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An Assessment of E-Recruitment Portal Effectiveness across Demographic and Job-Seeking Groups in Udaipur City

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Abstract:
E-recruitment portals offer job seekers convenient access to vacancies, search facilities, employment information and online application services. This research assessed users' perceptions of portal effectiveness in Udaipur City and examined whether those perceptions differed according to gender, age, educational qualification and primary job-seeking status. A cross-sectional descriptive-comparative design and quantitative approach were adopted. Using purposive sampling, data were collected from 165 individuals who had used an e-recruitment portal during the preceding 12 months. Perceived effectiveness was measured through eight statements on a five-point Likert scale. The scale demonstrated good internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha of 0.816. Respondents reported a moderately favourable overall perception (M = 3.39, SD = 0.55). Overall effectiveness, access to opportunities and convenience attracted comparatively stronger assessments, whereas application ease received the lowest mean. An independent-samples t-test found no significant gender-based difference, $t(163) = -0.67$, $p = .501$. One-way ANOVA also showed no significant differences across age groups, $F(2, 162) = 1.18$, $p = .311$; educational qualifications, $F(4, 160) = 0.25$, $p = .911$; or primary job-seeking statuses, $F(5, 159) = 0.96$, $p = .446$. All four null hypotheses were therefore not rejected. The results indicate that users from different backgrounds formed broadly similar evaluations of e-recruitment portals, although particular facilities still offer scope for improvement. Since the research was confined to a purposively selected sample in Udaipur City, its findings cannot be generalised without caution.

Keywords: E-recruitment portals; perceived effectiveness; demographic characteristics; job-seeking status; digital recruitment.

INTRODUCTION

Online recruitment portals have changed how employment opportunities are located and applications are submitted. Instead of depending entirely on newspaper advertisements, personal contacts or direct visits to employers, job seekers can examine vacancies from different organisations through a single digital platform. Search filters, vacancy alerts and online application facilities may make this process more convenient. Their practical value, however, depends on whether users can find suitable opportunities, understand the information provided and complete applications without unnecessary difficulty.

Effectiveness from a job seeker's perspective involves more than the availability of vacancies. The usefulness and ease of using an e-recruitment website can influence attitudes towards the platform and the intention to apply for advertised positions (Chowdhury, 2024). Vacancy advertisements also need to provide adequate and relevant information because job seekers use these details to judge whether an opportunity matches their qualifications, experience and employment preferences (Mahjoub & Kruyen, 2021). Portal effectiveness may therefore be reflected in the quality of search facilities, adequacy of vacancy information, convenience of application submission, usefulness of notifications and the extent to which the platform reduces search time and effort.

Users do not necessarily experience these facilities in the same manner. Differences in digital familiarity, educational background and employment circumstances can shape how individuals search for vacancies and respond to online recruitment systems. Karaoglu et al. (2022) observed that demographic characteristics and digital skills contribute to differences in online job-search behaviour. Some users may navigate digital recruitment processes confidently, while others may encounter difficulty interpreting portal requirements or managing automated procedures (Smythe et al., 2021). Gender may also influence the acceptance and use of e-recruitment technology in the Indian context (Kaur & Kaur, 2022). Similar differences may arise among age groups, educational categories and people seeking different forms of employment.

Previous research has examined website usefulness, ease of use, information quality, procedural fairness, attitudes and behavioural intentions associated with e-recruitment (Chowdhury, 2024; Kaur & Kaur, 2023; Lo Piccolo et al., 2024). Although these studies clarify several aspects of the online recruitment experience, limited attention has been given to comparing overall perceived portal effectiveness simultaneously across gender, age, educational qualification and primary job-seeking status. This issue is particularly relevant when the user population includes recent graduates, final-year students, unemployed applicants, employed job seekers, competitive-examination aspirants and individuals searching for internships or contractual work.

Against this background, the present research assesses users' perceptions of e-recruitment portal effectiveness in Udaipur City. It further examines whether perceived effectiveness differs according to gender, age group, educational qualification and primary job-seeking status. Such comparisons can provide a more differentiated understanding of portal effectiveness by identifying whether users with distinct demographic and employment circumstances evaluate the same facilities differently.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Magdalenić and Luić (2025) examined how digital tools and Design Thinking could strengthen contemporary recruitment processes and candidate experience. The researchers applied a Design Thinking framework to study the information and communication requirements arising during recruitment and employee integration. Their analysis indicated that digital tools can improve recruitment when technological efficiency is combined with an understanding of applicants' needs and expectations. This work is relevant because portal effectiveness depends not only on technological availability but also on whether applicants can navigate recruitment activities conveniently and obtain useful information.

Lo Piccolo et al. (2024) investigated how job seekers form procedural-fairness perceptions during e-recruitment and whether these perceptions affect their willingness to continue using recruitment websites. A quantitative study using an online recruitment setting assessed information quality, perceived fairness, organisational attractiveness and behavioural intentions. Adequate, relevant and clearly presented

information contributed to stronger fairness perceptions, which subsequently supported favourable intentions. The research demonstrates that an e-recruitment portal is evaluated through both its functional facilities and the manner in which it communicates recruitment information to applicants.

Chowdhury (2024) integrated signalling theory with the Technology Acceptance Model to explain prospective employees' intentions to apply through corporate recruitment websites. Data from 318 prospective candidates were analysed through structural equation modelling and mediation analysis. Perceived usefulness, ease of use and corporate reputation influenced attitudes towards recruitment websites, which partly explained applicants' intentions to apply. The results establish that straightforward navigation and useful employment information shape users' assessments of online recruitment facilities. They also justify examining whether portal effectiveness is perceived similarly by users with different personal and job-seeking characteristics.

Kaur and Kaur (2023) explored the influence of electronic word-of-mouth on job seekers' adoption of e-recruitment platforms. An online questionnaire generated 397 usable responses, and the proposed relationships were examined through partial least squares structural equation modelling. Electronic word-of-mouth affected perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use and attitudes towards e-recruitment. Usefulness and attitude also mediated its relationship with behavioural intention. The findings show that users' evaluations are influenced by both portal functionality and the employment information encountered through online sources, supporting a broader assessment of perceived portal effectiveness.

Kaur and Kaur (2022) examined the role of gender in the adoption of e-recruitment systems in India. Online responses from 364 final-year graduate and postgraduate students were evaluated using the Technology Acceptance Model, measurement invariance testing and multi-group analysis. Perceived usefulness and ease of use influenced attitudes, while the strength of several relationships differed between female and male respondents. Ease of operation was more influential among female users, whereas usefulness was comparatively more important among male users. This evidence supports the inclusion of gender as a grouping variable when assessing perceptions of e-recruitment effectiveness.

Bhatia and Satija (2022) studied the factors shaping job seekers' perceptions and behavioural intentions towards e-recruitment. Fresh MBA graduates were surveyed to examine how their evaluations of online recruitment affected their willingness to use such systems. The analysis indicated that job seekers' perceptions had a significant bearing on behavioural intention, demonstrating that portal adoption is closely connected with how applicants assess the facilities offered. The study is particularly relevant to the present research because it focuses on Indian job seekers, although its concentration on one educational group limits conclusions about users with different qualifications and employment statuses.

Karaoglu et al. (2022) investigated inequalities in online job searching and the role of digital job-search skills. The analysis used survey data from 1,000 internet users participating in the labour force, with additional analysis of social-media users. Age, education, income, online experience and digital skills were associated with searching and applying for employment online. Individuals therefore did not use online employment resources in an entirely uniform manner. The research provides a basis for comparing e-recruitment perceptions across age and educational groups, while also showing that demographic differences may be linked with broader variations in digital experience.

Smythe et al. (2021) considered the literacy demands created by automated e-recruitment and other online services. The research combined evidence from the German LEO literacy study with ethnographic interviews involving job seekers attending community-based digital-literacy classes in Canada. Online recruitment promised efficiency and convenience, yet applicants with limited digital familiarity

encountered difficulties navigating platforms and automated procedures. The findings caution against assuming that access to an e-recruitment portal produces an equally convenient experience for every user. They are relevant to the assessment of application ease, search facilities and differences among demographic groups.

Mahjoub and Kruyen (2021) reviewed research concerning the content and effectiveness of job advertisements. Through an exploratory narrative review, they examined the features commonly included in vacancy advertisements, the approaches used to study those features and their influence on potential applicants. Job descriptions, qualification requirements, organisational information and the presentation of employment conditions emerged as important elements of recruitment communication. Their analysis demonstrates that access to vacancies alone does not establish portal effectiveness; the adequacy and relevance of the information accompanying those vacancies also influence applicants' evaluations and decisions.

Research Gap

Existing research has established the importance of usefulness, application ease, vacancy information, digital skills, fairness and online communication in shaping job seekers' responses to e-recruitment. Several studies have also examined behavioural intention or willingness to apply, while a smaller number have considered demographic differences. However, limited attention has been given to whether the overall perceived effectiveness of e-recruitment portals differs simultaneously across gender, age, educational qualification and primary job-seeking status. Evidence is especially limited for job seekers belonging to varied employment categories within a specific Indian city. The present study addresses this gap by assessing portal effectiveness among users in Udaipur City and comparing their perceptions across four demographic and job-seeking grouping variables.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Objectives

The research objectives were as follows:

1. To assess users' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of e-recruitment portals in Udaipur City.
2. To examine differences in perceived effectiveness according to gender.
3. To analyse differences in perceived effectiveness among users belonging to different age groups.
4. To compare perceived effectiveness across different educational qualifications.
5. To examine differences in perceived effectiveness among users with different primary job-seeking statuses.

Research Design

The study followed a cross-sectional descriptive-comparative research design. The descriptive component was used to assess respondents' perceptions of e-recruitment portal effectiveness. The comparative component examined whether the mean perceived-effectiveness score differed across gender, age, educational qualification and primary job-seeking status. A cross-sectional design was appropriate because the required information was obtained from respondents at a particular point in time without manipulating any variable.

Research Approach

A quantitative research approach was adopted. Respondents' perceptions were measured through Likert-scale statements, while their demographic and job-seeking characteristics were recorded through categorical questions. This approach supported the calculation of frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations. It also permitted statistical comparison of perceived-effectiveness scores across the groups covered by the research objectives.

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 an employment opportunity during the preceding 12 months. It covered 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 confirmed whether each respondent had used an e-recruitment portal during the specified period. Only those reporting relevant portal-use experience were eligible to participate. The final sample consisted of 165 respondents.

Purposive sampling was employed because participation required prior experience of using an e-recruitment portal. The method enabled the inclusion of respondents who could meaningfully evaluate the facilities provided by these platforms. Although it did not give every member of the wider population an equal probability of selection, it was appropriate for reaching respondents who satisfied the eligibility requirement.

Research Variables

The dependent variable was the perceived effectiveness of e-recruitment portals. Gender, age group, educational qualification and primary job-seeking status were used as grouping variables for comparative analysis.

Table 1: Research Variables

Variable type	Variable
Dependent variable	Perceived effectiveness of e-recruitment portals
Measurement of dependent variable	Composite mean score calculated from the eight approved Likert statements
Independent variable 1	Gender
Independent variable 2	Age group
Independent variable 3	Educational qualification
Independent variable 4	Primary job-seeking status

A composite perceived-effectiveness score was calculated for each respondent by adding the scores obtained on the eight statements and dividing the total by eight:

$$\text{Composite mean score} = \frac{PE1 + PE2 + PE3 + PE4 + PE5 + PE6 + PE7 + PE8}{8}$$

The resulting score remained within the original range of 1 to 5. A higher composite mean represented a more favourable evaluation of e-recruitment portal effectiveness.

Reliability Testing

Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of the eight statements measuring perceived effectiveness.

Table 2: Reliability Testing

Construct	Number of statements	Cronbach's alpha
Perceived Effectiveness of E-Recruitment Portals	8	0.816

The scale produced a Cronbach's alpha of 0.816. As the coefficient exceeded the generally accepted threshold of 0.70, the eight statements demonstrated good internal consistency and were combined to calculate the composite mean score.

Statistical Tools and Techniques

Frequencies and percentages were used to describe the profile of respondents. Means and standard deviations summarised responses to the eight statements and the overall perceived-effectiveness score. Cronbach's alpha examined the internal consistency of the measurement scale.

Table 3: Statistical Tools and Techniques

Purpose	Statistical test
Internal consistency of the eight-item scale	Cronbach's alpha
Overall perceived effectiveness	Mean and standard deviation
Gender-based comparison	Independent-samples t-test
Age-group comparison	One-way ANOVA
Educational-qualification comparison	One-way ANOVA
Job-seeking-status comparison	One-way ANOVA
Homogeneity of group variances	Levene's test

LIKERT-SCALE STATEMENT ANALYSIS

Table 4: Likert-Scale Statement Analysis

S. No.	Likert Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean
1	E-recruitment portals make searching for employment opportunities more convenient.	2	13	71	63	16	3.47
2	E-recruitment portals provide easy access to a wide range of employment opportunities.	1	17	61	65	21	3.53
3	The search and filtering facilities help me identify suitable employment opportunities.	0	29	72	52	12	3.28
4	E-recruitment portals reduce the time and effort required to search for employment.	2	18	70	60	15	3.41
5	The information provided on e-recruitment portals helps me evaluate employment opportunities.	1	25	75	52	12	3.30
6	The application process through e-recruitment portals is easy to understand and complete.	2	26	74	56	7	3.24
7	Job notifications received through e-recruitment portals support my employment search.	2	23	75	53	12	3.30
8	Overall, e-recruitment portals are an effective means of facilitating employment opportunities.	0	17	61	68	19	3.54

Respondents held a moderately favourable view of e-recruitment portal effectiveness, although their evaluations varied across individual facilities. Overall effectiveness, access to employment opportunities and convenience attracted comparatively stronger responses. Search and filtering, vacancy information, notifications and reduced search effort received more measured assessments. Application ease recorded the lowest mean, showing that the application process offered greater scope for improvement than the other portal features examined.

HYPOTHESES

H_{01}: There is no significant difference in the perceived effectiveness of e-recruitment portals according to users' gender.

For testing H_{01}, an independent-samples t-test was applied to examine whether perceived-effectiveness scores differed significantly between male and female respondents.

Table 5: Independent-Samples t-Test

		n	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
PE_Mean	Male	85	3.36	0.55	0.06
	Female	80	3.42	0.56	0.06

Test	F	df1	df2	p
Levene's Test (Mean)	0.01	1	162	0.962

		t	df	p	Cohen's d
PE_Mean	Equal variances	-0.67	163.00	.501	0.10
	Unequal variances	-0.67	162.35	.501	0.10

Female respondents recorded a slightly higher perceived-effectiveness score (M = 3.42, SD = 0.56) than male respondents (M = 3.36, SD = 0.55). Levene's test was non-significant, F(1, 162) = 0.01, p = .962, indicating comparable group variances. The equal-variances t-test did not identify a statistically significant difference, t(163) = -0.67, p = .501, Cohen's d = 0.10.

Finding

The mean evaluation among female respondents was marginally higher than that of male respondents. However, the difference was negligible in practical terms and was not statistically significant.

Decision and Conclusion

H_{01} was tested using an independent-samples t-test. Since p = .501 exceeded the 5% significance level, the null hypothesis was not rejected. The study therefore found no significant gender-based difference in the perceived effectiveness of e-recruitment portals.

H_{02}: There is no significant difference in the perceived effectiveness of e-recruitment portals among users belonging to different age groups.

For testing H_{02}, one-way ANOVA was applied to determine whether perceived-effectiveness scores differed significantly across the three age groups.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics (Age Group)

	n	Mean	Std. Deviation
Up to 25 years	89	3.45	0.52
26–30 years	52	3.32	0.60
31 years and above	24	3.31	0.56
Total	**165**	**3.39**	**0.55**

Respondents up to 25 years of age recorded the highest perceived-effectiveness score (M = 3.45, SD = 0.52). The mean declined slightly among those aged 26–30 years (M = 3.32, SD = 0.60) and respondents aged 31 years and above (M = 3.31, SD = 0.56). The overall mean for the 165 respondents was 3.39 (SD = 0.55).

Table 7: ANOVA (Age Group)

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Age Group	0.72	2	0.36	1.18	.311
Residual	49.64	162	0.31		
Total	50.36	164			

Although the youngest group expressed a somewhat more favourable perception, one-way ANOVA showed that the difference was not statistically significant, $F(2, 162) = 1.18$, $p = .311$.

Finding

Respondents up to 25 years reported the highest mean evaluation, while the other two groups recorded nearly identical scores. This suggests that perceived portal effectiveness remained reasonably stable across the age groups examined.

Decision and Conclusion

H_{02} was tested using one-way ANOVA. Since $p = .311$ exceeded the 5% significance level, the null hypothesis was not rejected. The study therefore found no significant difference in perceived portal effectiveness among the three age groups.

H_{03}: There is no significant difference in the perceived effectiveness of e-recruitment portals among users with different educational qualifications.

For testing H_{03}, one-way ANOVA was applied to examine whether perceived-effectiveness scores differed significantly across the five educational categories.

Table 8: Descriptive Statistics (Educational Qualification)

	n	Mean	Std. Deviation
Higher secondary	15	3.41	0.55
Undergraduate/degree in progress	40	3.45	0.57
Graduate	58	3.36	0.55
Postgraduate	40	3.34	0.60
Professional or technical qualification	12	3.41	0.40
Total	**165**	**3.39**	**0.55**

Respondents pursuing an undergraduate degree recorded the highest mean ($M = 3.45$, $SD = 0.57$). Higher-secondary respondents and those with professional or technical qualifications each reported a mean of 3.41, while graduates and postgraduates recorded means of 3.36 and 3.34, respectively. The overall mean for all 165 respondents was 3.39 ($SD = 0.55$).

Table 9: ANOVA (Educational Qualification)

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Education	0.31	4	0.08	0.25	.911
Residual	50.05	160	0.31		
Total	50.36	164			

The small differences among the five educational groups were not statistically significant, $F(4, 160) = 0.25$, $p = .911$.

Finding

Perceived-effectiveness scores remained broadly similar across the educational categories despite minor differences in their means. This suggests that users' evaluations of e-recruitment portals were not substantially differentiated by educational qualification.

Decision and Conclusion

H_{03} was tested using one-way ANOVA. Since $p = .911$ exceeded the 5% significance level, the null hypothesis was not rejected. The study therefore found no significant difference in perceived portal effectiveness across the educational qualifications examined.

H_{04}: There is no significant difference in the perceived effectiveness of e-recruitment portals among users with different primary job-seeking statuses.

For testing H_{04}, one-way ANOVA was applied to examine whether perceived-effectiveness scores differed significantly across the six defined job-seeking groups.

Table 10: Descriptive Statistics (Primary Job-Seeking Status)

	n	Mean	Std. Deviation
Recent graduate seeking a first job	33	3.29	0.50
Employed person seeking a new or better employment opportunity	24	3.59	0.62
Final-year student currently applying for jobs	26	3.34	0.55
Competitive-examination aspirant seeking public- or private-sector employment	29	3.37	0.48
Unemployed and actively seeking employment	34	3.42	0.54
Seeking an internship, contractual work or part-time employment	19	3.33	0.68
Total	**165**	**3.39**	**0.55**

Employed respondents seeking a new or better opportunity recorded the highest mean ($M = 3.59$, $SD = 0.62$). Recent graduates reported the lowest mean ($M = 3.29$, $SD = 0.50$), while the remaining groups recorded means between 3.33 and 3.42. The overall mean was 3.39 ($SD = 0.55$).

Table 11: ANOVA (Primary Job-Seeking Status)

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Primary_Job_Seeking_Status	1.47	5	0.29	0.96	.446
Residual	48.88	159	0.31		
Total	**50.36**	**164**			

Despite the variation in group means, one-way ANOVA produced a non-significant result, $F(5, 159) = 0.96$, $p = .446$.

Finding

Employed respondents seeking a better opportunity reported the most favourable mean evaluation, while recent graduates and internship or contractual-work seekers recorded comparatively lower means. This suggests some descriptive variation among the groups, but the differences were not statistically significant.

Decision and Conclusion

H_{04} was tested using one-way ANOVA. Since $p = .446$ exceeded the 5% significance level, the null hypothesis was not rejected. The study therefore found no significant difference in perceived portal effectiveness among the primary job-seeking-status groups.

SUGGESTIONS BASED ON FINDINGS

The suggestions are based on the study findings.

1. Application ease recorded the lowest mean. Portal operators need to observe actual users completing an application rather than relying only on technical checks. This would help locate unclear instructions, repeated fields and stages at which applicants hesitate or leave the form.
2. Search facilities require more precise matching. Filters for qualification, experience, location, salary and employment type are likely to be more useful than a long list of options that still produces unsuitable results.
3. Employers could adopt a common format for vacancy advertisements covering eligibility, responsibilities, experience, location, remuneration and the selection process.
4. Access to numerous vacancies was among the more positively evaluated features, but quantity alone is an incomplete measure. Expired listings should be removed promptly, and vacancies that repeatedly appear in unrelated searches need separate review. Greater attention to relevance would protect the value of the access already available.
5. Applicants should be able to decide which notifications they receive and how often they receive them.
6. Reducing search effort involves more than shortening the application form. A user must locate a vacancy, understand its conditions, compare it with alternatives and then apply. Portal reviews therefore need to follow this complete journey and identify where time is being lost.
7. Convenience and access to opportunities do not require major reconstruction because respondents already assessed them comparatively favourably. Changes made to weaker functions must not make navigation more complicated or restrict straightforward access to vacancies.

8. An overall score of portal effectiveness may appear satisfactory even when a particular facility performs less favourably. Periodic evaluation should consequently retain separate measures for applications, filters, vacancy information and notifications.
9. Gender, age, educational qualification and primary job-seeking status produced no statistically significant differences. There is therefore no empirical basis in the present research for designing separate portal systems around these categories. Where personalisation is required, the applicant's stated occupation, location and employment preferences offer a more relevant basis.
10. Whether these results extend beyond Udaipur City remains open to examination. Research covering other cities, rural areas or a probability-based sample would clarify whether the broadly similar group perceptions observed here are specific to the present respondents or represent a wider pattern.

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