

**THE INTRODUCTION AND USE OF ELECTRONIC RECRUITMENT (E-RECRUITMENT) ON THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS IN ORGANIZATIONS: BENEFITS OF THIS TECHNOLOGY FOR RECRUITING ORGANIZATIONS**

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**ABSTRACT:** *The success of every organization depends on its human capital, and recruitment by the human resource department is vital in generating organizational human capital. In the past twenty years, the traditional paper-based method of recruitment has been replaced to some extent by electronic recruiting (e-recruitment) in many organizations as many organizations are now utilizing e-recruitment to post jobs and accept resumes on the internet, and correspond with applicants by e-mail. In this paper, recruitment and e-recruitment are theoretically defined, summarized and synthesized and the various benefits accruing to organizations for adopting electronic recruiting are highlighted. I also identified gaps and opportunities for future research and proposed some testable research questions in the domain of e-recruitment, as well as suggested research methods that can be utilized in future research to answer the proposed questions. Important contributions of this paper are highlighted.*

**KEYWORDS:** employer brand image, e-recruitment, human resource management, signaling theory, transaction cost

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## **INTRODUCTION**

To assist in winning the war for talent in the digital age, it is imperative that organizations find ways to attract job applications from all over the world in quick and expedient ways. Thus, an organization's ability to quickly and efficiently recruit and hire capable employees is an important determinant of organizational effectiveness and competitive advantage. Prior to the introduction of information technology (IT) firms traditionally, depended on low-technology methods, including newspaper advertisements, and employee referrals, to locate and attract qualified candidates, but in the past two decades the methods and processes by which many firms follow to recruit talent has changed as many organizations are transitioning to e-recruitment.

The research question I pose herein is: How does the introduction of electronic recruitment (e-recruitment) affect the recruitment process in organizations, and what are the benefits of this technology for recruiting organizations? I am motivated to write this paper to define, summarize and synthesize the literature on recruitment and e-recruitment and theoretically articulate the various benefits of adopting electronic recruiting in organizations. I also identify gaps and opportunities for future research and propose some unexplored testable research questions in the domain of recruitment and e-recruitment, as well as suggest research methodologies that can be utilized in future research to answer the proposed questions.

Findings in this paper should contribute to the literature by adding additional knowledge to the sparse literature on e-recruitment. Also, I expect to apply signaling theory and employer branding theory to the web-based recruitment domain and by theorizing that organizational use of e-recruitment sends positive signals about an organization's positive recruiting image to job seekers resulting in the attraction of many job seekers, this paper will advance knowledge by integrating the human resource (HR), psychology and marketing literature and outlining the critical links between these body of literature. I expect to posit that adoption of e-recruitment permits an organization to generate a large applicant pool, thereby allowing hiring managers to be very selective in hiring. In addition, I expect to point out that, adoption of e-recruitment is beneficial to recruiting organizations in many other ways, such as, e-recruitment being optimal for allocating financial resources which results in the reduction of recruiting personnel, leading to huge cost savings for organizations. I also aim to add that, e-recruiting makes possible reduction in paperwork and speed up the recruitment process, thus, making e-recruitment more effective and efficient.

The rest of this paper is structured as follows: the definitions of recruitment and e-recruitment from the point of view of various authors in the literature are synthesized and summarized, followed by an outline of several benefits accruing to recruiting organizations for adopting e-recruitment. I then, identified several gaps and opportunities in the literature and proposed some relevant research questions along with suggested research methodologies. Thereafter, I discussed findings in this paper and end with my conclusion.

## **RECRUITMENT AND E-RECRUITMENT IN THE LITERATURE**

The success of every organization depends on the vital value of the experience, skills, innovativeness and intellectual capital of its employees and efficient and effective recruitment by human resource personnel give rise to the generation of an organization's intellectual capital. As global competition for talent persists, an organization's ability to attract and recruit top and appropriate talent expeditiously becomes pivotal to the organization's ability to compete successfully. For decades, organizations typically relied solely on the traditional paper-based recruitment method for talent but for the past twenty years, there has been a paradigm shift in recruitment as many organizations have been transitioning into the use of electronic recruitment (e-recruitment) or a combination of the traditional paper-based recruitment method with electronic recruitment, but the trend towards adoption of electronic recruitment is ever increasing as the enormous benefits of electronic recruitment is becoming obvious to many human resource managers.

There are many definitions used to describe recruitment (e.g., Breaugh, 1992; Breaugh & Starke, 2000; Rynes, 1991; Saks, 2005; Taylor & Collins, 2000). "Recruitment includes those practices and activities carried on by the organization with the primary purpose of identifying and attracting potential employees" (Barber, 1998, p.5). Sims (2002) defined recruitment as the process of discovering, developing, seeking and attracting individuals to fill actual and/or anticipated job vacancies; it has three general purposes: to fill job vacancies; to acquire new skills; and to allow organizational growth. Recruitment activities involve either external candidates from outside

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organizations or current employees, in which case it is called internal recruitment, but the focus of this paper is solely on the process of recruiting external candidates.

The term, online recruitment, e-recruitment, cyber recruiting, or internet recruiting imply the formal sourcing of job information online (Vistal, Patil & Patil, 2012). E-recruitment is a hiring process that utilizes a variety of electronic means and technologies with the primary purpose of identifying, attracting, and selecting potential employees (Lee, 2011). E-recruiting technologies are web-based technologies that help recruiters and job applicants to complete their tasks more efficiently and effectively by automating recruiting processes and providing the information necessary for making appropriate decisions. These technologies include, career web sites, applicant tracking system, job search agent, prescreening/self-assessment tools, talent management systems, streaming videos. Candidate relationship management system, and social media (Lee, 2011). This usually means the use of an organization's own website, a third-party job site or job board, a curriculum vitae (CV) database, search engine marketing or social media platforms to fill vacancies. Organizations advertise job vacancies through worldwide web, and job seekers send their applications and curriculum vitae (CV) through e-mail using the internet (Lee, 2011). E-recruitment, is an umbrella or composite-term characterized by diverse properties and a broad range of practices, tools, and processes related to recruiting (Heery & Noon, 2001). E-recruitment, is elaborated to include candidate management technology, and the recruitment process in general, example, tracking applicants, selecting, offering jobs and rejecting (Parry & Tyson, 2009). Electronic recruitment or e-recruitment has been an issue of interest over the past twenty years and today many organizations use the internet as a source of recruitment.

E-recruitment covers the following digital Human Resource Management (HRM) practices: advertising of employment opportunities on job databases, career portals, social networking sites, corporate web sites and intranets, and other online resources; e-recruitment systems for application submission, tracking, screening and candidate management; résumé databases and search engines, etc. (Holm, 2012). The virtual recruiting environment will vary in the level of sophistication depending on the level of technology used and the scope of activities it covers. The choice as to which of these methods to adopt relies on the organizations' size, needs, and recruitment budget. E-recruitment can be divided into two main categories: a) corporate website used for recruitment and b) commercial job boards where job advertisements are posted (Parry, et al., 2009. Harris (2004) makes a clear distinction between we-find-you approaches and you-find-us approaches. We- find- you approaches refer to the methods whereby the recruiter searches for applicants while you – find us approaches refer to methods whereby the potential applicant searches for the organization (Harris, 2004). We-find you approaches include: searching through resumes on a job board, web-event recruitment, relationship recruiting, using the service of aggregator sites (Harris, 2004).

Kulkarni (2012) stated in his article about Electronic Resource Human (E-HRM) Implementation, that e-HRM is a web-based solution that takes advantage of the latest web application technology to deliver an online real-time human resource management solution. In other words, Electronic Human Resources Management (E-HRM) can be considered as a way to implement HR strategies, policies and practices in organizations through the use of web-based technology. In many

organizations, e-recruitment techniques and related technology are used, albeit to different extents, in the tasks of attracting applicants, processing incoming applications and communicating with candidates, supporting Cappelli's (2001) findings that the e-recruitment process consists of three major steps: attracting, sorting, and contacting candidates. The typical and traditional paper-based recruitment is no longer present in its original form in many firms, as many firms now use a combination of e-recruitment and traditional recruitment, and e-recruitment techniques and related technology are observed to be used by firms in the three major tasks - attracting job seekers, sorting applications, and communicating with job candidates - all these three tasks are fully automated in many organizations. E-recruitment allows technology aided résumé scanning, which is advantageous to hiring managers and job seekers, as it allows applicants from various locations worldwide to submit consistent information to HR managers and permits easy storage of the information. Thus, the organizational adoption of e-recruitment leads to, increased connectivity among organizational departments and managers and results in a reinvention of the organization. Recruitment and e-recruitment as defined by various authors are depicted in Table 1 below.

**TABLE 1: INDINGS FROM REVIEW OF THE RECRUITMENT AND E-RECRUITMENT LITERATURE**

<b><u>Title</u></b>	<b><u>Key Findings</u></b>	<b><u>Reference</u></b>
Developing effective e-recruiting websites: Insights for managers from Marketers	Defines recruitment as including those practices and activities carried on by an organization with the primary purpose of identifying and attracting potential employees.	Maurer, S. D., & Liu, Y. (2012)
Internet recruitment and selection: Kissing frogs to find princes.	Defines e-recruitment as the firm's recruitment process and activities, which, by means of technology and human agents, facilitate time and space independent collaboration and interaction to identify, attract, and influence job candidates.	Bartram, D. (2000).
Modeling the benefit of e-recruiting in process integration	Findings distinguishes traditional paper-based recruitment characterized by hard-copy forms and hand-written signatures from electronic recruitment.	Lee, I. (2011)
Applicant and recruiter reactions to new technology in selection: A critical review and agenda for future research.	Study concludes that the task of attracting applicants is the most reliant on e-recruitment sources, tools and techniques, as companies use advertising on corporate websites, Internet job portals, and online résumé databases, and use professional networks like LinkedIn as additional recruitment source.	Anderson, N. (2003).
A study of e-recruitment technology adoption in Malaysia.	Show that the tasks of sorting and processing job applications in e-recruitment firms are automated, so all incoming applications are received and sorted automatically through an e-recruitment system.	Tong, D. Y. K. (2009).
Institutional context and e-recruitment practices of Danish organizations.	Findings point out that, due to automated e-recruitment systems, candidates are notified immediately of application receipts, and rejected candidates are also	Holm, A. B. (2014).

	promptly notified of pre-screening results even before vacancies are formally filled.	
E-recruitment and the benefits of organizational web appeal.	Advances knowledge by applying signaling theory to the web-based recruitment domain, by stating that organizational use of e-recruiting sends positive signals about the organizations' positive image resulting in the attraction of many job seekers.	Thompson, et al. (2008).
An HR Perspective: the global hunt for talent in the digital age.	Shows that, e-recruitment allows technology aided résumé scanning and is advantageous as it allows applicants from various locations to submit consistent information to HR managers and permits easy storage of the information.	Dickson, D. R. & Nusair, K. (2010).
Modeling the benefit of e-recruiting in process integration.	Finds that organizational adoption of e-recruitment leads to, increased connectivity among organizational departments and managers and results in a reinvention of the organization.	Lee, I. (2011)
Managing Recruitment and Selection in the Digital Age: e-HRM and Resumes.	Concludes that e-recruitment results in several managerial implications and positive consequences for organizations, including, reduced paperwork and speeding up recruitment.	Elfi, et al. (2011)
The effects of information technology on recruitment.	Concludes that a significant advantage and managerial implication in e-recruitment, is the ability of the organization to generate a large applicant pool, thereby allowing the firm to be selective in hiring.	Singh, P. & Finn, D. (2003).
What is the potential of e-recruitment to transform the recruitment process and the role of the resourcing team?	Finds that some managerial implications of e-recruitment are, improved hiring efficiency and facilitate the shift to a more strategic role for the HR function.	Parry, E., & Tyson, S. (2009).
E-recruitment: Towards a Ubiquitous Recruitment Process and Candidate Relationship Management	Suggests that organizational adoption of e-recruitment leads to cost reductions and efficiency gains, improved service to clients, and allows recruitment professionals to spend more time on more value-added tasks, such as communication and employer branding.	Holm, A. B. (2012).

Prior to the introduction of information technology (IT) organizations traditionally, depended on low-technology methods, including newspaper advertisements, and employee referrals, to locate and attract qualified candidates, however, in the past twenty years, the recruitment function has been undergoing dramatic changes as a result of information technology (IT) and the introduction of e-recruitment, leading one observer to remark, "few markets have been hit as hard by the power of the Web and E-commerce as the recruiting industry, while there are still more changes underway, it's clear that the Web has quickly and dramatically changed the way the recruiting industry works" (Kay, 2000, p. 72). E-recruitment systems are also utilized for the preparation and submission of job advertisements from the system interface, making it possible for the recruitment staff to reuse and reformat older texts, job descriptions, images and other relevant content when

new vacancies are to be announced or new e-recruitment sources are to be used (Dickson & Nusair, 2010). The main changes in the recruitment process design using e-recruitment vis-à-vis the traditional paper-based recruitment process are in the sequence of the process tasks and this technology enable communication with job applicants to start simultaneously with the posting of job advertisements, and to be continued throughout the entire recruitment process (Holm, 2014). Recent studies on e-recruitment suggest that there have been a decrease in the use of corporate websites by employers since late 2007 due the paradigm shift towards social networking sites (Bradwell & Reeves, 2008). Accordingly, the advent of e-recruiting has resulted in a decline in the number of job applicants using corporate websites for job searches as more and more job applicants are more inclined towards utilizing social net-working sites for job searches for this is more advantageous to job seekers because social networking sites are updated more often (often daily) while corporate websites may not be updated for weeks.

***Effects of signaling theory:*** Signaling theory (Rynes, 1991; Spence, 1973) is commonly used to explain how applicant attraction to a recruiting organization may, in part, can be influenced by information, or signals, about an organization's characteristics revealed during recruitment activities. It is recognized that applicants construe many recruitment-related activities and information as signals of unknown organizational characteristics (Collins and Stevens, 2002; Turban and Cable, 2003), and recruiter characteristics and/or behavior (Rynes, 1991; Turban et al., 1998). Research by Highhouse et al. (2005) suggests that the signaling process is not only dependent upon the signals sent via the recruitment activity, but is also dependent upon the inferences drawn by the applicants receiving those signals, "prospective job seekers draw inferences about instrumental and symbolic features from signals in the marketplace (word-of-mouth, corporate rankings, experience as consumers, etc.)" (Highhouse et al., 2005, p.18). Signaling theory can be generalized to the domain of internet recruiting, thereby addressing the call for theory-driven research in the area of e-recruitment (Thompson, Braddy & Wuensch, 2008). Signaling theory predicts that peripheral features of a recruitment firm such as, an organizational website design may have tremendous effects on a job seekers' perceptions of the organization when they have little knowledge of a hiring company. Based on the psychology literature, signals from recruiting organizations can be conceptualized from individual-level and organizational-level perspectives and may play significant roles in a hiring organization's attraction to job seekers. Therefore, literature from signaling theory may provide insights into the cognitive and/or affective processes that may not only influence the type of messages that job seekers perceive from recruitment activities as signals of the organization's characteristics, but may also influence how job seekers perceive those signals to reflect either positively or negatively upon the hiring organization as an ideal employer.

***Enhancement of recruitment brand image:*** Electronic recruitment can play a significant role in enhancing the image of an organization as an employer in the eyes of job seekers. As Barber (2006, p.98 ) said: "Recruitment is, in reality, job marketing". This is certainly not an exaggeration, because both web pages' design and corporate image play a significant role for the impressions job seekers have on a company (Thompson, Braddy, & Wuensch, 2008). The support of the internet makes it possible to design a job posting and website page in a more interactive and informative way, for instance by using images, videos or adding links to them (Maurer & Liu,

2007). If a company is doing a fine job at designing their employment offer and their website page, it will attract more job seekers and the firm will be able to choose from a bigger pool of applicants (Kerrin & Kettley, 2003). Another factor that determines how successful an enterprise can be when attracting potential knowledge is the prominence of the corporate brand (Parry & Tyson, 2008). In fact, advertising for job positions on a corporate website which does not have a reputation nor a certain notoriety is not of much use, unless the company advertises on job boards as well, so that it can reach a larger number of job seekers. So, an organization's success in attracting applicants depends on how well known the company is, although the appropriateness and interest that the employment advertisement can draw cannot be neglected (Thompson, Braddy, & Wuensch, 2008). Job seekers generally use the design of a corporate website and job postings on the website to learn about the organization's values, its benefits and to form a general opinion on it. The better the image of the organization is portrayed on online job postings, the more job seekers will be drawn to an organization's website and potentially apply for jobs. Therefore, electronic job posting has brought a new facet to recruitment activities that is the importance of treating the image of the company and the design of the employment advertisement with enhanced attention. Continued communication with job applicants throughout the recruitment process should give job seekers (including those not hired) a favorable impression of the firm and improve firm brand image. Accordingly, an organization should consider all these factors as very important, i.e. the design of job postings, their website and corporate image, as e-recruitment advantages that can greatly improve the attraction phase of the recruiting process.

***Savings in time (speed and efficiency):*** With the tasks of sorting and processing job applications in e-recruitment firms automated, all incoming applications are received and sorted automatically through an e-recruitment system. Due to automated e-recruitment systems, candidates are notified immediately of application receipts, and rejected candidates are also promptly notified of pre-screening results even before vacancies are formally filled, leading to speed and efficiency in the process. An important benefit to the adoption of e-recruitment is the development of a method for optimally allocating financial resources under tight budget constraints for the recruiting setup cost reduction and staffing cost reduction (Lee, 2011). The most obvious benefit would certainly be the saving in time that e-recruitment generates (Kim & O'Connor, 2009). Electronic file folders characterized by e-recruitment reduce or eliminate the need for traditional personnel files and paperwork thereby speeding up the hiring process and resulting in efficiency in recruiting (Parry, E., & Tyson, S. (2009). Indeed, the duration of the whole recruitment process is considerably reduced thanks to faster exchange of information. Because all three stages of the re-recruitment process (attracting applicants, sorting applications and contacting candidates) are automated, this allows organizations utilizing e-recruitment to be able to recruit employees faster, with less staffing personnel involved, resulting in efficiency in the hiring process.

***Reductions in transaction costs:*** The cost of electronic job posting is usually lower than the one of printed media, employment agencies, headhunters and other traditional recruitment means (Malinowski, Keim, & Weitzel, 2005). In recruiting, transaction costs are incurred in job advertising, application processing candidate evaluation, screening and interviews (Lee, 2011). For recruiting organizations, e-recruiting lowers job advertising and application processing costs, and provides transaction speed and access to larger labor markets (Lee, 2011). When compared

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with newspaper advertising, e-recruiting enables organizations to provide far more information to potential applicants, due to the interactive and multimedia capabilities of the internet (Lee, 2011). On the company side, processing a large candidate pool becomes cost effective due to an automated screening and prescreening process, and recruiters will have a better chance of identifying more qualified job applicants (Lee, 2011).

***Reduction in administrative activities:*** Another significant benefit of e-recruitment is one of diminishing the administrative burden of the HR department (Kerrin & Kettley, 2003). Since part of the e-recruitment can be automated by integrating tools to the corporate information system, some tasks will be automated and therefore reducing significantly the bureaucratic load of work - which, in addition, also saves time (Malinowski, Keim, & Weitzel, 2005). In the case of a Human Resource Information System (HRIS), it is proven that with the adoption of e-recruiting, both the administrative work load and the cost of recruitment are significantly reduced, as HRIS decreases the need for some Human Resource (HR) staff (Kumar & Pandya (2012). Accordingly, the adoption of e-recruitment can be beneficial to an organization for it means, the development of a recruitment method that is optimal for allocating financial resources and which results in the reduction of recruiting personnel, resulting in huge cost savings for an organization.

***Reach of global or international knowledge and skills:*** Another important benefit of e-recruitment must be considered: the reach of global or international knowledge and skills. E-recruitment allows organizations to reach a wider scope of applicants (Kim et.al., 2009). E-recruitment is preeminently for firms searching for specific or highly-skilled and qualified workers, so it is crucial for them to attract from sufficient number of potential candidates to choose from (Holm, 2012; Dhamija, 2012). Not only does online recruitment reach a bigger pool of applicants; equally important, it has the potential for recruited candidates to often present better profiles than when using traditional means only (Kim & O'Connor, 2009). Because of the prevalence of the internet on every continent, the adoption of e-recruitment can avail an organization with the opportunity to reach far many potential candidates across the globe, thereby increasing the likelihood of recruiting highly qualified and skilled employees. Online recruitment targets candidates who have access to computers and have the skills needed to use this technology. E-recruitment may likely attract applicants who are well educated, have the ability to navigate the internet, and are searching for relatively high-level jobs, thus, e-recruitment systems entice candidates with higher achievement, drive and persistence levels to apply for jobs in organizations, than the paper-based traditional recruitment method. Online recruiting also makes it possible for recruiting firms to select from a large applicant pool, which affords recruiters the opportunity to be very selective in hiring. Thus, the organizational adoption of e-recruitment leads to, increased connectivity among organizational departments and managers and results in a reinvention of the organization.

***Reach of passive job seekers:*** Electronic recruiting also affords the potential of recruiting organizations to tap into a new category of candidates into the recruiting pool - passive job seekers - (Kinder, 2000). This also expresses a trend among today's workforce; they are much more mobile and knowledge-specific, and maybe also be less loyal and attached to a company (Kinder, 2000). Motivations of job seekers put apart, passive job seekers often present interesting profiles with



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quality potential (Dhamija, 2012). Thus, another glaring benefit of e-recruitment is that, due to the availability of the internet worldwide, passive job seekers who though, are not actively and seriously seeking employment but may wind up expressing interest in applying for job postings online if they perceive that the job offers alluring working conditions, such as, high compensation, or working from a location that may be ideal for them.

## **GAPS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

The research question I posed at the outset is: How does the introduction of electronic recruitment (e-recruitment) affect the recruitment process in organizations, and what are the benefits of this technology for recruiting organizations? This is a testable research question, for one research method that can be employed to answer this research question is: Surveying a total 360 senior HR executives in 180 firms across several states in the United States, (two HR executives from each of the 180 organizations) who have all implemented e-recruitment in their organizations anytime in the past ten years. The survey would involve the HR executives answering questionnaires relating to the process of implementing e-recruitment, including the benefits accruing to their organizations as a result of firm implementation of e-recruitment.

The research in this paper offers avenues for future research in the area e-recruiting, which are outlined in Table 2 below. As is generally the case with innovations, organizational leaders are usually faced with some challenges in managing internet technology, including those related to data processing and management, avoiding legal pitfalls, and using IT to aid in achieving strategic objectives. In this regard, a first identified gap, which has been ignored in the literature is a legal perspective on the use of e-recruiting. It is believed that an organization's exclusive use of e-recruitment may result in some legal issues unless the organization can put forth some convincing and justifiable reasons thereto. For instance, if a company uses psychometric tests, minorities in terms of ethnic affiliation, competences and mental abilities could be rejected because of the limited number of profiles the tests utilize (Dhamija, 2012; Cappelli, 2001). Some also argue that exclusive use of e-recruitment discriminates against lower skilled individuals, because of their potentially lower interest in online search (Kinder, 2000). Specifically, because it is believed that blacks, Hispanics and Native American are the ethnic minorities with the least computer skills and have the least access to computers, whereas, Asians and whites have more computer skills and have more access to computers, it is believed that ethnic minorities are likely to be disadvantaged by an organization's exclusive use of e-recruiting. Therefore, future research should investigate, if e-recruiting can have disparate impact on certain ethnic minorities. A ruling in 1971 by the US. Supreme Court in *Griggs Versus Duke Power Co.*, upheld that it is illegal for organizations to use recruitment and selection systems that disproportionately affect a group protected under the Disparate Impact Theory and Title VII of the Civil Rights Title Act, unless the firm can prove that the recruitment procedure is related to job performance, therefore future research in this area would be very important.

There have been rapid technological innovations in the world and enormous changes in employee recruitment and selection are occurring, though research into the phenomenon of e-recruitment has lagged, leaving our understanding of applicant perceptions of online recruitment open to questions

and in dire need of topical research. Little is known about job seekers' perceptions and reactions to web-based recruitment and selection procedures, (whether employers' websites and the process of e-recruiting are perceived as, efficient, user-friendly, and fair by job seekers is unknown), so this proposed study can examine job applicants' perceptions of and reactions to e-recruitment. Therefore, a second identifiable gap in the literature which future research can enlighten us on would be, what job seekers' perceptions and reactions to organizational use of e-recruitment are as a screening and hiring tool.

It is widely argued and known that Electronic human resource management (e-HRM) systems are successfully transforming the role of Human Resource by facilitating the transfer of transaction processing responsibilities to employees, managers and other third parties world-wide, whilst accommodating regulatory and cultural differences, one of which is language. Therefore a third identified gap is brought about by globalization, for another possible approach to understanding the significance of contextual factors on the adoption of e-recruitment lies in studying the organizational environment at a higher, social level and in addressing among other things the impact of culture and language on multinational corporations' use of e-recruitment, and how organizations can more effectively relay organizational culture and language information to job seekers via their electronic recruitment websites. I deem this as an obvious and highly relevant topic for future research, which may help shed even more light on how recruitment practices are influenced by demands and expectations of a wider society.

Finally, the internet was initially hailed as the future of recruitment and was expected to replace traditional paper-based recruitment as the preferred recruitment method, and while many organizations have adopted electronic recruitment, some for well over a decade, many other organizations have not made the transition to online recruiting. Even though it can be assumed that the primary reasons for adopting e-recruitment by many organizations, is efficiency in hiring and cost reductions, it is surprising that e-recruitment has not fully replaced traditional recruitment as thought about twenty years ago. If there are tremendous cost savings and efficiency in e-recruitment as many believe, then why is that many other organizations have not transitioned into e-recruitment? Future research would be necessary to answer this question and highlight the primary motivations why many organizations have adopted e-recruitment and the underlying reasons why many other firms have chosen not to adopt e-recruitment, at least not yet.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

**TABLE 2:** The following are additional testable research questions related to the research question in this paper, which can be answered to fill gaps in the literature, along with proposed research methodologies.

<b><u>Research Questions</u></b>	<b><u>Proposed Research Methodology</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A legal perspective on e-recruiting: Can e-recruiting have disparate impact on certain ethnic minorities?</li> </ul> <p>Research must first describe the technological advances in electronic recruiting and should analyze the prospects of potential legal problems involved in hiring through e-recruiting.</p>	<p>Research can be undertaken by extensively reviewing various academic literature on the topic and specifically analyzing the processes and designs of electronic recruitment by various organizations, along with extensive examination of the Disparate Impact Theory and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act to identify where legal issues may emanate from.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are job seekers' perceptions and reactions to organizational use of e-recruitment as a screening and hiring tool?</li> </ul> <p>This research question is necessary because, we do not know if job seekers perceive and react to employer web-based e-recruitment as user-friendly or even efficient. Research is needed to shed light on the cognitive processes activated when job applicants view websites during their job search process.</p>	<p>Research can be carried out by posting a survey on Amazon Mechanical Turk for 400 individuals who applied for positions online in the financial services industry anywhere in world anytime in the past four years. Survey participants should be asked questions relating to whether employers' websites were user-friendly, efficient, and if they perceived the process to be a fair and effective medium of recruiting.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What impact does culture and language have on the use of e-recruitment by multinational corporations?</li> </ul> <p>There has been no research on the impact of the culture and language on multinational corporations' use of e-recruitment, so this proposed research would be to rectify this gap.</p>	<p>Research data can be collected by conducting exploratory interviews of 260 recruiting managers in numerous multinational corporations (MNC) that have implemented e-recruiting for least two years. Interview questions should relate to the e-recruitment techniques of the MNC, and what impact they perceive culture and language differences play in the design, use and effectiveness of their e-recruitment strategies in different countries.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What factors influence organizations' decision either to adopt or not adopt electronic recruiting?</li> </ul> <p>This research should be aimed at examining the main factors influencing different organizations' decisions either to adopt e-recruitment or not to adopt e-recruitment.</p>	<p>To employ appropriate research to answer the research question, in-depth interviews and surveys with 210 human resource (HR) managers with recruitment responsibilities in 105 organizations that have adopted e-recruitment, as well as in-depth interviews and surveys of 210 human resource (HR) managers with recruitment responsibilities in 105 organizations that have not adopted e-recruitment, in large, medium-sized and small firms across the United States can be undertaken. Questions asked and explored in the interviews and surveys with HR managers that have adopted e-recruitment should relate to factors that influence the organizations' decisions to adopt e-recruitment, while questions asked of HR managers in organizations that have not adopted e-recruitment should relate to the underlying reasons why these organizations have not adopted e-recruitment.</p>

## **DISCUSSION**

I undertook this study because I am motivated to examine the effects of e-recruitment on the recruitment process in organizations, and highlight the benefits of adopting e-recruitment for recruiting organizations and provide impetus for other organizations to adopt e-recruitment. I first reviewed various literature pertaining to recruitment and e-recruitment; I summarized, synthesized and integrated the definitions of recruitment and e-recruitment in the literature and theoretically highlighted the benefits accruing to organizations for adopting e-recruitment. I posed several unexplored testable research questions relevant to recruitment and e-recruitment, and proposed necessary research methods which I believe can be utilized in the future research to answer the questions raised.

There are several contributions to this paper. First, since there is scant available literature in the domain of e-recruitment examining the process and specifically the value of e-recruitment for hiring managers and academics, this paper contributes to the literature by adding additional knowledge to the sparse literature on the subject.

Secondly, this paper advances knowledge by applying signaling theory and employer branding theory to the web-based recruitment domain and by postulating that organizational use of e-recruiting sends positive signals about the organization's positive image resulting in the attraction of many job seekers. Thus, I explained how the adoption of e-recruitment can positively influence organizational recruitment image in the eyes of jobseekers. Because, job seekers generally use the design of a firm website and job postings on the website to learn about the organization's values, its benefits and form a general opinion on it, the better the image of the organization is portrayed on online job postings, the more job seekers will be drawn to an organization's website and potentially apply for jobs. Therefore, in this article, I combined signaling theory with employer branding, which in essence means, this paper integrates the HR, psychology and marketing literature and outline the critical links between these bodies of literature.

Thirdly, in this paper I explained how organizational adoption of e-recruitment can speed up the hiring process and result in tremendous savings in time and bring efficiency to the hiring process. With all three stages of the recruitment process (attracting, sorting, and contacting candidates) fully automated, all incoming applications are received and sorted automatically through an e-recruitment system, and candidates are notified immediately of application receipts, and rejected candidates are also promptly notified of pre-screening results even before vacancies are formally filled, leading to speed and efficiency in the process.

The fourth contribution of this paper is, I explained how, the adoption of e-recruitment results in reduction in transaction and administration costs for recruiting organizations. Due the automation of all three stages of the recruiting process, there is ease in processing a large applicant pool quite quickly, which results in diminishing burden of the human resource, decreasing the need for some administrative staff in the HR department.

The final contribution of this paper is, I articulated how organizational adoption of e-recruitment can result in firms tapping into the skills and knowledge of a wider pool of highly qualified job seekers from many parts of the world. I posited that online recruiting reach a wider pool of candidates, including passive job seekers, due to the availability of the internet on every continent, so organizational adoption of e-recruitment permits an organization to generate a large applicant pool, (as millions of people worldwide are connected online) and the generation of a large applicant pool gives an organization the advantage of being highly selective in hiring.

## CONCLUSION

In this paper, I defined, summarized and synthesized the literature on recruitment and e-recruitment and highlighted several benefits that accrue to organizations for adopting e-recruitment, and proposed some testable future research questions along with suggested empirical research methods. In this paper, I also postulated that the introduction of e-recruitment leads to several benefits for recruiting organizations, such as, enhancement of organizational recruitment brand image, savings in time resulting in efficient and effective recruitment, savings in transaction and administrative costs, access to a huge applicant pool, and allows recruitment professionals to spend more time on more value-added tasks, which I hope would provide impetus and guide managers in more organizations to transition into e-recruitment, for the benefits are enormous and palpable. Organizational leaders and HR (human resource) managers who have implemented or expect to implement e-recruitment systems must commit to ensuring the system's success by systematically evaluating e-recruitment processes and outcomes, and increase the training of human resource personnel to operate the system effectively and efficiently.

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