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Exploring Job Applicants' Perspectives on Ai-Driven Interviews: The Influence on Stress and Anxiety Levels Due to Perceived Expectations of Perfection

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ABSTRACT
This study investigates the psychological impact and demographic influences of AI-driven interviews in the context of recruitment. Through a qualitative approach, the study explores the stress and anxiety levels experienced due to perfectionism by candidatesinAI interviews, analyzing the factors that impact these emotions. Additionally, it investigates demographic variables such as age, gender, and education to comprehend their influence on candidates' attitudes and responses inAI-based recruitment procedures. The findings reveal insights into the emotional toll of AI interviews and the intersectionality of demographics and technology in hiring contexts. The study provides suggestions and recommendations for improving the usability and effectiveness of AI interviews, aiming to inform the development of more equitable and inclusive recruitment practices in the future.

I. INTRODUCTION

This research delves into studying the impact of AI driven interviews, on job applicants in India particularly focusing on the levels of stress and anxiety induced by the pressure to perform well. The current job market shows a growing adoption of Artificial Intelligence in the recruitment process, shifting from human-driven to automated methods and altering the job search landscape.

The study explores into the viewpoints of job seekers to grasp their experiences, emotions, and responses to this interview method. The research exploreshow the anticipation of engaging with AI in an interview can escalate stress and anxiety levels. This pressure is thought to arise from the perceived expectations offlawlessness set by an AI system capable of meticulously analyse and evaluate each response.

II. BACKGROUND

Exploring Job Applicants' Perspectives on AI-Driven Interviews

The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) technology in the domain of job interviews is progressively gaining favour. As firms incorporate AI-guided interviews, it is imperative to take into account the perspectives of job seekers regarding this novel technology. While certain applicants may appreciate the efficiency and impartiality that AI introduces to the interview procedure, others may harbour reservations concerning privacy, equity, and potential biases in algorithmic decision-making. Furthermore, candidates may encounter discomfort when interacting with a machine as opposed to a human interviewer and may worry about the inability to establish personal connections or convey nuances that algorithms may not fully understand. Recognizing these varied viewpoints is pivotal for organizations to proficiently integrate AI-driven interviews, ensuring that the technology elevates rather than obstructs the candidate experience and overall recruitment results.

The Influence of AI on Stress and Anxiety Levels in Indian Job Seekers

The utilization of AI-driven interviews within the realm of job application procedures has the capacity to profoundly influence the levels of stress and anxiety experienced by job seekers in India (Esch et
al., 2020). The influence of AI on stress and anxiety levels among job seekers in India

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encompasses a wide array of concerns, encompassing those associated with linguistic and cultural disparities. Within a linguistically diverse nation such as India, where multilingualism is prevalent, AI-powered recruitment mechanisms might encounter obstacles inaccurately comprehending and deciphering responses in different languages and dialects. This language barrier has the potential to result in frustration and anxiety for job seekers who may encounter difficulties in effectively communicating their qualifications and experiences to AI systems. Furthermore, discrepancies in cultural communication styles, gestures, and social cues may not be fully taken into account in AI algorithms, leading to misinterpretations or biases during evaluation. In addition, the dependency on technology in recruitment procedures may conflict with traditional cultural norms that prioritize interpersonal connections and face-to-face engagements, thereby exacerbating stress and anxiety levels among job seekers. Addressing these linguistic and cultural challenges is crucial to ensure that AI-driven recruitment processes are inclusive, fair, and responsive to the diverse requirements of Indian job seekers. Moreover, the perceived pressure for perfection associated with AI-driven interviews could also contribute to heightened stress and anxiety levels among job seekers in India. Job seekers in India may experience heightened pressure to adhere to the perceived criteria set by AI algorithms, fearing that even minor imperfections or deviations from anticipated responses could negatively affect their prospects of securing employment (Lee et al., 2022).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Objective 1: Assess the levels of stress and anxiety that job applicants experience when participating in interviews Driven by AI technology.

Objective 2: Objective 2: Investigate demographic factors that may influence how the perceived pressure to be perfect affects the stress and anxiety levels of job applicants.

Objective 3: How to improve the design and implementation of AI driven interviews in order to create a less stressful environment, for job applicants provide suggestions and recommendations.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Hiring strategies were mostly based on basic, non-digital techniques for many years, up to the mid/late 1990s. The primary source of possible candidates was human agents. Job seekers frequently looked for available employment by physically searching job boards or written materials like newspapers. Upon discovering a suitable job offer, candidates were required to physically visit the employing organization, obtain a physical application, complete it by hand, and mail it to the employer (Black & van Esch, 2020). However, this dynamic is changing with the arrival of new technology and with the technique of interview, that technology facilitates, being used more and more by organizations looking to recruit new staff. The technology is known as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and it is a term used to describe 'smart' technologies that are able to use data to make a decision. AI- driven interviews have gained popularity in recent years due to their efficiency and objectivity in assessing job candidates (Smith, 2020). Research suggests that AI-driven interviews can help reduce bias in the hiring process and provide valuable insights into candidate performance (Jha et al., 2020). The research paper given by (Van Esch et al., 2021) examineshow AI-powered hiring is transforming recruitment and selection processes and discusses the implications of artificial intelligence including issues related to fairness, bias, and the potential for dehumanization in the selection process. The paper analyses the viewpoints of job seekers as well as the psychological impacts, such as stress and anxiety levels, of AI-driven interviews. It also covers the unspoken expectations of perfection that AI- driven interviews may place on candidates.

AI-Driven Interviews

AI interviews streamline and improve the assessment of candidates, providing a more objective and consistent evaluation process. They allow for the simultaneous assessment of multiple candidates, reducing time and resources required for hiring. AI interviews provide a consistent and objective evaluation process, ensuring all candidates receive a fair assessment (Intelligent Software Tools for Recruiting, 2019). In a study explores the application of AI-enabled interview analysis in human resource management, aiming to unveil insights and enhance decision-making in the hiring process.

AI technologies, including natural language processing (NLP) and machine learning (ML) algorithms, are used to analyse interview data and uncover hidden patterns, linguistic cues, and behavioural indicators that maybe missed by human interviewers The research also addresses the

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potential challenges and ethical considerations associated with AI-enabled interview analysis, such as privacy, data security, algorithmic biases, and the role of human judgment in decision-making. Responsible implementation and ongoing monitoring are highlighted as necessary (Panwar, 2023). It demonstrates that there are both positive and negative aspects to the AI interview. Electrolux, Cigna and Brother International Corporation are some companies that conduct AI interview. AI can help recruit top talent, streamline and personalize the application process for candidates, enhance the employee experience through skills matching and job alerts, save recruiters time to focus on other important tasks, and more. (Examples of Companies Successfully Using an AI Recruiting Platform, 2023).

Instahyre, HireSure and CutShort are some of the organization services and solutions offered by these companies, such as technical recruitment platforms, code-challenge communities, AI-based talent intelligence solutions, and algorithmic job matching platforms (Tracxn, 2024). IBM Watson Talent, Hilton, Unilever, Amazon, Delta Air Lines, Procter & Gamble (P&G) and Siemens companies using ai for recruitment in India (Thammala, 2023).

Job Applicants' Perspectives

Job applicants' perspectives on AI-driven interviews vary widely. Some candidates appreciate the convenience and consistency offered by these interviews, while others express concerns about the lack of human interaction and personalized feedback (Pandey & Bahukhandi, 2022). Understanding job applicants' attitudes towards AI-driven interviews is crucial for organizations to design effective recruitment processes that align with candidate expectations and preferences (Kim & Heo, 2021b). The inner workings of AI algorithms can be complex and difficult to understand, making it challenging to identify and address any potential biases or errors AI may struggle to fully understand the nuances and context of certain job roles, potentially leading to inaccurate assessments and mismatches between candidates and positions (The Impact of AI and Technology in Modern Hiring, 2021). A study highlights the significant impact of the recruitment process on employee retention, job satisfaction, and organizational performance. Therefore, while AI-driven interviews can provide many benefits, it is essential to ensure that they are used alongside human expertise to ensure that the recruitment process remains authentic and effective (Son et al., 2019).

Stress and Anxiety Levels in Job Interviews

Research has shown that job interviews can be a source of stress and anxiety for many individuals (Smith & Brown, 2019). Factors such as perceived scrutiny, fear of rejection, and pressure to perform well can contribute to heightened stress levels during job interviews (Lee et al., 2022). Understanding the impact of stress and anxiety on candidate performance is essential for organizations to create supportive interview environments that enable candidates to showcase their true potential (Chen & Wang, 2017). Techniques include practicing responses, researching the company, and engaging in physical exercise to relax the body. These strategies aim to help candidates prepare mentally and emotionally for interviews, increasing their chances of success (Robinson, 2022). The research findings suggest that attitudes towards AI use in the job application process and towards organizations that use AI are strongly related to prospective employees' intent to apply for jobs at such organizations. Understanding these reactions can provide valuable insights for organizations to effectively manage AI-enabled recruiting activities (Bhatt, 2022). According to Xuet al., a mental well-being expert, job interviews can trigger anxiety and stress, affecting performance and mental health. He suggests stress-busting tools like breathing exercises and physical activity to manage anxiety levels and excel in interviews. These strategies aim to help candidates navigate the challenges of job interviews with confidence and composure.

Perceived Expectations of Perfection

AI-driven interviews have become increasingly popular in modern recruitment processes, with the potential to revolutionize hiring practices. One significant advantage of AI-led hiring is its ability to efficiently prepare a list of role-specific interview questions and evaluate candidate response (Marzie 2023). Improved candidate matching is another benefit of AI, as algorithms can analyse candidate data and job requirements to identify the best-fit candidates (Smith, 2020). However, the AI-driven recruitment process is not without its challenges. For instance, one inadvertent consequence of AI- driven hiring systems is the rising number of fake candidates, as malicious actors exploit the system's reliance on technology (Katha, 2023). Additionally, candidates are increasingly employing AI-driven strategies to

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excel in AI-based interviews, relying on AI interview-practice tools to prepare for these types of interviews (Chen & Wang, 2017). Furthermore, while AI can enhance the efficiency and agility of the recruitment process, it still requires human expertise and input from subject matter experts. Without this input, the AI system may struggle to identify the most qualified candidates (Panwar, 2023). In conclusion,while AI-driven interviews have the potential to transform the recruitment process, they are not without their challenges and limitations.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used 10 interviews in dept case studies to understand how job applicants interact with AI interviewers. The data analysis approach is based on SWOT method, which allows for the evaluation of the participant experience's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Every interview was meticulously carried out and offered an in-depth knowledge of the complexities present in the applicants' perspectives. ethical considerations throughout, prioritizing informed consent and confidentiality. Through this methodology, the aim was to uncover valuable insights into the impact of AI on interview processes.

Research Design

The research design employed a qualitative, incorporating both interview and case study methods. This combination likely provided a rich and deeper understanding of the complex details for the interactions and perspectives during the interview process for the research topic.

Sample Selection

The sample selection process was likely carefully planned to ensure a diverse and representative sample. The sample selection process was likely carefully planned and selected 10 respondents to ensure a diverse and representative sample. By selecting participants strategically, the researcher aimed to capture abroad range of perspectives and experiences related to AI-based interviews, enriching the depth of the findings.

Data Collection

Data collection involved conducting semi-structured interviews with each participant. The use of 10 interviews suggests an in-depth exploration of the research topic, allowing for detailed insights to be obtained from the participants. By recording and transcribing these interviews, we captured detailed insights for analysis.

Data Analysis

The data analysis approach involved the application of the SWOT method (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats), the researcher likely gained a structured and insightful perspective on the findings. Through methodical analysis, we identified recurring themes and patterns within participants' experiences, shedding light on the impact of AI on job applicants'interview dynamics.

V. FINDINGS

The findings of this research were analysed using the SWOT method, which involved conducting 10 interviews with individuals who had participated in AI-driven interviews. The SWOT analysis was utilized to systematically identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats associated with AI-driven interview processes. This approach facilitated a comprehensive understanding of the benefits and challenges of using AI in recruitment, offering insights into its effectiveness, limitations, and potential areas for improvement.

Table 4.1 SWOT analysis

Strengths:	**Weaknesses:**
Efficiency Standardization Accessibility	Technical Issues Lack of Flexibility Lack of Human Interaction Stress Induction
Opportunities:	**Threats:**
Scalability Personalized Feedback Bias Mitigation	Technical Issues Overreliance Risk Skill Evaluation Beyond Language Proficiency

Strengths:

Standardization: Remote accessibility of AI interviews enhances the reach of recruitment processes, making them more accessible to candidates regardless of geographical location or scheduling constraints. One respondent during the interview stated, "I think that there is no biased and then no favouritism but when it comes to objectivity, I feel it's more objective in AI interview.

Accessibility: Use of AI for interviews would make recruitment more accessible, since the interview process becomes virtually accessible. That would make it more reachable for candidates, no matter where they are and when they would be

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available. Another respondent during the interview mentioned, "I have attended my interview during the time when I had fracture in my leg, I think it is one of positive side of AI interview."

Efficiency: AI-driven interviews can screen a highly scalable number of applicants and complete your interview at a masked speed.

Weaknesses:

Lack of Human Interaction:" The absence of human interaction in AI-driven interviews may lead to feelings of detachment and impersonality among job applicants, potentially impacting their overall experience. One respondent during the interview expressed, "I think the pace I mean in AI interview there is time limit and it's not a conversation but in an interview it's in a conversation was like there is flow of questions and there are pause and break which I feel is a lack in AI interview and that impact a lot creating stress and anxiety."

Lack of Flexibility: AI interviewers may have limited flexibility in adapting to unique candidate situations or accommodating individual preferences, leading to a less personalized experience.

Another respondent during the interview shared, "I would go for 6 as it's not extremely stressful but yeah it's not easy too and the reason would be language the then speed like at time it goes really fast pace and environment like I have send my roommate out when I attended interview distractions it doesn't eliminate and it catches it too."

Technical Issues: Technical glitches or compatibility issues with AI interview platforms can disrupt the interview process, leading to frustration and inconvenience for both applicants and recruiters. One respondent during the interview recounted, "There is a lot of instance I felt the interview are stressful because there was instance which I would like to share in beginning I was giving an interview I took break like filter and the AI was stuck due to that I got stress out seeing AI was not recording I back it and got log out somehow and the interview stopped I think that instance was worst one it feels like nightmare*."

Opportunities:

Personalized Feedback: AI-driven platforms have the potential to deliver personalized feedback to candidates, enhancing their understanding of strengths and areas for improvement. One respondent during the interview expressed, "I feel getting feedback forme which help me better next time."

Scalability: AI interviews offer scalability, enabling organizations to efficiently manage large volumes of applicants, especially in high-demand recruitment scenarios.

Bias Mitigation: By leveraging advanced algorithms and bias-detection mechanisms,AI-driven interview platforms present an opportunity to mitigate biases in recruitment processes, promoting fairness and equity in candidate evaluation. One respondent during the interview stated, "No there is nothing as such it is change behaviour because they don't have behave favouritism manner but AI in interview face chance are high."

Threats:

Technical Issues: AI recognition issues could increase anxiety and disrupt the interview. One respondent during the interview shared, "Yeah, beginning I once got out of AI interview and it was screening, I didn't get job further due to it."

Overreliance Risk: Overreliance on AI may overlook essential human elements in the hiring process. Another respondent during the interview cautioned, "AI can be organization instructions basics but evaluation for job I don'tthink it's a good idea as they are missing the potential employees as you are doing, they can do a gmeet too for evaluation."

Skill Evaluation Beyond Language Proficiency: Leveraging AI capabilities for better evaluation of skills beyond just language proficiency is crucial. One respondent during the interview acknowledged,

"Yes as I already respond it and I feel it's will there forever as it's in English language I am not comfortable talk in it mostly."

In conclusion, while AI-powered interviews offer clear benefits like efficiency, standardization, and accessibility, they also come with significant weaknesses and threats that need to be resolved. The lack of human interaction may lead to feelings of detachment among job applicants, while technical issues and stress induction can disrupt the interview process and impact candidate experience negatively. However, there are opportunities for improvement, including scalability, personalized feedback, bias mitigation, and leveraging AI for skill evaluation beyond language proficiency. Moving forward, it is imperative for organizations to strike a balance between the benefits of AI technology and the need

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for human interaction and flexibility in recruitment processes, ensuring fairness, equity, and apositive candidate experience.

VI. DISCUSSION

The study's discussion delves into the multifaceted dynamics observed among job applicants navigating AI-driven interviews. While some participants found AI interviews to be expedient and straightforward, others expressed concerns about the perceived lack of human connection and the pressure to meet unrealistic standards of perfection. Cultural considerations also emerged as significant factors shaping candidates' attitudes and impressions of AI-powered hiring practices, particularly within the context of India. Overall, these findings underscore the importance of acknowledging diverse perspectives and cultural nuances when designing and implementing AI-driven interview procedures, alongside recognizing its positive impact. Addressing stress, anxiety, and cultural fit will be pivotal in fostering applicant acceptance and trust in AI throughout the hiring process.

Job Applicants' Perception of AI-Driven Interviews

Participant opinions varied widely, with some embracing AI-conducted interviews for their efficiency, while others expressed apprehension about the impersonal nature of the process.

One respondent during the interview remarked, "No there is nothing as such it is change behaviour because they don't have behave favouritism manner but haa in interview face face chance are high."

Some individuals noted feelings of detachment and discomfort during AI-based interviews, citing a lack of interaction beyond scripted questions.

Impact of AI-Driven Interviews on Stress Levels

The stress level varied when AI-powered interviews were tested: some subjects reported increased anxiety brought by the pressure to be perfect.

One of the respondent during the interview "I try to use correct jaguar to clear the AI interview because I do understand the ML so I know the system but yaa it create stress for being perfect" .

Conversely, others reported reduced stress levels attributed to the standardized format and absence of face-to-face scrutiny by human evaluators.

Another participant stated, "Yes, I think interviews do have pressure but not work perfection it's more over how well we are able to present ourselves but AI how perfectly we are constructing our answers and producing it in a perfect way."

Influence of Perceived Expectations of Perfection on Anxiety Levels

The participants reported that the level of anxiety surged during exposure, as it constituted the perceived perfection expectations laid on them by the evaluators and hence indicated heightened self- doubt and pressure toward performance.

One of the respondent during the interview "Yes it has to go perfect you can't go wrong and correct it again or say it again so once it's gone its done will be judged according to what you say" .

However, the apprehension associated with evaluation based on the algorithmic criteria was realized by the speakers in order to feel incompetent and intensify their level of stress.

One of the respondent during the interview "I try to use correct jaguar to clear the AI interview because I do understand the ML so I know the system but yaa it create stress for being perfect" .

Cultural Factors Affecting Job Applicants' Perspectives in India

Cultural norms and values in India significantly influenced job applicants' perceptions of AI-driven interviews,with skepticism towards technology-driven assessment methods prevailing among some participants.
One respondent remarked, "Cultural expectations of interpersonal communication and rapport-building influenced participants' preferences for traditional face-to-face interviews over AI-driven alternatives."

These insights underscore the importance of considering cultural nuances and individual experiences when designing and implementing AI-driven recruitment strategies, ensuring a more inclusive and
effective hiring process.

VII. RECOMMENDATION

Recognizing the importance of using strengths, improving weaknesses, and managing threats can lead to a brighter future in AI-driven interviews. By matching recommendations with opportunities, organizations can successfully

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overcome challenges and improve recruitment processes.

Training and Education: Organizations should invest in comprehensive training programs and educational resources to prepare job candidates for AI-driven interviews. These programs can include workshops, online tutorials, and mock interview sessions specifically designed to familiarize candidates with the format, functionality, and expectations of AI interviews which can in incorporated in college curriculum. Providing candidates with ample opportunities to practice and receive feedback can help alleviate anxiety and build confidence in navigating AI-driven interview processes effectively.

Candidate Support: Offering personalized support and guidance to candidates throughout the AI-driven interview process is essential for promoting a positive candidate experience. This support can take various forms, including clear communication about the interview process, timely responses to candidate inquiries, and access to support resources such as FAQs or help desks. Additionally, providing candidates with opportunities to ask questions, seek clarification, and receive feedback can enhance their understanding and comfort level during the interview process, ultimately reducing stress and anxiety.

Technology Integration: Organizations should explore integrating conversational AI bots into the interview process to enhance candidate engagement and interaction. These bots can simulate human-like conversations, providing candidates with a more natural and interactive interview experience. By incorporating features such as voice recognition, natural language processing, and real-time feedback, AI bots can facilitate smoother communication and rapport-building between candidates and interviewers, thereby enhancing the overall candidate experience.

Feedback Mechanisms: Implementing feedback mechanisms within AI-driven interview platforms allows candidates to provide input on their experience and express any concerns or challenges they encountered during the interview process. Organizations should actively solicit feedback from candidates through post-interview surveys, feedback forms, or follow-up interviews to gather valuable insights into areas for improvement. By listening to candidate feedback and addressing their needs and concerns, organizations can continuously refine and optimize their AI-driven interview processes to enhance candidate satisfaction and overall effectiveness.

Diversity and Inclusion: To ensure that AI-driven interview platforms are inclusive and accessible to candidates from diverse backgrounds, organizations should proactively address potential barriers such as language differences, cultural biases, and accessibility issues. This may involve implementing features such as multilingual support, cultural adaptation algorithms, and accessibility accommodations to accommodate candidates with disabilities. Moreover, organizations should regularly audit their AI-driven interview processes to identify and mitigate any biases or disparities that may inadvertently disadvantage certain groups of candidates.

Limitations of the Research

Sample Size: The study's sample size maybe limited, potentially impacting the generalizability of the findings. Recruiting a larger and more diverse sample of participants could provide a broader perspective on the psychological impact and demographic influences of AI-driven interviews.

Sampling Bias: There maybe inherent biases in the recruitment of participants, such as self-selection bias or convenience sampling, which could affect the representativeness of the sample. Addressing these biases by employing random sampling or stratified sampling techniques could enhance the validity of the study's findings.

Contextual Factors: The study may not account for all relevant contextual factors that could influence candidates' experiences with AI-driven interviews, such as organizational culture, job role, or industry sector. Considering these contextual variables in future research could provide a more nuanced understanding of the factors shaping candidates' perceptions and responses.

VIII. CONCLUSION

This research has shed light on the impact and demographic effects of AI-driven interviews in recruitment practices. While AI proves to be efficient and impartial, it also raises concerns regarding the emotional well-being of candidates, particularly in terms of stress and anxiety. Various demographic factors such as age, gender, and literacy levels play a significant role in shaping how individuals perceive and respond to AI-driven recruitment processes. This study addresses the existing gap in research related to the theoretical and practical aspects of utilizing technology in recruitment. It emphasizes the importance of implementing strategies to manage stress and anxiety, address demographic disparities, and

enhance the overall candidate experience in AI-driven interviews.Looking towards the future, exploration should continue towards the use of AI technologies responsibly, ensuring that recruitment practices do not otherwise hurt the good intentions of being equitable, inclusive, and above all, considerate of needs and experiences from diverse candidates. This research highlights the importance of finding a harmony between the advantages of AI-based recruitment and the moral dilemmas and human elements at play. Through this approach, companies can make use of technology to enhance recruitment procedures while also ensuring equality, openness, and regard for the welfare of candidates.

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