the attitude to accept automation in HRM as the degree of use definitely influences job seekers' attitude. Based on these interview insights we deduce the following proposition:

**Proposition 3:** The higher (lower) the effort expectancy the better (worse) is the job seekers' attitude toward automation in HRM.

### **Social influence**

In our interviews, we also found support for the UTAUT2 factor social influence, which reflects job seekers' perception that important others (e.g. the recruiting company) want them to accept a particular technology. Interviewees submit that job applicants might behave submissively as a consequence of the prevailing opinion that recruiters are in the powerful position while candidates are to some extent dependent from the selection decision making [45]. Therefore, they tend to accept the organization's use of AI-based recruiting methods, as the following statement illustrates:

*"It [use of AI recruiting] does not make any difference within the application process and I have no other choice. That's why I would apply." (#19)*

Besides, the interviews indicate that job seekers are more likely to accept AI recruitment, as they are used to the application of new technologies and therefore open-minded:

*"I mean it is kind of too late [to be afraid of AI recruiting], because I'm quite sure it is already happening." (#8)*

The presented statements show that social influence also matters. In the context of automated recruiting social influence does not necessarily concern job seekers' perception that important others want them to use technology. It is rather a question of whether job seekers perceive that organizations want them to accept use of new technologies in the recruiting process.

**Proposition 4:** The higher (lower) the social influence, the better (worse) is the job seekers' attitude to automation in HRM.

### **Habit**

We also found support for the factor habit in our interviews. From the respondents we learned that millennials are in general used to the use of new technologies, therefore they tend to accept technologies automatically. The following statement underlines this impression:

*"I expect that nowadays nearly every company uses it [AI-based recruiting methods], because there is nothing done anymore paper-based." (#9)*

Moreover, interviewees are more likely to accept automated recruiting, as related technologies are state of the art and almost every organization applies these methods.

Thus, the attitude to accept use of AI in HRM might be transformed into an automatic and unconscious behavior [32], such that we propose:

**Proposition 5:** The higher (lower) the habit of using AI recruitment, the better (worse) is the job seekers' attitude toward automation in HRM.

### 4.3 Additional Factors identified in the interviews

Besides the well-established UTAUT2 factors, we could also identify additional factors that influence job seekers acceptance of AI in HRM but has not been discussed in previous acceptance research.

#### Privacy risk expectancy

One factor that was mentioned during the interviews is the privacy risk [46] perceived by job seekers. In the HRM context organizations process particularly sensitive personal data of candidates. Therefore, interviewees pay attention to data privacy although they graduate their statements dependent on the extent to which organizations process personal data. In general, millennials are open-minded about data processing within the recruitment process and express in the interviews that it does not matter whether personal data is scanned by a human recruiter or a machine:

*"Nowadays nearly everyone knows your data because it can be seen publicly. If this is now scanned by a machine doesn't make a difference. There already exist so many algorithms so I think it's ok" (#1).*

Nevertheless, the interviewed millennials see it critical if organizations share personal data with third parties without their permission:

*"The data have all been inserted by me and therefore, these are the data for which I don't see a problem if they are published. Of course, it is problematic if they are given to third parties but within the company or website I don't mind." (#3)*

Moreover, respondents feel uncomfortable if organizations match CV data with private data from social networks (e.g. Instagram, Facebook) as the following statement shows:

*"I have the opinion that the things in social networks should stay private and shouldn't be used by employers. You always want to keep some kind of privacy and when you are controlled permanently... I don't know." (#7)*

These findings support previous research that highlights the shift from the question from whether individuals are willing to disclose their private data to how individuals deal with the knowledge that their private data is widely accessible [47, 48].

Thus, the proposed model for explaining job seekers' acceptance of AI recruitment also includes the factor "privacy risk expectancy" (see [49, 50] for a similar approach) that is not covered by UTAUT2 so far.

Following the interviewees' statements that their privacy risk expectancy influences the degree of data processing acceptance, we define privacy risk expectancy as the extent to which job seekers perceive that the use of AI-based recruiting methods is non-transparent and fosters data abuse. Based on this remarks, we deduce the following proposition:

**Proposition 6:** The higher (lower) the privacy risk expectancy, the worse

(better) is the job seekers' attitude toward automation in HRM.

### **Innovation Expectancy**

In the conducted interviews, we also found evidence that innovation expectancy is a factor for the acceptance of automation in HRM. In this respect, the participants frequently referred to the use of new technologies as a reference point for an organization's innovativeness. They also mentioned that use of AI-based recruiting technology could simplify processes and reduce errors. The following statement exemplary illustrates this observation:

*"I think, every company needs new technology nowadays because now things are not done manually this much. Technology makes everything easier, less mistakes and analysis and statistics are better and easier." (#10)*

Additionally, the interviewed millennials stated that they expect organizations to a certain degree to adopt new technologies in HRM as they are more likely to identify themselves with technology-driven companies:

*"The current generation is growing up with technology and everything gets automatic, that's why I think that in the following years companies will use this." (#7)*

However, AI recruitment is seen an expedient addition to conventional recruiting methods and not as a substitute. Respondents think the use of new technologies is important for an organization's development and reflects both the degree of innovation and attitude toward technologies. Anyhow, they still wish for personal contact:

*"As long as it is not a robot that will do the interview in the end or something like that, I think it's good to have new technologies, but I think you still have to keep some of the old ways of doing things." (#15)*

Therefore, we conclude that a model that explains the acceptance of AI recruiting, should consider the factor "innovation expectancy". This observation is supported by related research as the attractiveness of an employer is influenced by the perceived organization's degree of innovation [51]. Hence, we define innovation expectancy as the degree of innovation associated with organization's use of AI recruitment and derive the following proposition:

**Proposition 7:** The higher (lower) the innovation expectancy, the better (worse) is the job seekers' attitude toward automation in HRM.

### **4.4 UTAUT2 factors not identified in the interviews**

In addition to the factors described above, technology acceptance research has identified other factors that influence behavioral intentions. These are namely facilitation conditions, hedonic motivation as well as price value. In our interviews, we found no support for these factors, as job seekers are not directly involved in the IT use in HRM. In fact, the recruiters are using the AI-based recruiting technologies and job seekers have a more passive role in this process. Therefore, job seekers have no need for additional resources to accept AI recruitment and cannot actively experience fun. Accordingly, there are no monetary costs for the candidate if an organization uses automated recruitment methods and the proposed cognitive trade-

off between the monetary costs of a technology and the presumed benefits by UTAUT2 becomes redundant. Therefore, we excluded these three factors in our proposed research model.

## 5 Discussion and implications

Our research was motivated to analyze job seekers' attitude regarding AI recruitment. For this purpose, we propose a research model based on UTAUT2 that theorizes factors relevant for explaining job seekers' acceptance of automation in HRM for technologies that job seekers only uses passively. Due to this passive role regarding the technology use and associated dependency from AI-based recruiting methods used by organizations, reconsideration of existing acceptance models becomes crucial. We will discuss the implication of these results to the literature in the following.

First, while prior studies have generated insights by outlining the impacts of different factors on users' perceptions towards adopting/rejecting a technology [31, 49], the issue of how a passive usage of IT can be modeled is largely unaddressed. Therefore, the results contribute to acceptance research by highlighting the need for a comprehensive model to explain acceptance of the passive use of IT. Our proposed model addresses this challenge by identifying factors that have an impact on job seekers' acceptance of automation in HRM, thereby highlighting that the dependent variable should be reconsidered [52]. Academic research on technology acceptance focuses especially on variables, which influence the behavioral intention to use a technology and its use as an indicator of technology acceptance. In the context of AI recruitment, it is rather a question of what influences the attitude toward a passive use of IT given that the job seekers' perspective is investigated and how this attitude influence the intention to apply respectively the intention to disclose data to the organization. Hence, use is not an appropriate measure of acceptance in a passive use context such that we imply to consider attitude toward the technology [53] as mediating variable that explains the influence of several perceptions about a technology that is passively used by individuals on individual behavior, whereas behavior is in relation to the technology, but not technology itself (e.g. data disclosure, applying for a job, etc.).

Second, in comparison to prior research, we contribute to the general UTAUT2 model [19]. It focuses especially on consumer acceptance and provides variables that explain the intention to use or reject a certain technology. Nonetheless, as highlighted by our results, both *privacy risk expectancy* and *innovation expectancy* might also influence attitude toward a technology, which are not considered by UTAUT2 so far. Therefore, we theorize that factors differ depending on the context and provide an updated UTAUT2 model contextualized for the context of automation in HRM. In this context, we also discussed factors considered by UTAUT2, namely *effort expectancy* and *social influence* in order to express both the need for a convenient recruiting process and the importance of unbiased recruiting decisions. To reflect the importance of the outcome job seekers expect from the organizational use of AI recruitment we further considered the factor *performance expectancy*. Besides,

acceptance might occur automatically when AI recruitment becomes a standard process in organizations and job seekers feel that they have no other choice than accepting it. Therefore, we also included *habit* in our model. However, we could not find support for the factors *facilitation conditions*, *hedonic motivation* and *price value* supposed by UTAUT2 as these factors require an active IT use, which is not given in the context of explaining job seekers' attitude toward the passive use of AI-based recruiting methods.

Third, regarding research dealing with AI recruitment we followed the call for an investigation of technology use [54]. So far, little is known about AI-based recruiting methods in general and impact of these methods in particular. Results highlight the importance of automation in HRM and give guidance for future research as our findings show that UTAUT2 is a sufficient starting point for the examination of job seekers' attitude toward a passive IT use.

Besides these contributions, the presented paper underlies several limitations. First, the generalizability of the findings is restricted as only German millennials are interviewed and we did not control for potential personality differences [55] or any other biased relation to IT [56]. Moreover, there is a possible distortion in the selection of participants as recruiting of interviewees took place within the personal network of the authors.

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