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A Review of Machine Learning Application in the Talent Acquisition Process

[1]Supriya P. Inamdar, [2]Dr. Shinu Abhi
[1]Research Scholar, REVA University, Bangalore, Karnataka, India,
[2]Reva Academy for Corporate Excellence, REVA University, Bangalore, Karnataka, India.

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Abstract:

Purpose - This paper reviews 45 Scopus-indexed articles, a significant body of research, to identify the degree, scope and purposes of machine learning (ML) adoption in the core functions of talent acquisition (TA).

Design/methodology/approach—This review has employed a semi-systematic approach, a unique, comprehensive literature analysis method involving a structured search and review process. This approach, emerging from multiple disciplines and using different methods and theoretical frameworks, was deemed appropriate due to ML research's diverse origins and methods, ensuring a thorough review.

Findings: The review suggests that talent acquisition has embraced ML and is attracting attention from technology-oriented practitioners. ML applications, particularly those using random forest and decision tree algorithms for classification, are most robust in recruitment and talent acquisition. However, the early stage of ML applications for complex tasks underscores the need for collaboration between HR experts and ML specialists, highlighting the field's interdisciplinary nature. (Fang et al., 2016).

Originality/value: This review significantly enhances the understanding of ML integration in talent acquisition in the current digitalisation era. More importantly, it highlights the potential of ML applications to significantly improve the efficiency and effectiveness of talent acquisition functions, thereby enhancing employee performance and contributing to organisational success. This potential should inspire hope and excitement about the future of talent acquisition.

Keywords: Talent Acquisition, Machine learning, Artificial Intelligence, Data-driven decisions (decisions based on data analysis and interpretation), Talent acquisition functions.

1. Introduction

We are witnessing integrated machine learning (ML) and artificial intelligence (AI) in talent acquisition, a trend and a transformation. These technologies are revolutionising traditional recruiting methods, replacing manual processes with data-driven and automated approaches (Hemalatha et al., 2021; Pessach et al., 2020; Punnoose et al., 2016). They are streamlining recruitment processes, enhancing candidate selection, and heralding a new era of possibilities in talent acquisition.

ML, a subset of AI, enables computers to perform tasks autonomously by identifying patterns and making inferences without explicit instructions. Its adoption in talent acquisition is growing, with over 70% of staffing firms investing heavily in AI recruitment technologies to improve candidate matching through advanced predictive analytics (Spectraforce, 2023). For instance, IBM's use of Watson AI has reduced time-to-hire by 23% and boosted candidate conversion rates by 300% (Lindner, 2024). AI technologies can save recruiters up to 15 hours per week, enhancing productivity and enabling more significant focus on strategic tasks.

ML algorithms have the potential to mitigate human biases in hiring decisions significantly. By focusing exclusively on data-driven insights, they can promote diversity and inclusivity in the workforce (Smelyakov et al., 2023a). HR managers are pivotal in leveraging these technologies, enhancing their data analysis skills and adopting evidence-based decision-making approaches to predict candidate success within their organizations (Karacay, 2018b). Moreover, ML models facilitate predictive analytics that helps organisations forecast future hiring needs based on business growth, market trends, and internal talent movements, thereby improving workforce planning and maintaining robust talent pipelines (Smelyakov et al., 2023a).

The evolution from human resource information systems to HR analytics has significantly benefited research and practice, particularly with the increasing adoption of ML in talent acquisition. However, further research is necessary to fully capture ML adoption and its integration into AI-powered talent acquisition practices. This includes understanding the challenges and opportunities of this integration and its potential impact on HR professionals and the overall recruitment process.

Our research aims to address these gaps by investigating:

1. The objectives of ML adoption in talent acquisition practices and strategies.
2. The associations between talent acquisition practices and ML methods.
3. ML application's impact on talent acquisition on employees and organisations.

We examined 68 Scopus-indexed papers to gather insights into the current state of machine learning (ML) and its implications for talent acquisition. The review underscores the increasing adoption of ML-enabled algorithms in talent acquisition, particularly in data-rich areas like recruitment and selection processes. The manuscript is structured to first detail the methodology of the literature review and then present key findings. Subsequent sections discuss the implications of machine learning for talent acquisition and outline future research directions.

2. Research Methodology

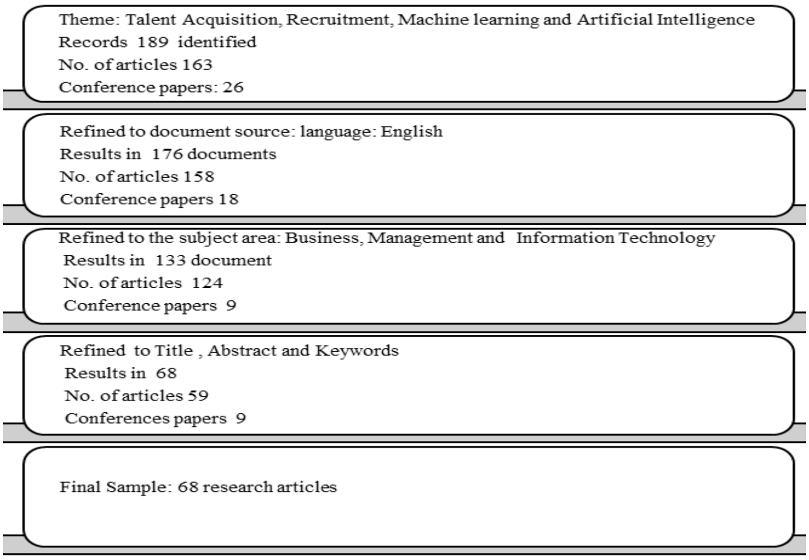
Our research employs a semi-systematic approach, combining structured methodology with flexibility to review the interdisciplinary literature on machine learning (ML) applications in Talent Acquisition (TA). Given the complexity of ML and TA, studied across diverse fields such as management, social science, and computer science, our approach aims to synthesise research findings across varied methods and algorithms.

The study began by defining clear research objectives and proceeded with a systematic literature search and review process. We focus on understanding how ML is utilised within talent acquisition, specifically in functional areas like candidate sourcing, screening, and assessment, all integral to the hiring process. For clarity, talent acquisition is defined as "a strategic approach to identifying, attracting, and onboarding talents that align with an organisation's goals and culture" (Deloitte, 2018). Several authors define ML as employing algorithms to detect patterns in data, enabling computers to make predictions (Garg et al., 2022; Nocker et al., 2019).

The literature search was conducted using Scopus, a comprehensive database of peer-reviewed literature, facilitating advanced searches by criteria such as year, document type, keywords, language, and subject area. This thorough approach ensured comprehensive coverage, including journal insights and conference proceedings. Keywords related to talent acquisition and ML were employed, encompassing terms like "Talent acquisition," "Talent acquisition process," "Talent acquisition metrics," as well as "machine learning," "data mining," "algorithm," and "analytics."

Network analysis was followed by thematic analysis, collaboratively conducted by two authors. In cases of divergence, consensus on emergent themes was reached through discussion. Three primary thematic categories emerged: (1) Talent acquisition functions integrating ML, (2) Objectives of ML in these TA functions, and (3) Methods and algorithms employed to achieve ML objectives (e.g., decision trees, random forests, k-means clustering, neural networks, ensemble classifiers).

Figure 1: Flowchart of inclusion and exclusion criteria



Source: Author’s work

3. Results and analysis

3.1 General results and analysis

Many research publications in the review suggest that ML applications prosper in talent acquisition. Of 74 references, 41 research papers and 13 conference papers have been published (see Graph 1). This highlights TA's emerging role as a field for ML applications, though with a limited number of empirical studies in academic literature. Most publications are found in management-oriented journals, with only a few adopting empirical approaches. Examples include Choi's study on predicting job involvement using ML (Choi and Choi, 2020), Ali's research on predicting performance in hiring and appraisals (Ali et al., 2009), Khera's work on predictive modelling of employee turnover (Khera Divya, 2019), and Punnoose's research on turnover prediction (Punnoose and Ajit, 2016).

Since 2020, there has been a notable shift with a convergence in the number of papers published in journals versus conferences. Conference papers have declined, potentially influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic, while there is an increase in journal publications. This trend reflects growing confidence, interest, and acceptance of ML-based research in TA among journal publishers.

A network analysis used author keywords extracted from a final set of 77 publications to analyse the publication landscape (see Figure 1). This analysis clustered keywords based on their associations, revealing thematic clusters that were cross-validated by reviewing the dataset. Author independence and reliability were ensured through inter-coder reliability and face validity procedures, followed by consensus reached through thorough discussion. Following the network analysis, several prominent themes emerged, highlighting the integration of ML and artificial intelligence (AI) in TA (see Figure 2). "Talent acquisition" and "AI" were identified as nodes with high centrality, indicating their pivotal roles and numerous associations. This signifies a significant shift in TA practices towards embracing ML and AI technologies, driven by perceived opportunities

Graph 1: Total research contributions over the years

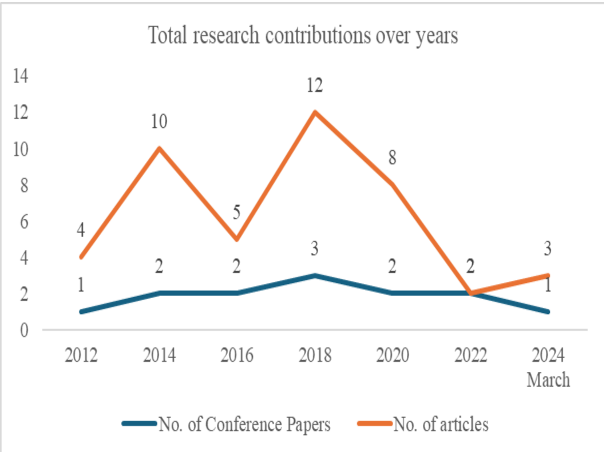
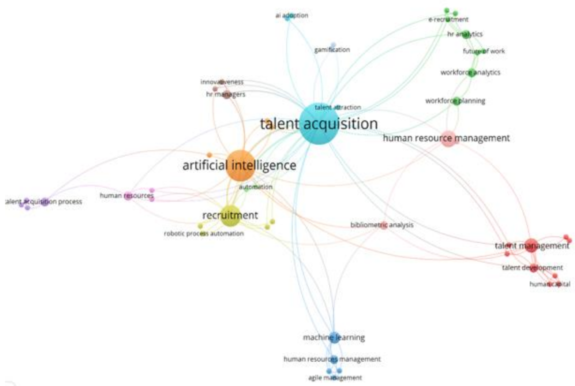


Figure 2: Network analysis by author keywords



Source: Author's work

In addition to manual analysis, the authors utilised VosViewer (Figure 2) to examine keyword networks in their study thoroughly. The network analysis highlighted "talent acquisition" and "AI" as central nodes, emphasising their critical importance in current research discussions. Meanwhile, "job description creation," "sourcing candidates," "resume screening," "skill assessment," "interviewing," "selection decision," "candidate engagement," "employee retention prediction," and "performance prediction" emerged as vital functional areas where ML applications are prominent within talent acquisition.

Following the network analysis, several primary themes emerged:

1. **Application of ML in Various TA Functions:** This category explored how ML is applied across different functions within talent acquisition, ranging from job description creation to performance prediction.

2. **ML Objectives Addressed in TA Functions:** This theme focused on specific ML techniques used in TA, such as classification, clustering, decision trees, random forests, and neural networks. These techniques aim to enhance efficiency and decision-making across TA processes.

Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of research publications across identified talent acquisition functions. The process begins with job description creation, candidate sourcing, resume screening, and skill assessment. Notably, there is a scarcity of publications on selection decisions and interviewing. Research in candidate engagement, employee retention prediction (Yadav, 2018), and performance prediction have significantly expanded, reflecting increased ML-based research efforts in these areas (see Figure 3). Section 4 provides detailed insights into the research advancements within these TA functions.

Figure 2: Research contribution over TA functions and ML objectives

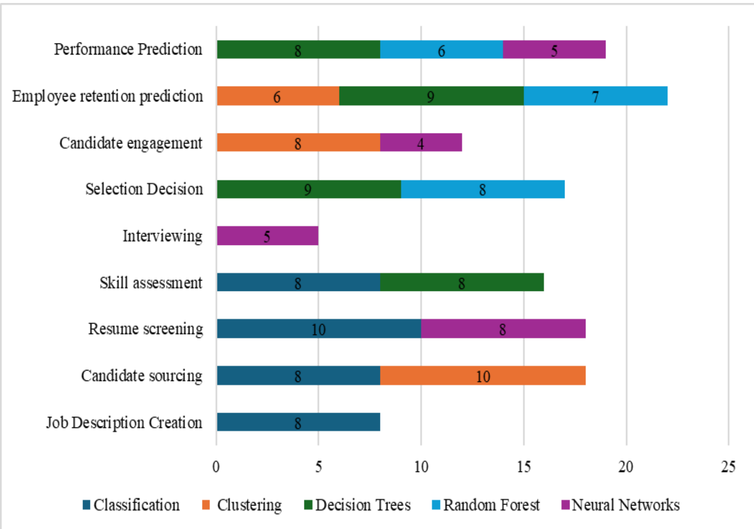
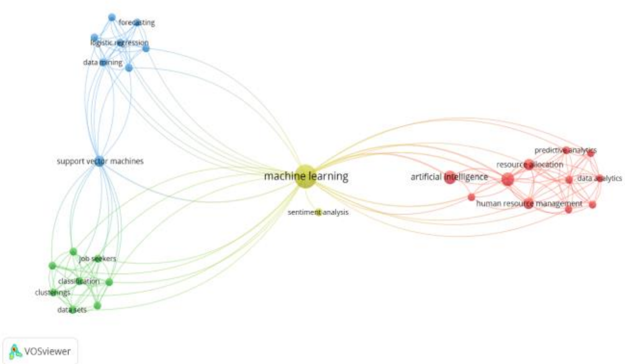


Figure 3: Network analysis showing the association of ML methods, Algorithms and TA functions



3.3 Methods-specific results and analysis

This research delves into applying machine learning (ML) methods in talent acquisition (TA). Our findings are structured into two stages, focusing on understanding ML objectives, techniques, and algorithms within TA functions. In the first stage, we conducted a graphical analysis to explore various ML objectives. Subsequently, in the second stage, a network analysis was performed to identify specific ML methods and algorithms used across TA functions (see Figure 3).

Five primary ML objectives are commonly employed in talent acquisition (Chalutz Ben-Gal, 2019; Yadav, 2018), ranging from foundational to advanced algorithms: Classification, Clustering, Decision Trees, Random Forests, and Neural Networks. Classification predicts categorical labels for new data based on known labels from training data. Clustering groups similar data points without predefined labels. Decision Trees split data into branches based on feature values to make decisions or predictions. Random Forests combine multiple decision trees to improve prediction accuracy and avoid overfitting. Neural networks model complex relationships within data, which is suitable for handling large datasets but less interpretable than other methods.

Our review emphasises that effectively deploying advanced ML approaches in talent acquisition often requires collaboration between TA domain experts and ML specialists. This collaborative effort is crucial for applying and integrating these methods into TA practices.

Figure 3 illustrates that Classification exhibits the highest centrality in the network analysis, indicating its pivotal role in resume screening, candidate selection, skill assessment, employee retention, and performance prediction. Decision Trees follow with notable centrality, valued for their interpretability and straightforward decision-making capabilities based on data. Random Forests span a medium to high scope, offering robust predictions through ensemble learning. Neural Networks, though less interpretable, are highly effective for capturing complex patterns in data.

Our examination of several studies reveals that ML algorithms significantly enhance efficiency, accuracy, and decision-making across various TA functions. For instance, in resume screening, algorithms like logistic regression and support vector machines automate the initial screening process by categorising resumes based on job requirements, thereby improving candidate shortlisting accuracy. Neural networks such as Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) and Recurrent Neural Networks (RNNs) excel in processing unstructured resume data, identifying nuanced patterns that traditional methods may overlook (Sołek et al., 2018). In candidate sourcing, clustering algorithms like K-means and hierarchical clustering group candidates based on similar attributes, facilitating targeted recruitment strategies tailored to organisational needs. For selection decision-making, Random Forests aggregate predictions from multiple decision trees to provide reliable insights into candidate suitability, effectively handling complex data relationships.

ML algorithms also play critical roles in skill assessment by establishing decision rules and objectively evaluating candidates' proficiency levels required for specific roles. Furthermore, in employee retention and performance prediction, these algorithms leverage historical data to forecast outcomes, identify key influencing factors, and support proactive HR strategies.

While ML algorithms empower data-driven decision-making in talent acquisition, it is crucial to recognise them as tools rather than definitive solutions. They assist HR professionals in making informed decisions aligned with organisational goals. However, challenges such as algorithmic bias, data privacy concerns, and the need to keep pace with technological advancements underscore the importance of ethical considerations and ongoing research to ensure responsible and effective use of ML in HR practices.

4. Detailed analysis of the results

This section presents a detailed overview of the current state of ML integration in Talent acquisition. Table 1 Maps the objectives for ML applications and AI tools in each TA function and explains them briefly later.

4.1 Job Description Creation

Previously, job description creation was straightforward, primarily listing required qualifications, responsibilities, and reporting structures (Huff-Eibl et al., 2011). It relied on standardised templates and generic language, focusing on outlining basic requirements without emphasising employer branding or attracting diverse talent (Patô, 2015). This process was manual, with HR professionals or hiring managers crafting descriptions based on their understanding of the role and industry norms. However, the advent of machine learning has transformed this practice. HR professionals now play a strategic role in crafting job descriptions, using data analytics to analyse application rates and candidate demographics to refine them (Srivastava et al., 2015b). Notably, Hemalatha et al. (2021) developed an NLP model that impacts the recruitment and selection process by saving time and costs, increasing accuracy, and reducing bias. This model improves work efficiency, reduces workload, and enhances the candidate experience, motivating HR professionals to adopt machine learning in their practices.

4.2 Sourcing candidates

Historically, candidate sourcing was manual, relying on methods like newspaper ads, job fairs, and recommendations (Slowinskim et al., 2009).Recruitment agencies were pivotal in the past, playing a crucial role in the candidate sourcing process. However, this process was time-consuming and limited by geographical constraints (Kamal et al., 2021). Today, candidate sourcing is a sophisticated, data-driven process, leveraging social media platforms like LinkedIn and Facebook to access a global talent pool. Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) automate sourcing, enhancing the candidate experience, while recruitment marketing and data analytics identify effective sourcing channels. However, while technology aids in identifying candidates, it is essential to remember that human expertise remains crucial for final decisions, making each recruiter an integral part of the process (Walford et al., 2018).Looking ahead, the future of candidate sourcing is promising. Predictive analytics, AI tools, VR/AR for job previews, and blockchain for credential verification are set to revolutionise the process. These technologies will further enhance the candidate experience and streamline the sourcing process. (M. M. H. Onik, 2018), emphasising personalised experiences and employer branding. This evolution mirrors broader technological and globalisation trends, making candidate sourcing more efficient, data-driven, and candidate-centric (Phillips et al., 2016).

4.3 Resume Screening

The traditional resume is evolving, and ML promises to automate the initial screening process significantly and reduce the time required to review resumes (Vedapradha et al., 2019). The review shows that ML can handle large volumes of resumes quickly and efficiently, ensuring every candidate is noticed due to capacity constraints. Furthermore, Palashikar and his team (Srivastava et al., 2015a) Utilised attributes from candidates' resumes through the Resume Information Extractor (RINX). They planned to incorporate information from various online and social platforms to assess technical and domain skills using extraction tools. Researchers and developers are actively developing techniques to detect and mitigate biases, ensuring the ethical application of these technologies in HR practices (Vedapradha et al., 2019).

4.4 Skill assessment

The evolution of skills assessment through machine learning (ML) has shifted from traditional, manual methods to data-driven, automated approaches. Integrating ML and Natural Language Processing (NLP) algorithms enables the analysis of vast amounts of data from resumes, online profiles, and performance metrics, leading to more accurate and objective skill assessments (Hemalatha et al., 2021). Companies now use ML to evaluate coding skills through automated code analysis, scoring, and performance benchmarking, providing immediate feedback and detailed insights, which enhances efficiency and objectivity (Karacay, 2018a). Researchers are also developing techniques to detect and mitigate biases in training data and algorithms to ensure ethical application in HR practices. ML algorithms in skill assessment utilise advanced techniques such as Classification (e.g., Logistic Regression, SVM), NLP for analysing textual data, Deep Learning models like CNNs and RNNs for processing unstructured data, and clustering methods such as K-means. These algorithms objectively evaluate candidates' skills, aiding HR in making informed hiring decisions aligned with organisational needs and enhancing talent management practices.

Advancements in ML and related technologies will continue transforming skills assessment, offering more immersive, fair, and transparent evaluation methods driven by ongoing innovations and ethical considerations in HR (Baig et al., 2019).

4.5 Interviewing

Several companies use AI-driven systems for preliminary interviews, where these systems ask standard questions and evaluate responses to help shortlist candidates for further rounds (Vedapradha et al., 2019). Also, ML assists in creating structured interview frameworks that ensure consistency and reduce interviewer bias by analysing past interview data to recommend questions predictive of candidate success. Chatbots handle initial scheduling interactions, confirm interview times and dates, and provide candidates with necessary information (Albert, 2019; Vedapradha et al., 2019). ML algorithms are crucial in improving the interview process through various techniques. Natural Language Processing (NLP) algorithms can analyse interview transcripts to identify critical skills and competencies discussed by candidates. Sentiment analysis algorithms help gauge the emotional tone and sentiment expressed during interviews, providing insights into candidate engagement and attitude. Future advancements promise more sophisticated systems, including enhanced AI interviewers, VR interviews, and advanced bias mitigation, aiming to create a seamless, fair, and engaging experience for candidates and recruiters, thus empowering HR professionals and improving hiring outcomes.

4.6 Selection Decision

Selection decisions were labour-intensive and prone to bias, often resulting in disparities and unfairness due to the lack of standardised tools and data-driven approaches. Hiring choices were primarily based on managers' judgments and unstructured reference checks, hindering objective candidate comparison and performance projection (Johnson et al., 2016). In contrast, modern selection practices are more objective and accurate, integrating technology and data analytics. Structured assessments like psychometric tests, behavioural interviews, and skills evaluations ensure consistency and fairness (Woods et al., 2020). Future selection processes will leverage AI and machine learning for predictive insights into candidate success and cultural alignment. AI-driven platforms will analyse diverse data sources to generate detailed profiles and predictive models, while immersive technologies like VR and AR will enable realistic job simulations (Hemalatha et al., 2021). Advanced AI algorithms will continually learn and adapt, identifying and rectifying biases to promote diversity and inclusion (Jatoba et al., 2019).

Future research should focus on evaluating the effectiveness of these advanced tools in various contexts and their impact on employee performance and retention, guiding the development of sophisticated and equitable selection frameworks.

4.7 Candidate engagement

Modern candidate engagement emphasises interactive and personalised approaches, leveraging social media, interactive job boards, and targeted email campaigns to establish meaningful connections early in recruitment. The future will see AI-driven chatbots for instant interaction, virtual reality for immersive experiences, and data analytics to predict and meet candidate preferences (Khera & Divya, 2019). Candidate engagement in talent acquisition involves leveraging ML algorithms to enhance interactions and relationships between candidates and recruiters. Techniques like sentiment analysis, natural language processing (NLP), and predictive analytics are used to personalise communication, understand candidate preferences, and predict engagement levels. ML enables proactive engagement strategies by identifying optimal communication channels and timing, ultimately improving candidate experience and increasing retention rates. These innovations aim to attract top talent and foster long-term relationships through transparency, responsiveness, and tailored experiences, leading to more dynamic and candidate-centric recruitment practices.

4.8 Employee Retention Prediction

Employee retention prediction has significantly evolved with data analytics and organisational strategies advances. Current practices use predictive analytics to identify factors contributing to turnover, analysing data such as performance reviews, engagement surveys, job satisfaction, career advancement opportunities, organisational culture fit, and exit interviews to identify attrition patterns. AI algorithms can suggest tailored interventions, such as offering new projects or training programs to employees with a high risk of leaving, thereby enhancing loyalty and tenure. These advancements help organisations anticipate turnover risks and implement personalised retention strategies, promoting a more engaged and stable workforce, which drives long-term performance and growth. Additionally, Punnoose (2016) developed a voluntary turnover model that considers work-related attributes like project importance and on-site assignment duration, helping predict valuable employees who are likely to leave.

4.9 Performance Prediction

Performance prediction in human resource management has evolved significantly due to advancements in technology and data analytics. Historically, it relied heavily on manual assessments and managers' intuition, conducting annual performance reviews based on subjective observations and perceived contributions. This subjective approach often resulted in evaluations influenced by recency effects, personal biases, and the halo effect (Rozario et al., 2020). Predictive efforts were limited to historical trends and simple metrics like sales figures or project completion rates, offering a narrow view of employee potential.

In contrast, contemporary practices now leverage data analytics and machine learning (ML) to enhance accuracy and objectivity (Ali et al., 2019). Organisations today utilise diverse data sources such as performance reviews, engagement surveys, 360-degree feedback, and real-time productivity metrics. ML algorithms analyse these datasets, identifying patterns and predictors of high performance. This data-driven approach enables more nuanced and objective predictions, reducing reliance on subjective judgment.

5 Discussion and implications

The adoption of ML in Talent Acquisition is not merely a technological upgrade; it signifies a profound transformation in the philosophy and practice of recruitment. By embracing a more proactive, predictive, and data-driven approach, organisations can revolutionise their TA processes, elevate the quality of hires, and better align their recruitment strategies with organisational objectives. (Smelyakov et al., 2023)This transformation empowers HR professionals, underscoring the pivotal role of ML in shaping the future of talent acquisition. It ensures that talent acquisition remains agile, inclusive, and responsive to changing business needs.

ML is also applied to video interviews, where algorithms analyse verbal and non-verbal cues to assess candidate suitability (Fisch and Block, 2018). These tools can evaluate speech patterns, facial expressions, and body language, providing additional insight beyond traditional interviews. Advanced AI models will analyse vast amounts of data, including unstructured data from emails, social media, and collaboration tools, to predict performance outcomes (Deeba, 2020; Etukudo, 2019; Gueutal, 2011).Pillai and Sivathanu (2020) have proposed a comprehensive model that leverages the Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) and Task-Technology-Fit (TTF) frameworks to explore adopting AI technology for talent acquisition. The model also delves into how the alignment between tasks and technology influences the effectiveness of AI adoption in talent acquisition. El-Rayes et al. (2020) developed a tree-based binary classification model and a machine learning algorithm to predict the likelihood of employee attrition based on firm cultural and management attributes. In addition, they observed that random forest and decision tree methods are the most vital attrition prediction models. In another study by Vedapradha et al. (2019), By continuously learning and adapting, these models relieve HR professionals from the burden of repetitive tasks, allowing them to focus on strategic responsibilities. The potential of ML in automating tasks and improving predictive accuracy gives HR professionals more control over their decisions, fostering a sense of relief and empowerment. (Institute of Personnel, 2020)This strategic alignment of recruiters' strategies with the organisation's goals promotes proactive strategic decision-making. It instils confidence in organisational leaders, assuring them that their decisions are based on data-driven insights, and fostering a sense of confidence and trust in the decision-making process.

Here’s a detailed table that outlines various talent acquisition (TA) practices, the ML algorithms used, and the AI tools or advancements available for each function:

Table 1: Functions of ML algorithms and AI tools

TA Function	ML Algorithms used	AI Tools / Advancements
Resume Screening	Natural Language Processing (NLP), Clustering	Textio, Grammarly, Ongig
Sourcing Candidates	Decision Trees, Random Forest, Reinforcement Learning	LinkedIn Recruiter, Hiretual, Entelo
Resume Screening	Naive Bayes, Decision Trees, Random Forest	Arya, HireVue, Textio, LinkedIn Recruiter
Skills Assessment	Logistic Regression, Support Vector Machines (SVM), Neural Networks	Codility, HackerRank, Pymetrics
Interviewing	NLP, Reinforcement Learning, CNNs	HireVue, Modern Hire, Interview Mocha
Selection Decision	Gradient Boosting, Random Forest, Neural Networks	Pymetrics, Koru, PredictiveHire
Candidate Engagement	NLP, Reinforcement Learning	Paradox Olivia, Mya Systems, Beamery
Employee Retention Prediction	Random Forest, Gradient Boosting, Neural Networks	Ultimate Software, Eightfold.ai, Visier
Performance Prediction	Decision Trees, Random Forests, Neural Networks	Workday, SAP SuccessFactors, Oracle HCM

The review highlights the pivotal role of ML applications in talent acquisition, significantly enhancing process efficiency, accuracy, and strategic alignment. ML algorithms streamline tasks such as resume screening and candidate shortlisting, leading to notable time and cost savings (Deloitte, 2018a; Garg et al., 2022). This operational efficiency enables HR professionals to prioritise strategic initiatives, alleviating the burden of repetitive tasks. Furthermore, ML models provide predictive analytics that anticipates candidate success and forecast employee turnover, empowering proactive and informed hiring decisions (Angrave et al., 2016; Deloitte, 2018a; Gupta et al., 2018; Sivathanu and Pillai, 2019; Walford-Wright and Scott-Jackson, 2018). By analysing extensive datasets, ML identifies patterns that optimise the quality of hires, ensuring alignment with organisational objectives (Dutta and Vedak, 2023). This data-driven approach minimises biases and bolsters confidence in fairness, fostering ongoing enhancements in recruitment strategies (Falletta and Combs, 2021). ML emerges as an indispensable asset in modern talent acquisition, promising substantial advancements in HR practices.

Future Research Directions

The integration of machine learning (ML) and artificial intelligence (AI) in Talent Acquisition (TA) presents numerous avenues for future research. Potential areas include developing models to handle structured data and effectively analyse unstructured data such as text, video, and audio from resumes, interviews, and social media profiles (Shet & Nair, 2022). Enhancing natural language processing (NLP) capabilities to improve job description creation and resume screening accuracy and relevance is also a promising area for investigation (Bersin, 2018; Garg et al., 2022; Sivathanu & Pillai, 2020).

Another critical research focus is identifying and mitigating bias in ML models. Ensuring fairness and equity in hiring processes by developing fairness-aware ML models and robust evaluation frameworks is essential to prevent biased algorithms from perpetuating discrimination and hindering diversity efforts. Additionally, exploring the ethical implications of AI and ML in TA, including privacy concerns and regulatory compliance like GDPR, requires further scrutiny (Upadhyay & Khandelwal, 2018).

Future studies could also examine the long-term impacts of AI-driven TA practices on organisational outcomes such as employee retention, job satisfaction, performance, and organisational culture. Tailoring AI solutions to specific industries and conducting longitudinal studies on AI's effects on diversity and productivity will be crucial for guiding future implementations. Addressing these research directions can leverage ML in talent acquisition to enhance efficiency, equity, and effectiveness in hiring practices.

6 Limitations of the Study

This research aimed to review the integration of ML in talent acquisition (TA), focusing on the specific functions where ML is being applied and the objectives of these applications within the identified TA functions. Despite the extensive exploration of ML's potential and benefits in TA, several limitations were observed in this study. Broad keywords such as "TA," "TA Processes," and "ML" were used for the search to ensure comprehensive coverage of TA functions. However, this approach might limit the nuanced insights gained from using a more focused set of keywords. Similarly, a detailed analysis of algorithms, considering their unique characteristics, types, and prerequisites for applicability, could provide a more refined understanding of their optimal utility for TA functions.

7 Conclusion

The integration of machine learning (ML) and artificial intelligence (AI) in Talent Acquisition (TA) is revolutionising hiring and talent management. This study highlights the benefits of applying various ML algorithms across essential TA functions, including increased efficiency, accuracy, and data-driven decision-making. These technologies automate tasks, enhance candidate matching, and reduce human bias, promoting diversity and strategic hiring decisions. However, challenges such as data quality, resistance to adoption, algorithmic bias, and privacy concerns remain. Addressing these requires improved data practices, training, fairness-aware models, and robust data protection. Future research should focus on advanced algorithms, bias mitigation, ethical implications, and the long-term impacts of AI in TA. The potential of these advancements to revolutionise human resource management underscores the pivotal role of technology in fostering efficient and equitable hiring practices. Continued collaboration among researchers, practitioners, and technologists is essential to fully harness the transformative power of ML and AI in reshaping Talent Acquisition.

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