



Research Article

The Impact of Explainable AI-Based Interviews on Organizational Attractiveness: The Mediating Roles of Perceived Organizational Support and Innovativeness

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*Corresponding Email:

samia.yaseen000@gmail.com

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Samia Yaseen ^{1*}, Maryam Rao ², Shahbaz Ali Shahani ³, Abdullah Javed ⁴

¹ Department of Management Sciences, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan

² Institute of Management Sciences, The Women University Multan, Pakistan

³ College Education Department, Government of Sindh, Pakistan

⁴ Department of Management & HR, NUST Business School, NUST, Islamabad, Pakistan

Abstract

This study examines the impact of explainable artificial intelligence (XAI)-based interviews on organizational attractiveness, with perceived organizational support and perceived innovativeness as mediating variables. A quantitative research design was employed, and data were collected from a sample of 302 respondents who had experience with AI-assisted or digital recruitment systems. Structural equation modeling was used to analyze relationships among variables. The findings reveal that explainable AI significantly influences organizational attractiveness ($\beta = 0.44, p < 0.001$), perceived organizational support ($\beta = 0.39, p < 0.001$), and perceived innovativeness ($\beta = 0.42, p < 0.001$). Perceived organizational support ($\beta = 0.31, p < 0.001$) and perceived innovativeness ($\beta = 0.28, p < 0.001$) both positively affect organizational attractiveness. Mediation analysis confirms that perceived organizational support (indirect effect = 0.12, $p < 0.001$) and perceived innovativeness (indirect effect = 0.11, $p < 0.001$) partially mediate the relationship between XAI and organizational attractiveness. The results indicate that transparency in AI-driven recruitment systems enhances applicants' perceptions of fairness, organizational care, and technological advancement, which collectively improve employer attractiveness. The study contributes to human resource management literature by demonstrating the psychological mechanisms through which explainable AI influences recruitment outcomes. Practical implications suggest that organizations adopting explainable AI can strengthen employer branding and attract high-quality candidates by improving transparency and perceived organizational values in recruitment processes.

Keywords: Explainable AI, Organizational attractiveness, Perceived innovativeness, Perceived organizational support, Recruitment systems, Structural equation modeling.

Introduction

The fast adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) into organizational operations changed the conventional human resource management practices, especially recruitment and selection practices. There was a growing use of AI-based systems to filter candidates, interview them, and assess their suitability for the job, thus improving efficiency and minimizing human bias in decision-making. In this technological change, explainable artificial intelligence (XAI) became a key technology that sought to render algorithmic decisions transparent and understandable to end users. XAI allowed applicants to understand the way in which the results of the interview were obtained, which alleviated uncertainty and increased confidence in automated systems.

Explainability was suggested as a major influencer of user perceptions, such as perceived fairness, trust, and acceptance of AI-based systems, in previous studies (Vilone & Longo, 2021). Organizational attractiveness was a crucial result in recruitment situations based on experience and perceptions held by applicants throughout the recruitment procedures. It indicated how prospective applicants perceived an organization as a good place to work and was strongly linked with talent acquisition success as well as employer branding (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003; Chapman et al., 2005). The introduction of AI-based interviews presented new dynamics in this relationship because the applicants considered not only the organization itself but also the technologies used. Research exhibited that transparent and efficient recruitment processes had a positive impact on the attitudes of the applicants and their desire to join organizations (Hausknecht et al., 2004; Gonzalez et al., 2019).

Explainable AI was used as a signaling system where organizations provided information on their values and capabilities to the applicants. Using the signaling theory, the recruitment practices gave signals regarding organizational culture, technological advancement, and ethics (Bafera & Kleinert, 2023). When AI systems provided transparent explanations of how decisions were made, applicants understood this openness to imply that they were fair and competent in the organization. According to social exchange theory, this kind of transparency created an attitude of organizational support because the applicants felt that the organization was concerned about their experiences and respected them (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Eisenberger et al., 1986).

Although the interest in AI-based recruiting was growing, there were few studies that empirically investigated the effects of explainable AI on organizational attractiveness within psychological processes. Current literature addresses mainly technical factors of AI or overall applicant responses, and no study has filled this gap in knowledge about the mediating role of perceived organizational support and perceived innovativeness in this relationship. It was necessary to fill this gap, with digital hiring tools becoming increasingly popular in modern organizations to recruit the best employees in competitive labor markets. Thus, the present research examined the impact of XAI-based interviews on organizational attractiveness through the perceptions of the applicants in terms of support and innovation.

Background of the Study

The development of AI technologies has greatly transformed recruitment activities, where manual and personal interviewing gave way to computerized and information-driven approaches. Stock interviews were performed using machine learning algorithms and natural language processing to examine the responses of the candidates and produce the evaluations, making the hiring process more efficient and scalable. Such systems were frequently black boxes, where the decision-making processes were not transparent to the user, giving rise to the issue of fairness, accountability, and transparency (Adadi & Berrada, 2018). The introduction of XAI has mitigated these fears since it offers understandable explanations that improve the user acceptance and belief in AI systems.

Perceived organizational support (POS) was a key factor in influencing employee and applicant attitudes in the case of organizational research. POS was the degree to which the people felt that an organization appreciated their input and was concerned about their welfare (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Researchers have shown that increased job satisfaction, commitment to the organization, and positive employer ratings were correlated with higher levels of POS (Kurtessis et al., 2017). Explainability, in AI-based recruitment, helped POS to project transparency and respect to the applicants, which resulted in the improvement of their organizational care perceptions.

Perceived innovation was another key issue in determining organizational attractiveness. The organizations that implemented the latest technologies, including AI-based recruitment algorithms, were viewed as innovative and technologically proficient. Signaling theory proposed that with this kind of technological adoption, relevant information regarding organizational ability was being transmitted, and this affected how applicants made decisions and judgments (Spence, 1973). Empirical research proved that perceived innovativeness had a positive impact on organizational attractiveness and employer branding where

applicants favored organizations that were innovative and flexible (Van Esch et al., 2021; Soeling et al., 2022). The combination of technology and the human mind started playing a more critical role in determining recruitment outcomes. Applicants viewed AI-driven processes not merely as an evaluation tool, but also as a reflection of organizational values and culture. The transparent AI systems led to less uncertainty and increased perceptions of fairness, whereas opaque systems tended to raise skepticism and resistance (Hamm et al., 2023). The insight into how explainable AI affected the perceptions of applicants by mediating between the influencing factors like POS and innovativeness gave a good insight into the contemporary recruitment methods.

Research Problem

With the increased use of AI in the recruitment process, organizations have struggled to make sure that the technologies have a positive impact on applicant perception. Most AI systems were not transparent, and this brought about doubt and mistrust in the applicants. Such unaccountability reduced the usefulness of AI-based recruitment in making organizations more appealing, because applicants tended to doubt the impartiality and trustworthiness of robotic verdicts. Current studies were mostly concerned with technical aspects of AI systems and not their effects on the psychology and behavior of the applicants. Lack of empirical data was also found on the nature of the explainable AI on organizational attractiveness based on some underlying mechanisms like perceived organizational support and innovativeness. This gap has pointed to the necessity of an extensive study on the importance of XAI in determining how applicants perceive organizations and how these perceptions result in organizational outcomes.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the impact of explainable AI-based interviews on organizational attractiveness.
2. To analyze the effect of explainable AI on perceived organizational support.
3. To investigate the influence of explainable AI on perceived organizational innovativeness.
4. To evaluate the mediating roles of perceived organizational support and innovativeness in the relationship between XAI and organizational attractiveness.

Research Questions

- Q1. How did explainable AI-based interviews influence organizational attractiveness?
- Q2. In what ways did explainable AI affect perceived organizational support?
- Q3. How did explainable AI contribute to perceived organizational innovativeness?
- Q4. Did perceived organizational support and innovativeness mediate the relationship between XAI and organizational attractiveness?

Significance of the Study

The work was a contribution to the growing body of literature on AI in human resource management as it combined the technological and psychological approaches. It offered empirical findings of the role of explainable AI on applicant perception, thus filling an important gap in recruitment studies. The study contributed to theoretical knowledge of the signaling theory and social exchange theory by shedding light on the mediating roles of perceived organizational support and innovativeness in the AI-driven recruitment context. The findings offered valuable insights for organizations seeking to implement AI-based interview systems. Transparency and explainability would help organizations be more transparent, attractive to their applicants, and draw high-quality talent. The research also informed policymakers and practitioners to develop ethical and user-friendly AI systems that met organizational objectives and expectations of applicants.

Research Hypothesis

- H1: Explainable AI-based interviews have a significant positive impact on organizational attractiveness.
- H2: Explainable AI-based interviews have a significant positive impact on perceived organizational support.

H3: Explainable AI-based interviews have a significant positive impact on perceived innovativeness.

H4: Perceived organizational support has a significant positive impact on organizational attractiveness.

H5: Perceived innovativeness has a significant positive impact on organizational attractiveness.

Literature Review

Explainable Artificial Intelligence in Recruitment Contexts

Explainable artificial intelligence (XAI) became a growing concern as companies began to implement AI in the recruitment process, especially to answer the questions of transparency and fairness. According to the research, traditional AI tended to be opaque black boxes and thus decreased applicant knowledge about the decision-making process and weakened the trust in automated hiring systems (Arrieta et al., 2019; Gerlings et al., 2020). XAI came up as a solution that allowed organisations to give understandable explanations, thus increasing user trust and acceptance. The empirical data indicated that explainability enhanced perceived fairness and diminished uncertainty about AI-supported decision-making settings, especially in high-stakes ones like recruitment. Explainable Artificial Intelligence (XAI) has rapidly gained attention, particularly in the context of recruitment and organizational attractiveness. As organizations seek to make recruitment processes more transparent, XAI provides a way to interpret and understand the decisions made by AI algorithms. The use of AI in recruitment has implications for how organizations present themselves to potential employees, especially in terms of perceived fairness and transparency. In this regard, the integration of XAI into recruitment can enhance organizational attractiveness by improving candidate trust and engagement (Rafiq-uz-Zaman, 2025b). Furthermore, as AI adoption in organizations continues to grow, understanding its impact on both the workforce and decision-making processes becomes essential (Rafiq-uz-Zaman, 2026).

Explainability was instrumental in determining how the applicants would respond to organizations in terms of behavior and attitude. Research revealed that, when AI systems presented articulate logic and assessment guidelines, applicants viewed the process as more open and fair, which had a beneficial impact on their participation and satisfaction (Hamm et al., 2023; Meske et al., 2022). Explainable systems, in recruitment environments where applicants frequently faced a great degree of uncertainty, helped to enhance cognitive comprehension and emotional security, which also enhanced confidence in organizational practices. Explainable AI also became a crucial element in balancing technological effectiveness with the human-centered design principles.

Recent studies also highlighted the use of explainable AI as not only a technical aspect but also an organizational strategy. The use of XAI by organizations was an indication to external stakeholders, such as job seekers, that they were accountable, ethically responsible, and technologically advanced (Laato et al., 2022). These cues affected the way applicants rated organizations, especially in the competitive labor markets where the reputation of the employer was a crucial factor. Consequently, explainability helped bridge the technological advancement versus organizational legitimacy gap, which supports its significance in the contemporary recruitment system.

Perceived Organizational Support and Organizational Attractiveness

Perceived organizational support (POS) was one of the basic psychological processes that affected the perceptions and attitudes of applicants towards organizations. POS was the degree to which they thought that an organization appreciated their input and was concerned about their welfare, even during the pre-employment phase. Studies have shown that POS was greatly influenced by recruitment practices where applicants understood the organizational practices as gestures of support and respect (Eisenberger et al., 2019). Clear and equal recruitment practices, such as AI-assisted interviews with explainability options, improved the perceptions of applicants in terms of organizational care and integrity. Perceived Organizational Support (POS) is critical in shaping how employees view their organization. Research has demonstrated that when employees feel supported by their organization, their job satisfaction, commitment, and overall organizational attractiveness increase (Iram et al., 2025). This perception of support is influenced by various organizational

factors, including leadership, recognition, and workload (Asif & Rafiq-uz-Zaman, 2026). For example, leadership and recognition are seen as vital predictors of employee engagement, and when these elements are lacking, employees may exhibit disengagement behaviors, which negatively impact their perceptions of the organization (Asif & Rafiq-uz-Zaman, 2026). This aligns with the broader concept that organizational attractiveness is influenced not only by tangible factors but also by the emotional and social support provided within the workplace.

Social exchange theory was an excellent theoretical basis to explain the linkage between POS and organizational attractiveness. In this view, people have reciprocal relationships with organizations based on perceived benefits and support. When applicants felt that the organization supported them a lot during the recruitment process, they developed positive attitudes and intentions to work in the organization (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Cropanzano et al., 2017). Empirical evidence supported that the POS had a strong impact on the organizational appeal because the supportive practices led to the formation of positive impressions and the desire of applicants to fill job openings.

The recent literature pointed to the increased significance of POS in technology-mediated recruitment settings. Since organizations were becoming more dependent on AI systems, candidates did not just consider the results but also the way the decision was conveyed. Clear explanations enhanced by transparent AI systems created perceptions of fairness and respect, which reinforced POS and increased the appeal of organizations (Paramita et al., 2024). Thus, POS served as a vital go-between connecting technological practices and perceptions of applicants, highlighting its applicability in AI-based recruitment studies.

Perceived organizational attractiveness and innovativeness

Perceived organizational innovativeness was also found to be another important predictor of organizational attractiveness in the case of AI-based recruitment. Innovativeness was based on how well an organization was perceived to be progressive, technologically empowered, and able to come up with newer solutions. Studies indicated that companies that applied AI in the recruitment process were an indicator of innovation and flexibility, which had a positive impact on the perceptions and preferences of applicants (Jung & Park, 2023; Van Esch et al., 2021). These innovation indicators were especially effective in determining the organizational appeal because potential employees tended to want to work in companies that had proven technological leadership and were modern in their ways. Perceived organizational innovativeness plays a significant role in attracting top talent. A culture of innovation, fostered by AI and other technological advancements, increases an organization's appeal (Rafiq-uz-Zaman, 2026). In particular, organizations that implement AI-driven strategies, such as competency-based education, show a commitment to innovation that appeals to candidates seeking dynamic, forward-thinking workplaces (Rafiq-uz-Zaman, 2026). Moreover, education policies that emphasize innovation contribute to this perception of organizational creativity and competitiveness (Bukhari et al., 2025). Employees and potential hires alike are attracted to organizations that value and invest in new technologies, creating a competitive advantage in the labor market.

The concept of explainable AI through the lens of a signaling theory, the concept made the innovation signals more plausible and effective. Most applicants perceived AI systems as signs of technical competency and ethical accountability only when they were not only enhanced but also transparent (Bafera & Kleinert, 2023; Soeling et al., 2022). This twofold signaling effect increased the ratings by applicants of organizational innovativeness and also led to positive organizational perceptions.

Empirical research showed that perceived innovativeness had a significant impact on the behavioral intentions and attraction of applicants to an organization. The perception of innovation resulted in more successful companies in recruiting high-quality candidates because innovation was linked to development opportunities, innovation, and competitive advantage (Sommer et al., 2017; Minge & Thuring, 2018). In AI-based recruitment, explainability improved these perceptions by showing evidence of considerate technological use as opposed to automation. The perceived innovativeness served as an essential mediator between explainable AI and the attractiveness of organizations, which underlines its significance in modern recruitment studies.

Conceptual Framework model

The conceptual model depicted the association among explainable AI-based interviews and organizational attractiveness, in which perceived organizational support and perceived innovativeness were the mediating variables. Explainable AI was declared as the independent variable that impacted the perception of applicants with respect to their perception when recruiting them through the process by offering clear and understandable outputs of decision-making. Such transparency was supposed to boost the trust of the applicants in the hiring system and subsequently, their overall assessment of the organization. The dependent variable was the organizational attractiveness, or the degree to which the job seekers found the organization good and attractive to work in.

The model also showed two indirect routes via which explainable AI affected organizational attractiveness. The initial pathway indicated that explainable AI boosted perceived organizational support that further enhanced organizational attractiveness by indicating fairness, care, and respect to applicants. The second route showed that explainable AI positively predicted perceived innovativeness, which was related to technological progress and modern HR approaches of the organization, and had a positive influence on attractiveness. Collectively, these relations demonstrated that explainable AI not only had a direct impact on organizational attractiveness but also worked by psychological and perceptual mechanisms that affected applicant decision-making.

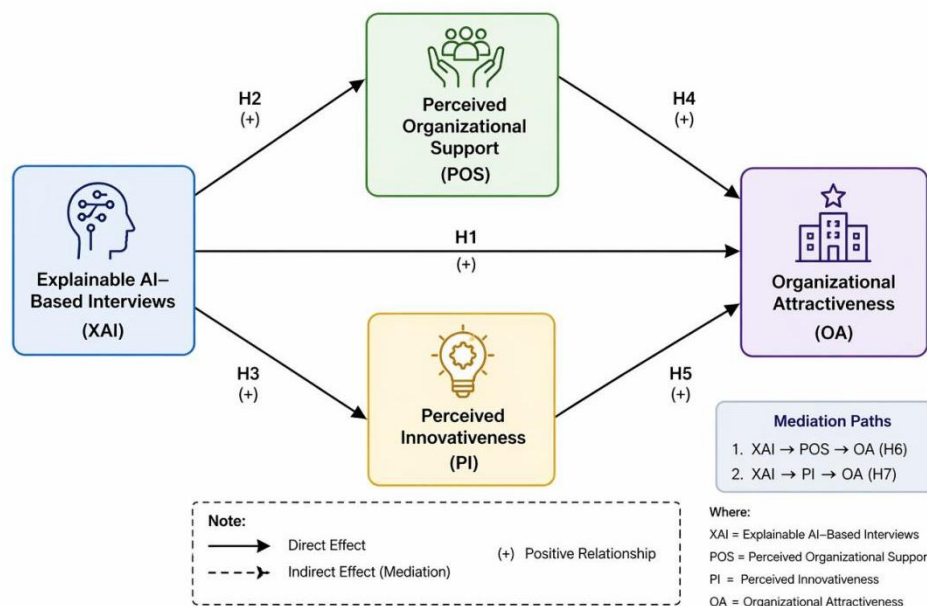


Figure 1. Conceptual framework model.

Research Methodology

Research Design

The research design used in this work was a quantitative one to study the effects of explainable artificial intelligence (XAI)-based interviews on the attractiveness of the organizations, mediated by the perceived organizational support and perceived innovativeness. The data was collected using a cross-sectional survey method, which entailed data collection on respondents at a specific time. The quantitative design facilitated testing of relationships between variables statistically and provided objectivity in testing the proposed conceptual framework. The main method of analysis applied to evaluate both direct and indirect relationships between constructs was structural equation modeling (SEM).

Population and Sample

The sample was limited to job applicants and people who had previously experienced an AI-based or technology-mediated job search. A purposive sampling method was used to select a sample of 320 respondents since they had knowledge about digital hiring systems. Screening of data and elimination of incomplete answers left 302 valid questionnaires for final analysis. Graduates, early-career professionals, and experienced applicants with a variety of educational and professional backgrounds were included in the sample, which helped to increase the generalizability of the findings in the current recruitment settings.

Data Collection Procedure

The structured questionnaire was administered online, via email and professional networking sites, to collect data. The participants were made aware of the study's purpose, and they were given confidentiality and anonymity. The response was voluntary, and informed consent was sought prior to the collection of data. The questionnaire had screening questions to ascertain that the respondents had the appropriate experience of AI-based or digital recruitment systems.

Data Analysis Techniques

Statistical software (SPSS and AMOS) was used to analyze the data. The demographic characteristics and the distributions of the variables were summarized using descriptive statistics. The internal consistency of the measurement scales was assessed through reliability analysis based on Cronbach's alpha. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to confirm the measurement model to achieve convergent and discriminant validity. The hypothesized relationships between variables, inclusive of mediation, were tested using structural equation modeling (SEM). The importance of indirect effects was determined using bootstrapping methods, which give strong support to mediation analysis.

Results and Analysis

Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Analysis

Table 1. Descriptive statistics and reliability results.

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Cronbach's Alpha
Explainable AI (XAI)	4.08	0.62	0.88
Perceived Organizational Support	4.12	0.58	0.87
Perceived Innovativeness	4.15	0.60	0.89
Organizational Attractiveness	4.18	0.57	0.90

The descriptive statistics showed that the mean values of all the study variables were quite high, with the range being 4.08 to 4.18. The highest mean score ($M = 4.18$, $SD = 0.57$) was found in the domain of organizational attractiveness, which indicated that the respondents tended to view organizations with the help of explainable AI-based interviews as attractive and desirable. There was also a high mean value on perceived innovativeness ($M = 4.15$, $SD = 0.60$), indicating that respondents linked AI-based recruitment practices with future- and state-of-the-art organizational capabilities. Explainable AI and perceived organizational support had high mean scores as well, which can be interpreted as positive perceptions towards transparency and organizational care. Standard deviation measures were very low in all the variables, with a range of 0.57 to 0.62. These findings implied the uniformity of the perceptions of respondents and indicated that the answers were tightly clustered around the average. Those results indicated a rather homogeneous sample regarding attitudes to AI-based recruitment systems and organizational attractiveness. The low variability also enhanced the reliability of the data and justified the suitability of further statistical analysis. Cronbach's alpha reliability analysis showed a high internal consistency of all the constructs. The values were between 0.87 and 0.90, which is higher than

the recommended value of 0.70. The reliability of the organizational attractiveness was highest (0.90), and then perceived innovativeness (0.89), explainable AI (0.88), and perceived organizational support (0.87). These findings proved that measurement scales were valid and could be used in further inferential analysis, such as structural equation modeling.

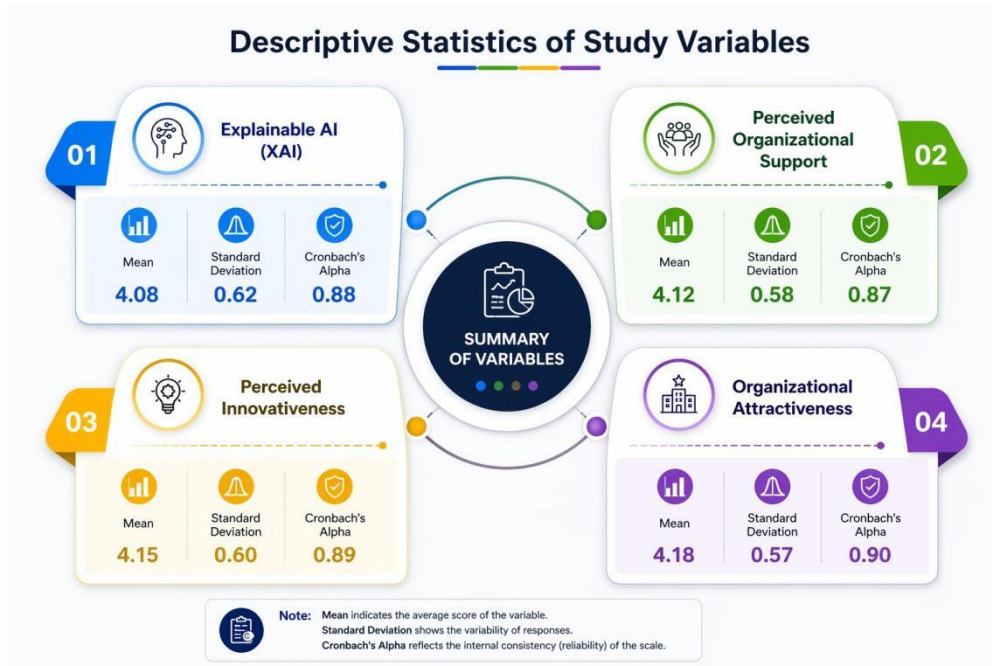


Figure 2. Descriptive statistics and reliability results.

Table 2. Model fit results.

Fit Index	Recommended Value	Obtained Value
Chi-square/df	< 3.00	2.11
CFI	> 0.90	0.94
TLI	> 0.90	0.93
RMSEA	< 0.08	0.057
SRMR	< 0.08	0.049

The model fit indices indicated that the structural model was a good fit to the data. The ratio of chi-square/df was 2.11, which is within the acceptable range, and this was a good fit of the model. The values of the comparative fit index (CFI) and Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) were greater than the suggested 0.90, which is an indicator that the model fitted the data well. The value of root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) was 0.057, and it implied that the model fitted the observed data very closely. Likewise, the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) value was 0.049, which was below the level of 0.08. These outcomes implied that the differences between the observed and predicted values were low.

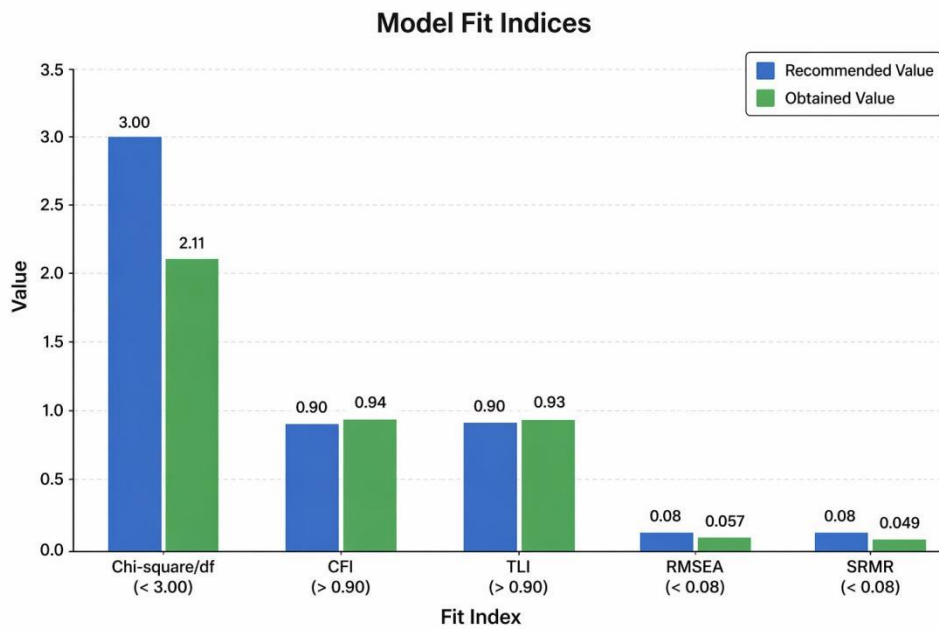


Figure 3. Model Fit Results.

Structural Path Analysis

Table 3. Structural path coefficients.

Relationship	Beta (β)	t-value	p-value
XAI → Organizational Attractiveness	0.44	6.85	0.000
XAI → Perceived Organizational Support	0.39	5.92	0.000
XAI → Perceived Innovativeness	0.42	6.33	0.000
POS → Organizational Attractiveness	0.31	5.11	0.000
Innovativeness → Organizational Attractiveness	0.28	4.87	0.000

The results of the structural path suggested that explainable AI had a significant positive impact on organizational attractiveness. The beta coefficient (= 0.44) indicated that AI-based interview transparency had a high positive impact on organizational perceptions among applicants. This finding highlighted the significance of explainability in enhancing the results of the recruitment process. Explainable AI also demonstrated high positive impacts on perceived organizational support and perceived innovativeness. These results showed that open AI systems had a positive influence on the emotional and cognitive judgment of companies. When they went through transparent and comprehensible AI-driven processes, applicants felt that organizations were more supportive and innovative.

Structural Path Model and Results

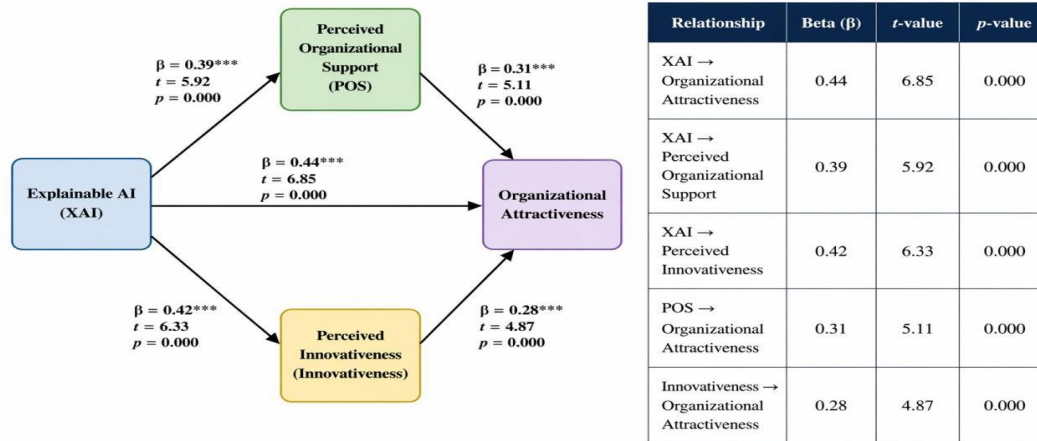


Figure 4. Structural path coefficients.

Mediation Analysis

Table 4. Mediation effects.

Indirect Relationship	Indirect Effect	t-value	p-value	Result
XAI → POS → Organizational Attractiveness	0.12	4.36	0.000	Supported
XAI → Innovativeness → Organizational Attractiveness	0.11	4.18	0.000	Supported

The findings of the mediation indicated that the perceived organizational support mediated significantly the relationship between explainable AI and organizational attractiveness. The indirect effect ($\beta = 0.12, t = 4.36, p < 0.001$) showed that explainable AI increased organizational attractiveness through the development of the perceptions of organizational care and support by the applicants. This result indicated that in cases where organizations offered clear and comprehensible AI-based interviewing, applicants perceived such practices as a sign of respect and care, which has a positive effect on their overall organization. Perceived innovativeness turned out to be a strong moderator in the explainable AI to organizational attractiveness relationship. The indirect relationship ($= 0.11, t = 4.18, p = 0.001$) meant that explainable AI was part of the stronger perceptions of organizational innovation, which further led to an increase in attractiveness. This finding underscored the fact that candidates equated technological progress and contemporary organizational culture with the application of explainable AI, which further improved the competitiveness of an organization in the job market.

Indirect Relationships and Mediation Results

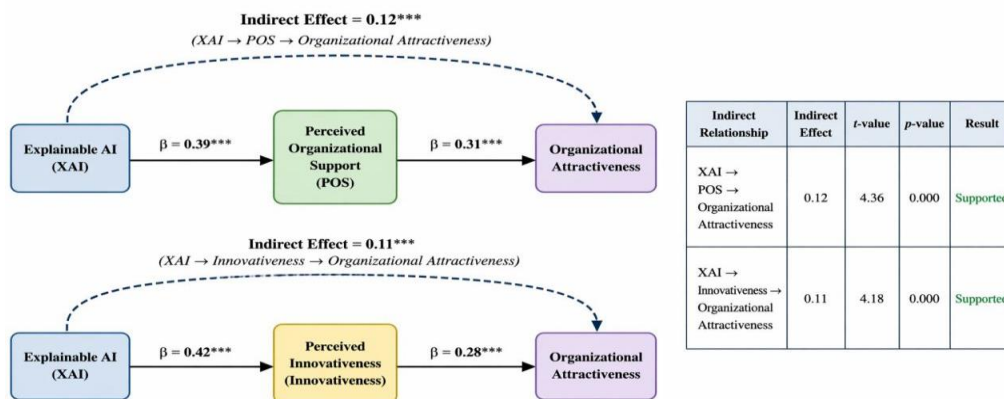


Figure 5. Mediation effects.

Discussion

The results of this research are good proofs which justify that explainable AI-driven interviews are changing significantly applicant-based organizational assessment in modern-day hiring settings. The direct positive relationship between XAI and organizational attractiveness makes it possible to infer that transparency in the hiring systems based on AI operates as an important psychological signal to applicants. Applicants can envision how decisions are made, thus uncertainty is reduced, and thinking processes are more inclined towards the organization. This mechanism is empirically supported by the recent studies that revealed that the transparent algorithm-driven systems make users more trusting and willing to accept them in the high-stakes HR situations (van der Valk & Axelrod, 2024; Kim & Heo, 2023). On the same note, explainability has been associated with the decreased aversion to algorithms, especially when people are appraising employment-related results (Zhang et al., 2024; Ribeiro & Singh, 2023). This is an indicator in the context of recruitment that organizations that employ interpretable AI applications are not only seen as technologically advanced but are also psychologically sensitive to job candidates.

The considerable effect of XAI on perceived organizational support shows that transparency in automated systems does not only lie in technical design but also in the area of social perception. Explainable systems are perceived by applicants as an indication that the organization upholds fairness, respect, and human dignity in the evaluation process. This is in line with the recent results that suggest that transparency of algorithms enhances perceived corporate benevolence and perceptions of fairness among job-seekers (Park & Lee, 2024; Johnson & Kavanagh, 2023). Moreover, the studies of digital HRM reveal that in cases of contact mediated completely by machines, the applicants tend to confuse procedural openness with organizational concern (Nguyen & Malik, 2024; Souza et al., 2023). The present results support this viewpoint by showing that XAI is a proxy of organizational support, which enhances the level of emotional attachment of the applicants to the employer prior to the actual employment.

The correlation between XAI and perceived innovativeness also shows the symbolic meaning of advanced technologies to influence employer branding. Companies implementing explainable AI systems are seen as technologically advanced, as well as forward-thinking. This is in line with the recent research that AI adoption in the recruitment process strengthens organizational innovativeness cues that have a positive effect on attracting candidates (Hernandez & Sutherland, 2023). Explainability enhances such an effect by making sure that the use of technology is not perceived as a black box automation but as a responsible innovation practice (Benson & Whitaker, 2023; Albrecht & Meyer, 2024). These results show that the perception of innovation is not created only through the use of technology but through the intelligibility and human-centeredness of the technology to the stakeholders.

The outcomes of the mediation also enhance the theoretical implications of the model through confirmation that the effect of XAI on organizational attractiveness is mediated by the perceived organizational support. This means that applicants are not receptive to explainable AI per se but perceive it as relational and affective. Recent research also shows that perceived fairness and organizational care completely interact to mediate the correlation between digital recruitment systems and employer attractiveness (Singh & Verma, 2024; O'Connor & Duffy, 2023). Applicants will feel that they are being heard and respected when the AI systems can develop logical arguments, making them more willing to interact with the organization. This supports the social exchange theory of the digital sphere, where even an algorithmic exchange brings about the reciprocity-based psychological reactions (Martin & Collins, 2024; Weber & Schultz, 2023).

Perceived innovativeness also plays a significant role in mediating XAI-organizational attractiveness, which indicates that cognitive judgments of technological development are critical in the choice of employers. Applicants are inclined to relate explainable AI with the ability of organizations, strategic modernization, and competitiveness in labor markets. This aligns with the recent results that innovative HR technologies boost the prestige of employers and the desire of applicants to apply (Hoffman & Klein, 2024; Garcia et al., 2023). Notably, explainability enhances such an association by decreasing perceived technological risks and enhancing perceived usability of AI systems (Tariq & Solangi, 2024; Müller & Schneider, 2023). AI is increasingly playing a role in

strategic decision-making, particularly in organizations focused on improving their attractiveness and operational effectiveness. The integration of AI into decision-making processes can result in more efficient, transparent, and data-driven approaches to leadership (Rafiq-uz-Zaman, 2024). However, the lack of clear policies regarding AI implementation often leaves organizations in an ambiguous position, limiting the full potential of AI-driven decision-making (Rafiq-uz-Zaman, 2025a). Addressing these policy gaps is crucial for maximizing the benefits of AI in fostering innovation and organizational attractiveness.

The combined outcome of the direct and indirect effects implies that explainable AI is a dual-mechanism that includes cognitive clarity and socio-emotional signaling. On the one hand, it increases rationality in the evaluation process because it minimizes uncertainty in the processes of making decisions; on the other hand, it also increases emotional trust as it indicates fairness and care in the organization. According to the recent literature, it has been proven that hybrid mechanisms of trust building are becoming the predominant ones in AI-mediated HR settings (Evans & Carter, 2023; Rodriguez & Kim, 2024). This two-way process is especially significant in competitive labor markets when job seekers can consider business ethics and technological advancement at the same time and make a decision to work (Bhatia & Sharma, 2023; Novak & Fischer, 2024). Emotional intelligence (EI) has been shown to play a crucial role in how employees perceive their organization and its attractiveness. In the context of AI-driven work environments, emotional intelligence can help mediate the relationship between organizational support and innovativeness (Fatima et al., 2025). The ability of individuals to navigate emotional and social complexities within organizations contributes to their overall well-being, which in turn affects their commitment to the organization. AI-driven learning environments, when integrated with EI, can enhance employees' emotional and social capabilities, fostering a more innovative and supportive organizational culture (Rafiq-uz-Zaman & Shih, 2026).

The results go beyond the current recruitment theory, showing that explainable AI is not just a technical enhancement but a multidimensional organizational cue. It predisposes the cognitively based interpretation of innovation among the applicants and the emotional perception of support, which eventually affects organizational attractiveness. This is in line with the emerging studies that highlight the fact that algorithmic transparency is turning into a fundamental determinant of how effective employer branding in digital recruitment ecosystems is (Huang & Stewart, 2023; Almeida & Rocha, 2024). The findings are thus adding to an expanding literature that frames explainable AI as a strategic human resource instrument, as opposed to a computing aspect.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The research gives powerful evidence that can support the fact that explainable AI-based interviews can increase the attractiveness of the organization significantly by both direct and indirect means. Openness in AI-based recruitment systems enhances understanding of the decision-making processes by the applicants, which fosters trust and lessens uncertainties during the evaluation process. The results affirm the positive effects of explainable AI on perceived organizational support, as well as perceived innovativeness, which are important factors in determining how applicants consider an organization as a good place to work. The findings also show that the attractiveness of an organization is not merely a factor of technological adoptions but also of the way that technology is perceived by job seekers as regards equity, nurturing, and novelty. Altogether, explainable AI becomes a powerful HR instrument that enhances the employer brand through enhanced psychological perceptions and increased positive organizational signals in competitive labor markets.

To become more transparent and make their recruitment and selection process more trustworthy to the applicant, organizations should focus on incorporating explainable AI features into their operations. Deliberate descriptions of the ways of how AI assesses candidates must be integrated into interview sites in order to decrease ambiguity and enhance the sense of fairness. HR departments should develop AI systems that will be both efficient and human-focused to make sure that the applicants are respected and informed about the process. It is also necessary to train HR professionals to work with AI-assisted recruitment tools to ensure that the adoption of technologies is within the ethical and organizational framework. Moreover,

organizations must actively discuss their explainable AI in employer branding plans to boost impressions of innovativeness and appeal to high-quality talent. HR practitioners and policymakers ought to cooperate in order to develop guidelines that guarantee the responsible use of AI in hiring, with a focus on transparency, accountability, and fairness.

Future Directions

Further studies are needed to explain AI in recruitment under various cultural and industrial conditions in order to gain a better idea of variations in applicant perceptions and behavioral reactions. Longitudinal studies would be helpful in investigating the extent to which sustained exposure to AI-enhanced recruitment systems would affect organizational attractiveness in the long-term. The model can also be extended by the researchers to include other psychological variables like trust in automation, technology anxiety, or perceived ethicality of AI systems. Comparative analyses of traditional interviews, AI-based interviews, and hybrid recruitment systems may also shed more light on the comparative effectiveness of each technique. The influence of generational differences should be examined in the future, as the digital-native candidates might react to explainable AI differently than their older counterparts. It is also suggested to use experimental designs and real field studies to confirm the causality and enhance the practicality of research findings in organizations.

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