A Study on the Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic in the Recruitment Process: With Special reference to IT companies of Pune Region

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Abstract

The effects of COVID-19 on companies are undeniable since it has affected everything from the economy to the livelihoods of businesses and organisations. Organizations seek innovative solutions to continue operations without interruption. From hiring to keeping personnel, every aspect of human resource management is difficult. The recruitment process involves finding job openings, inviting applications, analysing job requirements, reviewing applications, screening, listing, and selecting the most qualified individual. In COVID-19, organisations operate remotely, and their employees perform their duties from home. Electronic-Recruitment or online recruitment uses web-based technology to find, evaluate, choose, sign, and onboard job candidates. It is a tool that aids businesses with online workflows and recruitment chores to increase productivity, reduce time-to-fill, reduce hiring costs, and enhance their organization's overall talent profile. This study intends to figure out how E-recruitment is replacing human involvement in the recruitment process by analysing the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic inference on the recruitment process. The purpose of this study is to analyse the influence of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the recruitment process, i.e., E-recruitment, of personnel working in information technology (IT) organisations in Pune, MH. A total of one hundred individuals from five distinct IT organisations were selected for the study. This research is expected to help come up with strategies for hiring people and set up a successful hiring process so that qualified people who can work in a competitive environment can be hired.

Keywords: COVID-19, Recruitment, IT companies, E-recruitment.

INTRODUCTION

In today's ever-changing environment, it is crucial to find the right person for the right job. Companies rely on qualified personnel but finding them can be costly. The standard hiring procedure used by most businesses consists of analysing resumes, group discussions, interviews, and psychometric tests. According to research, businesses are advancing and embracing technology. By using an e-recruitment platform, it is possible to reduce recruiting expenses without abandoning the concept of globalising social features. Most organisations should focus on creating an online recruitment process that lets them build concrete profiles that are already made.

The objective of an organisation is always to cut expenses and automate processes. At Wikipedia e-recruitment is defined as "the approach and procedure for recruiting individuals using electronic resources, in particular the internet.

"To increase the rate at which potential applicants are matched with available opportunities, organisations and recruitment firms have switched a massive portion of their recruitment process and strategy from traditional to online mode." By employing database technology, online job posting boards, and search engines, HR managers may now fill vacant positions in a fraction of the time it took previously. "

Even though COVID-19 presents enterprises with numerous obstacles, recruitment is one of them. Traditional tactics employed by firms, such as posting job openings on multiple sites, may result in unemployment and a lack of qualified candidates. Recruiting and finding qualified candidates for the firm is a challenging endeavour. Corporate use of technology-assisted recruitment approaches that may be

employed remotely and aid in assuring hiring and business continuity during the pandemic is increasing. Companies usually have data-driven and analysis-driven inputs that can be used to make sure there are qualified people available when making hiring decisions.

The e-Recruitment method decreases the pollution and energy consumption involved with the production, transport, and utilisation of paper materials. The automated approach would save energy on a variety of tasks, including mailing letters, recording data on paper, filing information, generating reports, etc. E-recruitment reduces the amount of paper used in resumes, advertisements, and the publication of findings. The firm should develop a user-friendly and functional web portal to generate a tangible online recruitment process that can deliver a prefabricated profile. E-recruitment should be well-designed so that it provides firms with competent people for the position, with an emphasis on taking tests on an online platform that focuses on skills testing, competency tests, experience sharing, psychometric tests, and finally submitting a candidacy. Once the profile has been given to HR, the system should be able to generate the proper data, allowing the HR team to conduct telephonic or online interviews to assess the individual's capabilities, followed by a face-to-face interview with the stakeholder. Through e-recruitment, employers get access to a broader pool of qualified candidates. Employing e-recruitment HR software or recruiting firms that offer e-recruitment as part of a package, companies can build their own electronic-recruitment platforms.

Recruitment and the COVID-19 Outbreak:

Hamza et al. (2021) Recruitment is the process of inviting, finding, selecting, and finally employing the best eligible and qualified individual who is also a good fit for the firm. It is the process by which organisations find and recruit candidates to fill open positions. Recruitment is a series of operations undertaken by a company to attract the interest of job seekers who own the skill set necessary for the organisation to achieve its aims and goals. Inviting applications, understanding the requirements of vacant positions, enticing people to apply, vetting, and ultimately selecting the best prospects, placement, and orientation of the new employee are all components of the recruitment procedure. Organizations should be able to comprehend and predict if the existing workforce can meet the quantity and quality of people necessary for the attainment of organisational goals. Additionally, it is necessary to find the gaps between the available and required staff to place the most qualified candidates in the positions.

Job Analysis	
Job Description	**Job Specification**
Job Title	Qualifications
Job Location	Experience
Job Summary	Training
Reporting To	Skills
Working Conditions	Responsibilities
Machines to be Used	Emotional Traits
Hazards	Sensory Demands

Job Analysis: An analysis of the work on the Internet is an easy choice. Job analysis is the process of studying and defining the functions, roles, and responsibilities of a certain selected job in the business. In the past few years, there has been a major change and increase in the utilisation of online tools for completing job analysis surveys, and most businesses choose to use online ways to gather this data.

Job Description: The rise of information technology has revolutionised job description management and other components of talent management.

HR departments have often supported their printed job descriptions on computers or corporate servers either in cabinet filings or in word descriptions. There are now numerous firms that offer cloud-based personnel management systems to corporations that enable the human resource department to effortlessly save and file HR information, link with other departments, and access different files with the use of the internet from any device.

Job Specification: Job specification is a written document in which the essentials to do a job are being stored such educational qualification, needed skill set, years of experience, physical compatibility if required, mental stability, soft skills, and any other skills to conduct a specified job.

Businesses are looking for solutions to be productive in the face of significant difficulties as COVID-19 sweeps the nation and the world. Managing personnel procedures, raising or lowering headcount, and sustaining workloads have become a remote operation for many organisations as they attempt to protect their employees, customers, and the general public. The epidemic has changed a major chunk of the workforce in unforeseen ways. Remote employment has become the new norm for organisations that can adopt proper social distancing measures. Employees are converting living rooms into offices while balancing children and personal chores. Businesses must make tough decisions about how to adapt to and survive this tremendous transition and hiring methods have shifted overnight.

Today, Software as service suppliers are part of the job description management company, including those incorporated into the recruitment tools of a full, integrated talent management series and self- supporting solutions. Solutions such as Halogen's Job Description Builder have made it possible to integrate with broader talent management operations of recruiting and job description management and authorised HR departments of any type of firm. It aids in monitoring and confirming the job descriptions for all interested parties, such as employees, managers, recruiters, lawyers, allowance, and reward.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Abia, M., & Brown, I. (2020) reviewed that e-recruitment is known by several other titles, like internet recruitment, online recruiting, web recruitment. E-recruitment as compared to traditional recruiting use information technology and software to manage the recruitment process of the firm. A recruiting model that presents the recruitment process covers the actions like setting the objectives of recruitment, strategy designing, conducting the recruitment activity, and assessing recruitment output. Recruiters fight for the best-fit applicants (job seekers which are suitable and perfect fit for the available job), while job seekers compete for jobs to get selected; this motivates both the organisation and candidate to adopt information technology vastly to alleviate some of the challenges in the recruitment efforts. This study analysed five notions of e-recruitment that developed from extant literature, these are e-recruitment as a technology tool, system, process, service, and proxy. It also concluded the problem of diversity in the organisation to comprehend the notion of e-recruitment, which goes unrecognised in the stored literature, and proposed that recognising and naming the numerous conceptualizations of e-recruitment can be part of the articulation of diversity.

Simón, C., & Esteves, J. (2015) found that considerable forces of institutions may drive companies to choose the elements of the recruiting websites of the organisation are based on copying and feature the colleagues in their reference, networks, and groups. In the other study studies of the IT business, e-recruitment functions that the HR staff may employ to customise the accessible application to as per their specifications and cost-benefit criteria. IT sector evaluation of digital business strategies by highlighting the significance of knowing the external environment and its function in setting up the digital business strategy. To summarise, electronic recruitment can become a key instrument and approach for companies and HR professionals in searching and selecting the best people while minimising expenses associated with the screening of worldwide candidates. E-recruitment offers obvious benefits for any company, it also causes significant barriers for enterprises.

Ehrhart et al., (2012) The study on attracting Internet recruiting is both philosophically and practically effective because the job market is swamped with Web-savvy applicants who typically visit multiple websites as their initial point of contact with a company. It is vital to study the contributions made by the website so that businesses may utilise it to manage the available resources and recruit the best valuable human resources. Given the prevalence of this recruitment approach in firms and the necessity to balance its potential and hazards and showed that employee-organization fit should be there to achieve the organisational purpose. It also helps in mediating the relationship between work-life balance and boosting the usability of the website. Organizations should plan for the implications and opportunities of drawing a considerable number of potential applicants, and to supply feedback or other vital information that could encourage and helps in the better and more correct choice of human capital through the e-recruitment process. Kucherov, D., &Tsybova, V. (2021) presented that the e-recruitment methods which include internet- based and internal technology-enabled solutions, are to be employed in the overall framework of human resource management (HRM) digitalization. E-recruitment approaches are related with the beneficial outcome. However, e-recruitment utilisation does not serve as a bridge between e-recruitment techniques and outcomes. E- recruiting aid not only in cutting the cost of marketing and selection procedures but also in cutting paperwork. Hot skill alerts can be activated to allow companies to be notified when a candidate who matches the criteria for future requirements registers. People looking for a job can explore for and apply 24*7. Recruitment agencies, which can cost thousands of pounds, can also be avoided to realise the genuine economic benefits of internet recruitment.

Bhupendra, S.H., & Swati, G. (2015), The approach of employing the top people and encouraging them to investigate work options are defined. The organisation itself can recruit, or by outsourcing it to an external agency. On the other hand, it is difficult to define the most efficient recruitment source as it is situational and has its benefits and cons.

Adetunji, O.J., & Ogbonna, I.G. (2013) (2013) Recruitment has a lengthy history, starting from prehistoric times since individuals tend to consume the services of others when they cannot do that alone. Adeosun, O. T., & OHIANI, A. S. (2020) showed that organisations can leverage salary, brand recognition, reference, and employment stability as major elements in attracting and recruiting excellent employees. In addition, digitalization is a crucial technique for attracting, recruiting, and selecting the most eligible people. Using social media, traditional media, taking interviews online, as well as physical interviews have been proved to aid in the choice of top individuals.

Gignac et al., (2021) Studied the influence of COVID-19 on health, money, and organisational support. Human beings with the challenges of physical and mental health voiced more anxieties and less support as compared to other groups during the early phases of the COVID-19 epidemic, as per the data. The findings also underlined the significance of workplace circumstances to understand COVID-19, as well as the necessity to assess inequalities in the conditions of COVID-19 beliefs and understand how work effects perspectives and can contribute to disparities that may arise because of a pandemic. Furthermore, the impact of working circumstances is not restricted to COVID-19. It demands greater research attention in the future and underscores the need of providing more inclusive work possibilities for those with the problems of physical and mental health.

Feldman, D. C., & Klaas, B. S (2002) Concluded that in the recruitment process both recruiter and job applicant can keep their anonymity. Organizations can search for possible individuals and their CVs without advertising vacancies, or they can also promote the vacancies without

making their identities out. Additionally, job hunters can give their CVs with the use of the Internet while keeping the privacy of their facts including their names and details of employment.

Al-Zagheer, H., & Barakat, S. (2021) Investigated and presented the concept of electronic recruitment, as well as its benefits for both enterprises and job seekers. Some of the advantages of internet recruitment include Lowering the organization's costs. Moreover, generating information about a job online is less expensive than advertising it in the newspapers, there are no mediators. Also, the time taken in the recruitment is minimised. E-recruitment allows and aids in hiring the ideal candidate with the best skills which improves the efficiency of the recruitment process and promotes the access to 24*7 to an ample number of online resumes for both applicants and employers. E-recruitment has its own set of advantages and disadvantages, some of which are like screeing and confirming the talents which waste loads of time. B. Low internet speed or lack of internet access or lack of knowledge is also a fault. C. Companies cannot rely only on internet recruitment strategies. D. In India, both the interviewer and interviewee prefer to connect in person rather than over email.

RESEARCH GAP:

Analysing the existing literature on this topic reveals that a considerable deal of study has been conducted on recruiting, traditional recruitment, recruitment strategies, and the role of technology to date. This study aims to examine the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis on the recruitment processes of IT enterprises in the Pune region, as well as the employees' views on the matter.

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

1. Analyse the effects of the COVID-19 epidemic on recruiting.
2. Evaluating the influence of e-recruitment on the IT company's workforce.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Research Design:

Using a quantitative approach, a questionnaire was created and distributed to IT companies in the Pune area. The questionnaire is divided into two sections, with the first section standing for and focusing on the first aim, which was to analyse the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic condition on the recruitment process. The second part of the survey focuses on the consequences of e-recruitment on IT company personnel.

Sampling Design:

The IT companies in the Pune region were chosen for the survey, and their employees completed the questionnaire. Utilizing MS Excel 2010 as the statistical analysis tool, descriptive statistics were generated and used to evaluate the data. The sample population for this study makes up of 100 working IT professionals.

Data Collection:

To collect data for this study, a Multi-Factor Questionnaire (MFQ) was distributed to personnel in the Human Resource Department of Information Technology organisations in the Pune Region. Responses on a five-point Likert scale were gathered for data analysis and interpretation.

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DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

Distribution of Respondents.

Based on	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	55
	Male	45
Departments	Human Resource	42
	Information Technology	58
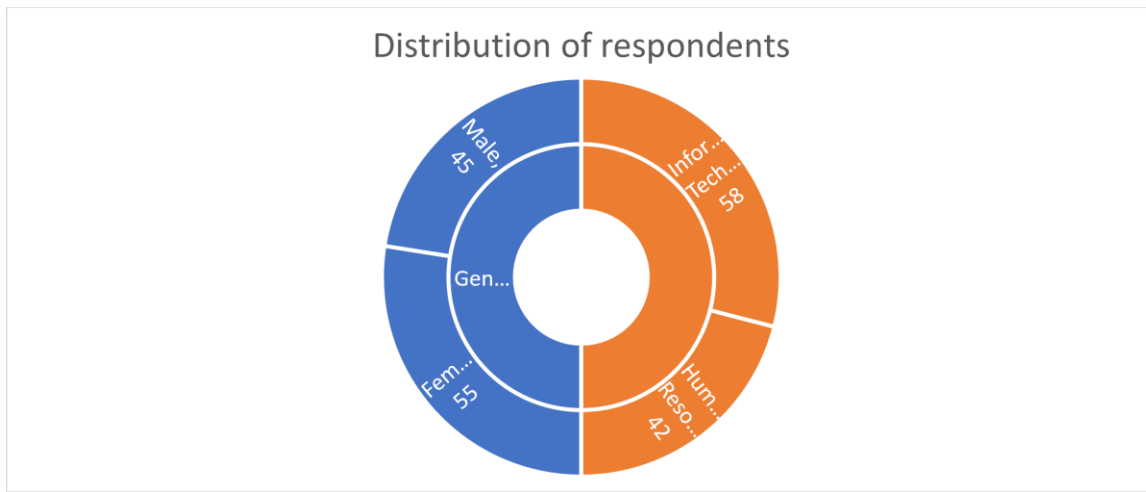
Statements for Research Objective 1: Analyse the effects of the COVID-19 epidemic on recruiting.

1. **Interaction between humans is something that cannot be replaced by technology**.

Serial No.	Response	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly Agree	30
2	Agree	17
3	Neutral	10
4	Disagree	9
5	Strongly Disagree	34
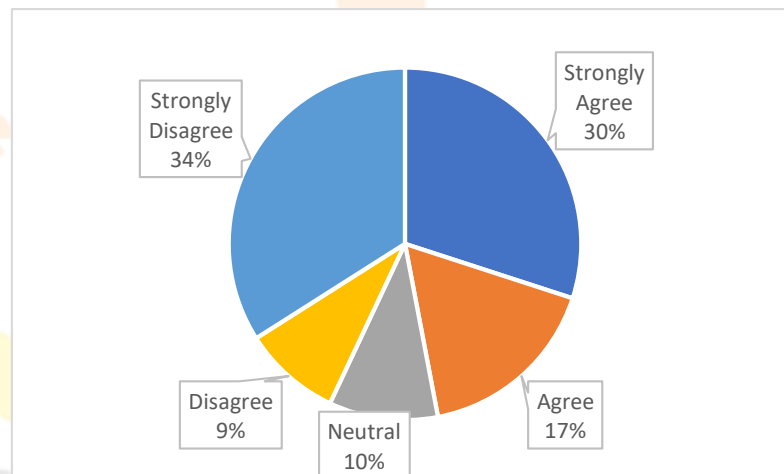
2. **E-recruitment will not be hindered by the interviewee's geographic location.**

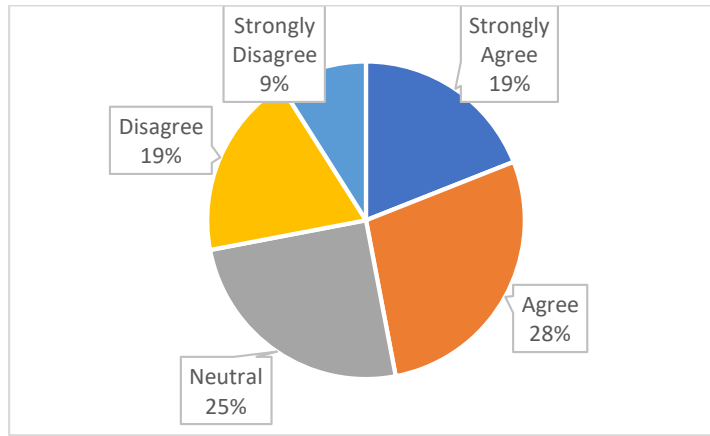| Serial No.	Response	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly Agree	28
2	Agree	25
3	Neutral	6
4	Disagree	21
5	Strongly Disagree	20
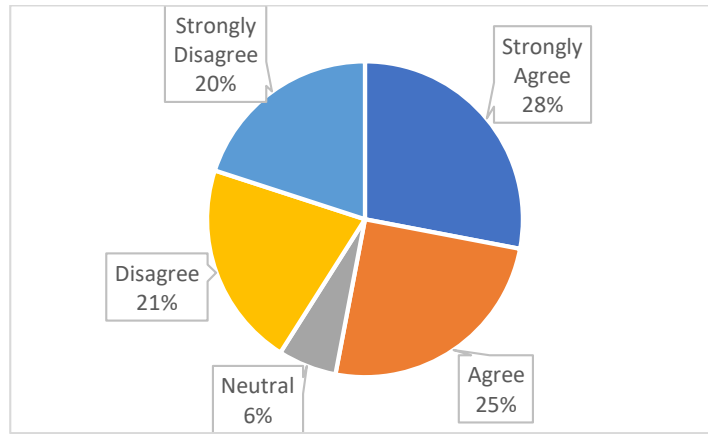
3. During the e-recruitment process, the applicant is likely to encounter complications with their internet connection.

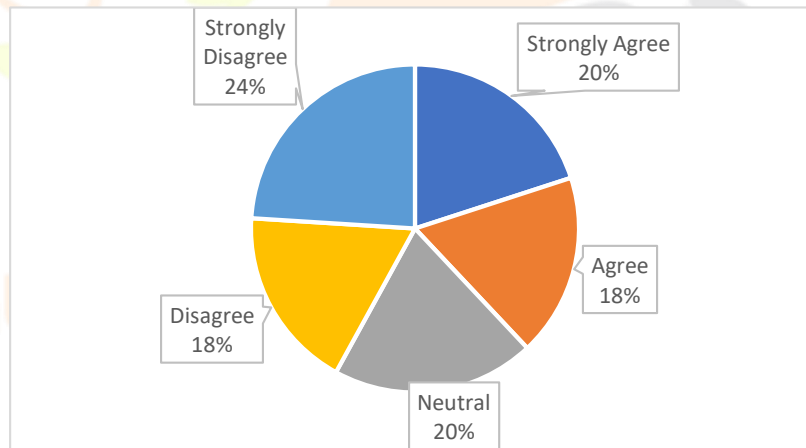| Serial No.	Response	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly Agree	34
2	Agree	33
3	Neutral	10
4	Disagree	11
5	Strongly Disagree	12
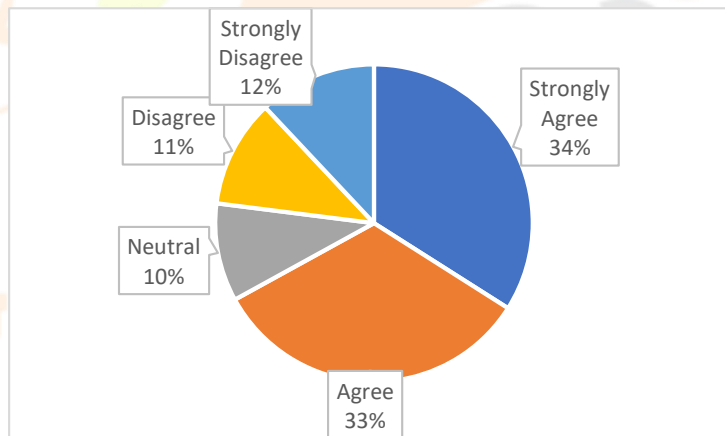
4. The HR department's workflow has been made easier by the implementation of e-recruitment methods.

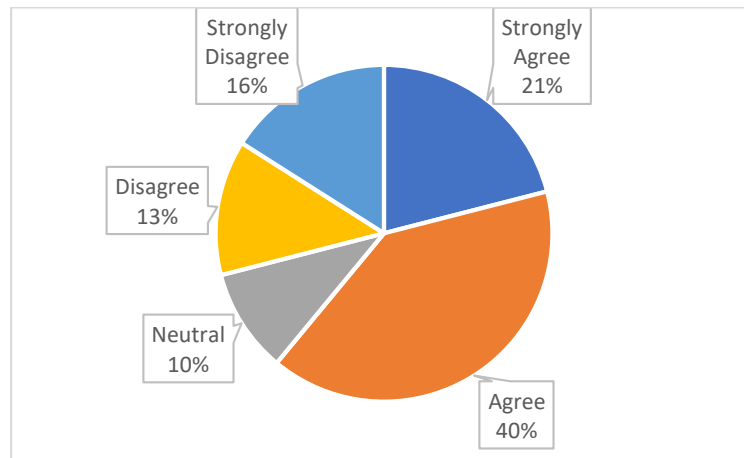| Serial No.	Response	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly Agree	19
2	Agree	28
3	Neutral	25
4	Disagree	19
5	Strongly Disagree	9

5.   **The e-recruitment accelerates the recruitment procedure and optimises the organization's overall talent profile.**

Serial No.	Response	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly Agree	20
2	Agree	18
3	Neutral	20
4.	Disagree	18
5.	Strongly Disagree	24

6.   **My company frequently conducts training sessions for using the e-recruitment process**.

Serial No.	Response	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly Agree	21
2	Agree	40
3	Neutral	10
4.	Disagree	13
5.	Strongly Disagree	16

Statements For Research Objectives 2: Evaluating the influence of e-recruitment on the IT company's workforce.

7. **E-recruiting practises used in the recruitment process can prevent bias in decision-making.**

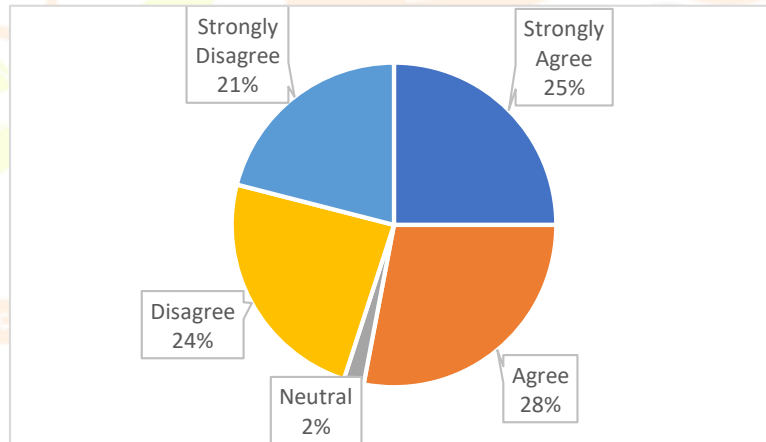| Serial No.	Response	Percentage(%)
1	Strongly Agree	36
2	Agree	19
3	Neutral	14
4.	Disagree	11
5.	Strongly Disagree	20
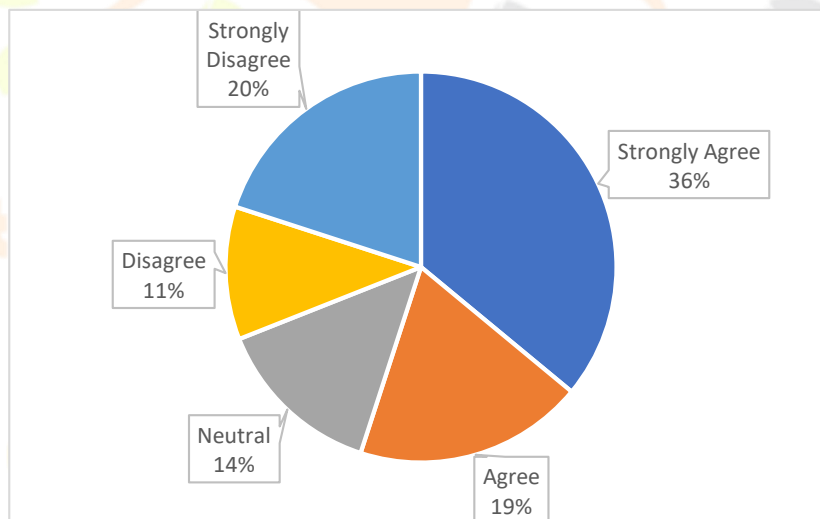
8. **The e-recruitment procedure avoids check or test scenarios that are prone to human error.**

Serial No.	Response	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly Agree	33
2	Agree	23
3	Neutral	12
4.	Disagree	16
5.	Strongly Disagree	16
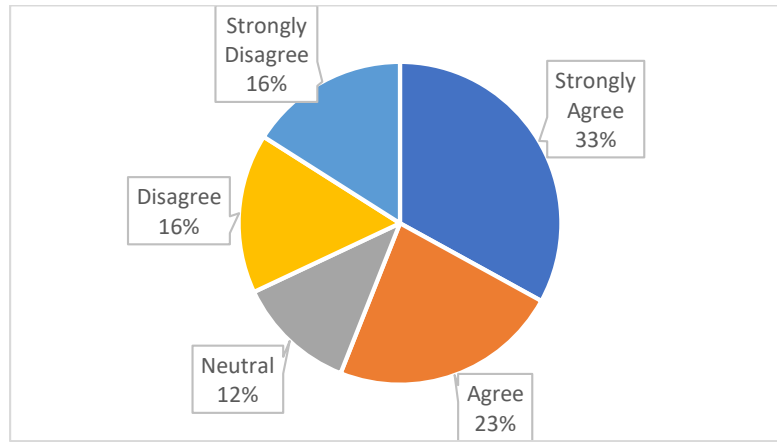
9. **E-recruitment allows recruiters to increase their productivity.**

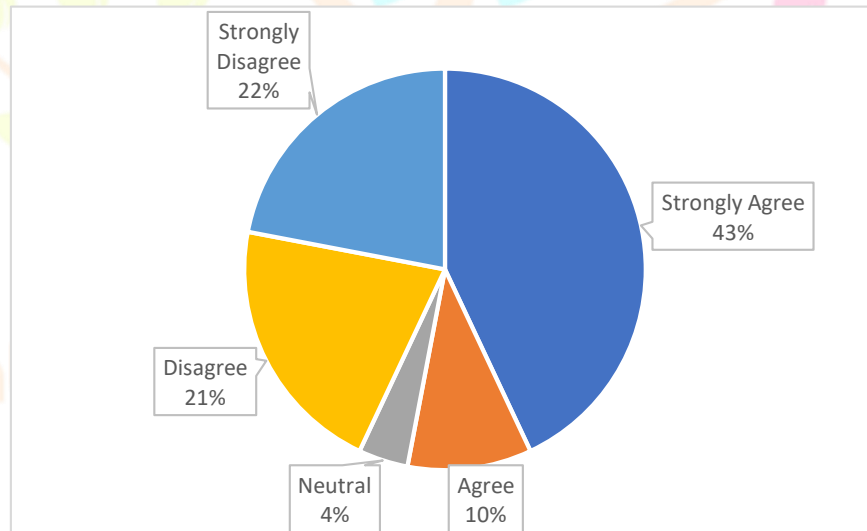| Serial No.	Response	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly Agree	25
2	Agree	28
3	Neutral	2
4.	Disagree	24
5.	Strongly Disagree	21

10. **The e-recruitment test scenarios aid in maximising efficiency and reducing human mistake.**

Serial No.	Response	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly Agree	16
2	Agree	37
3	Neutral	5
4.	Disagree	15
5.	Strongly Disagree	27
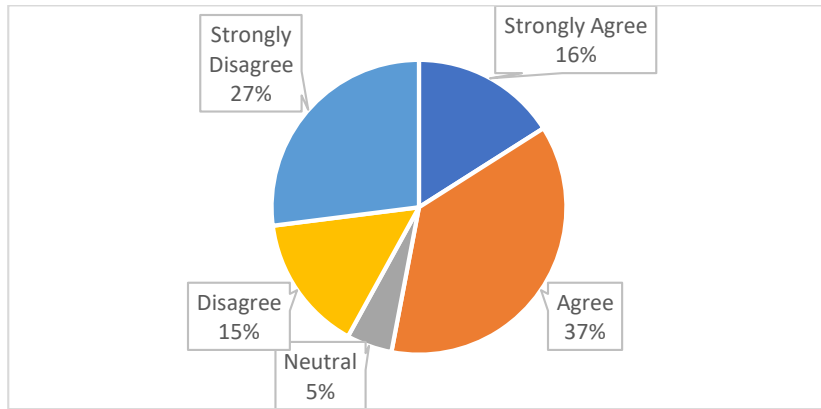
11. I am pleased with my organization's e-recruitment approach.

Serial No.	Response	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly Agree	43
2	Agree	10
3	Neutral	4
4.	Disagree	21
5.	Strongly Disagree	22

12. Your organization's e-recruitment software is user-friendly.

Serial No.	Response	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly Agree	30
2	Agree	33
3	Neutral	4
4.	Disagree	22
5.	Strongly Disagree	11
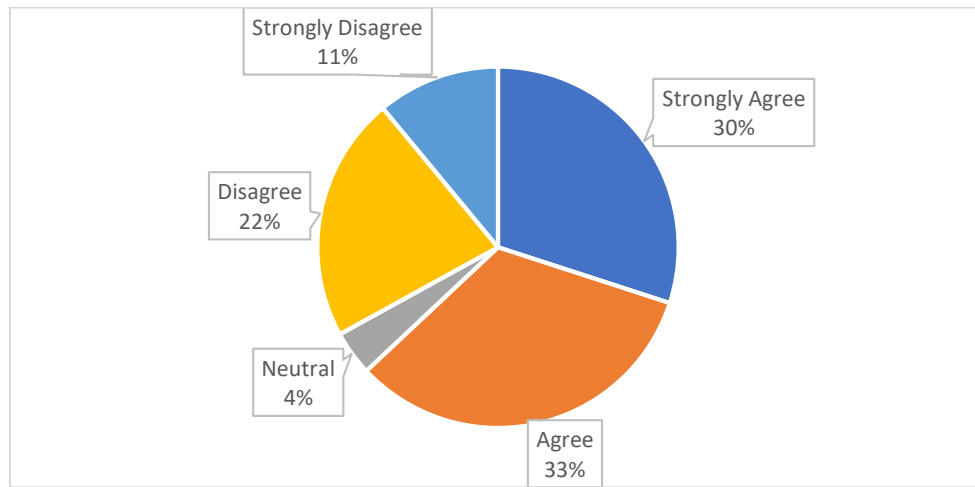
FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION:

The Covid-19 pandemic issue has a substantial impact on the hiring process, which affects both the traditional hiring process and the e-hiring process, according to the study. According to the report, employees at IT companies are significantly impacted by e-recruitment. Organisations gain from e-recruitment in several ways, including time savings, reduced recruiting expenses, an efficient recruitment process, and choice. The participants' opinions on how e-recruitment affected the hiring procedure were gathered by the researchers. The Covid-19 Pandemic situation has a big impact on the hiring process, and e-recruitment has a good impact on IT company employees, according to the research's two main conclusions. The vast majority of people concur that human interaction cannot be replaced by technology. The largest benefit of e-recruitment, according to the respondents, is that geographic distance never poses a barrier to interviews. The majority of people concur that an essential challenge the interviewee has during the e-recruitment process is internet availability. The vast majority of people believe that the overall recruitment process is sped up by e-recruitment. It is claimed that training is necessary for employees to use e-recruitment platforms. The majority of employees concur that the HR department's workflow is made more efficient through e-recruiting. According to the respondents, e-recruitment is a highly helpful tool for locating job openings and is adaptable to use in the hiring process for junior/entry-level positions. It will conduct the work based on code, so it will deliver as instructed, in a timely, dependable, and impartial manner.

LIMITATION & FUTURE ASPECTS OF THE STUDY

The authors have updated the paper with new information. This will add to the body of knowledge already available. The study contains some fresh findings that will assist e-recruitment practitioners in discovering extra functionality in recruitment apps and identifying holes in current e-recruitment applications. The poll was restricted to IT enterprises in Pune. The proposed research can be carried out in many sites across India, particularly in high-tech hubs such as Bangalore, Mumbai, Delhi-NCR, and Noida. Future research could compare the e-recruitment procedures of various sectors.

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