

# RECRUITMENT DURING COVID -19 PANDEMIC ERA IN INDONESIA : BENEFITS AND DRAWBACKS

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## Abstract

**Online recruitment continues to attract many organizations as Covid-19 Pandemic has hampered many countries in the past two years. On the other hand, the advent of information and communication technology has become an enabler for online recruitment in many organizations. This paper analyzes benefit and drawback of online recruitment technology based on some prominent studies in many countries. In addition, this paper explores some lessons learned obtained from several early adopters in Indonesia to optimize employee recruitment process in their organizations. This study findings from several early adopter in regards to online recruitment technology in Indonesia showed some promising positive lessons learned which suggested strong potential to adopt this technology in the near future. Usefulness and ease of use of online recruitment system become the key factors of adopting online recruitment technology in many organizations in Indonesia for the year to come. Several drawbacks also have been experienced by the early adopters which represented some typical technical and cultural aspects which need to be addressed by online recruitment technology adopters in Indonesia**

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the past two decades many organizations have widely recognized the significant contribution of employees including their knowledge, skills, and abilities to organizational performance (Breaugh & Starke, 2000). Many organizations tried many efforts to attract the best applicants with their skills and knowledges that suits the available jobs. The advent of information and communication technology in the past decade has made employee selection and recruitment processes evolve rapidly in adopting variety of advanced technologies including social network analytics (Dragusha & Prenaj, 2021), recommender system (Freire & de Castro, 2021), machine learning (Grzadzilewska, 2021), and artificial intelligence (Umachandran, 2021).

In many references the term online recruitment and e-recruitment are often used interchangeably. Smythe, Grotlüschen, and Buddeberg (Smythe et al., 2021), for example, use the term e-recruitment which refers to the “*use of web-based technologies to automate (to varying degrees) the processes of attracting, reviewing and selecting job applicants*” proposed by (Chapman & Webster, 2003). In contrast, (Ghosh et al., 2021) used the term online recruitment refers to various internet-based technologies to support recruitment. Despite the terms, what makes online recruitment of e-recruitment differs from the prominent conventional recruitment is the use of automatic facilities which is “*a wide range of technologies that reduce human intervention in processes*” (Wikipedia, 2021). Those automatic facilities aim to reduce repetitive human activities to complete the predetermined human recruitment tasks.

The Covid-19 pandemic in the past two years has forced many societies and organizations to turn into technologies which become a vital medium for various services including recruitment and employment. E-recruitment or online recruitment system might be one of those technologies which has gained wide research attention in the past several years as many governments restrict their citizens mobility. According to many prominent studies there are some indications that the online recruitment system has successfully facilitated many job applicants with human resource (HR) department of many organizations during recruitment processes. There are some indications that this new approach also has given human resource department of many organizations some benefits from an optimized and systematic employee recruitment process. Further studies suggested that application of online recruitment has become the first step for an organization in creating a competitive advantage in human capital (Chapman et al., 2005). On the other hand, technology adoption for online recruitment also carries variety of costs such as recruitment fraud (Ghosh et al., 2021).

Despite many studies have been reported on online recruitment that discuss the results and challenges experiencing by particular public or government own organization or corporate from adopting this technology, little have been said on online recruitment adoption that gives a comprehensive view about benefits and drawback of this technology in Indonesia context. This condition makes it difficult for new human resource management researchers or professionals to evaluate feasibility of online recruitment technology adoption in Indonesia. In addition, none of these study reports presents a complete view of the online recruitment adoption landscape in Indonesia to obtain actionable insights on research efforts and current practices of online recruitment.

This study aims to fill in the above shortcoming in online recruitment landscape in Indonesia. In attempts to answer these objective, this paper will be focusing on two research questions: (i) what are advantages of online recruitment applications, and (ii) what are disadvantages of online recruitment applications.

The remaining of this paper is organized as follows. Section 2 will explore background of this study. Section 3 describe research method of this study. Section 4 will elaborate and critically analyze some previous study reports on online recruitment adoption in many countries and Indonesia. Finally, Section 5 will conclude this paper.

## **II. BACKGROUND**

### **2.1. Online Recruitment**

Recruitment is a term refers to a process of discovering or selecting and hiring or best qualified candidate from inside or the process by which organizations locate and attract individuals to fill job vacancies (Anwar & Surarchith, 2015). Many studies showed some evidences that recruitment is an important part of HR management with the main focus to acquire intellectual capital, which is one of the company's most important capital, involving various all the organization's practices and activities (Oksanen, 2018). Hamza (Hamza et al., 2021) suggests that the main role of recruitment are discovering or selecting and hiring or best qualified candidate from inside or outside of organization for a job opportunity.

The conventional recruitment process which has been practiced in an organizations typically consist of contacting several peoples, engaging executive search, or using various ads in newspapers. The process is often repeated should there be any major changes in organization

including change of policy, location, business, ownership, and employees' resignation. The recruitment is implemented typically to add, maintain, or adapt to the organization structure and human resource planning (Tyson, 2014). As reported by (Barber, 1998) the main processes of recruitment are (i) certain recruitment activities may influence the number and type of individuals who apply for a position, (ii) certain activities may affect whether job applicants withdraw during the recruitment process, and (iii) certain recruitment actions.

Online recruitment also known as e-recruitment or internet recruiting is a term that has raised popularity in the past decade. The term refers to the use various internet-based solutions in various recruitment steps which previously were implemented manually. For example, online advertising, job listings, sourcing or hiring candidates using social media and company websites. Many studies have been reported on online recruitment. For Example, (Freire & de Castro, 2021) analyzed some changes that arises in recruitment process such as the use of recommender system applications in online recruitment. Another study reported by (Grzkadzielewska, 2021) explored application of machine learning approach in online recruitment.

## 2.2. Scope of the Study

Most of the study reports discuss in this paper are prominent reports on online recruitment in many countries which are used as comparison to the study report on the technology adoption in many organization or corporation in Indonesia without limiting to particular business domains. However, study report on online recruitment adoption in Indonesia context which comparable to a study report in other countries might not be available.

### **III. RESEARCH METHOD**

In order to answer the above research questions, we conducted a systematic analysis using qualitative method toward a number of previous study reports related to online recruitment process. Various perspective on recruitment process and its main objectives are discussed. Some of these reports related to online recruitment are then critically analyzed in order to obtain both positive and negative lesson learned from the technology adoption. Lastly, a comprehensive analysis is conducted to a number of the online recruitment study reports in Indonesia in the past decade especially to those studies involving government agencies or large corporations. Special attention are given to their lesson learned as it might become learning transferred to many organization and corporation in Indonesia as early adopters of this technology.

### **IV. DESCRIPTION**

#### 4.1. Online Recruitment Technology Adoption in Many Countries

Several technologies have undoubtedly redesigned recruitment process in the past decade. Many processes of human resource recruitment has been affected significantly by technology (Lee, 2011). A recent study by (Nikolaou, 2021) suggested a variety of technologies that an organization can get advantage from to leverage recruitment process can be categorized broadly into several types mainly:

- 1) Technologies in attraction comprises of various technologies aim to attract and encourage an increasing number of applicants to apply for the vacant job in the organization. Some

technologies which have been widely used, among others, are: internet-based applications (Bartram, 2000) and job forum website (Nikolaou, 2021).

- 2) Technology in screening comprises of various technologies aim to select candidates' available information on the subject of their appropriateness for the position. The popularity of internet and social media have transformed the screening landscape. Cybervetting is a term refers to the practice of researching potential candidates online (Nikolaou, 2021). A recruiter filters some job candidates collected from internet searches engines and social media profiles such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, and Twitter as the key method to find the right match for an open position. However, there is a drawback of using this technology. As the popularity of social media usage continue to increase so is hoax news, fake news, misinformation, and disinformation which produce unusable information for the recruiters. In addition, some researchers argue that cybervetting might present unfairness and moral judgment into the hiring process.
- 3) Technology in selection comprises of various technologies aim to match organizational requirements with the skills and qualifications of the job applicants by choosing individuals whose qualifications relevant to fill a vacant jobs. According to (Nikolaou, 2021) two technologies that recently has been widely adopted in online recruitment are: (i) asynchronous interview which is a type of interview where candidates are requested to record their answers to each questions and submit their response using an on-line application. The recruiters can interview several candidates at the same time without being present. Afterwards, multiple reviewers based on the records might rate the interview to jointly reach to an agreement; and (ii) gamification which is the use of game elements in non-gaming contexts. Selection process using gamification involving conversion an existing selection method into a gamifying version. For example: during personality test or a situational judgment test, candidates play a game like application that creates gamified or virtual environment with questions that candidates have to answer. The use of gamification in the selection process might promote fun, immersion, openness, challenge, and interaction. Based on a research, (Nikolaou, 2011) argues that the main drawbacks of digital interview are mainly lack of a personal and face-to-face interaction with the interviewer.
- 4) Technology in on-boarding comprises of various technologies aim to assist new employee quick adjustment in their new roles in organization environment such as formal or informal training, on-the-job training, and coaching-mentoring. Nikolaou (Nikolaou, 2021) argues that the human resource management will gain full benefit of using technology in the on-boarding process if they use the technology effectively.

According to (Oksanen, 2018) the main goal for using technology in recruitment process is to achieve quick, effective and cost-efficient ways of finding potential employees. These findings validated the earlier study results reported by (Panayotopoulou et al., 2007) who concluded that online recruitment has brought considerable benefits in terms of cost, time, candidate pool and quality of response of the candidates. These findings are also inline with several study results on technology acceptance in recruitment process as reported by (Tong, 2009) and (Kumar & Priyanka, 2014).

Although HR managers in many organizations tend to resists when online recruitment technology appears, technology in recruitment gradually is accepted and HR manager can adapt to the

technology. Based on a study in Finland, (Noe et al., 2006) concluded that technology adaptation needs a quite transition periods until the technologies in recruitment process progressively shows an impact in management of HR. Interestingly, some evidences showed that most technology-oriented and innovative organizations are most willing to take full benefit of the recruitment technologies. Some evidences showed that the main purposes of adopting online recruitment technology in an organization are mainly to accelerate and enhance the recruitment process. A study by (Noe et al., 2006) suggested that online recruitment lessens some manual and repetitive works from recruitment process so that the recruiters have more time for addressing human interaction with both job applicants as well as internal members of the organization. The main objective is to spend more time in candidate screening and communication with the applicants to obtain qualified candidates from the recruitment process.

#### 4.2. Online Recruitment Technology Adoption in Indonesia

According to (Bondarouk et al., 2016) Indonesia is an emerging economy country with strong potential to adopt online recruitment technology due to several reasons, among others, are Indonesia is one of populous country and has adopted information technology in many areas. Several studies on online recruitment in Indonesia have been reported. Several lessons learned from online recruitment technology adoption in Indonesia in relation to the main recruitment processes can be summarized into a table as follows.

Table 1. Summary of Lesson Learned from Online Recruitment in Indonesia

<b>Author(s)</b>	<b>Study Object</b>	<b>Positive Lesson Learned</b>	<b>Negative Lesson Learned</b>
(Husna et al., 2021)	PT. Es Teh Indonesia Makmur (tea beverage company), West Java	Increase coverage of job advertisement, increase recruitment process efficiency and increase number of job applicants.	Not available
(Nanda S, 2017)	PT. Inka (Government owned train factory company in East Java)	Increase number of candidates who applied for a vacant job positions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting false information from some job applicants,</li> <li>• High load of application submitted online caused computer server problem.</li> </ul>
(Bondarouk et al., 2016)	Subsidiaries of MNC group in Jakarta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment process becomes more efficient,</li> <li>• Reducing paperworks,</li> <li>• Reducing bureaucratic workload.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impossible to limit job advertisement to Indonesia only,</li> <li>• Some applicants have problem with English language.</li> </ul>
(Anggadwita, 2013)	PT. KAI (Government	The role of organization leadership, open culture, and	Not available

	owned railway operator in Indonesia)	commitment of all staff levels become the key factor of online recruitment technology adoption.	
(Arismunandar et al., 2018)	Recruitment process of school principal in South Sulawesi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase objectivity, transparency, and accountability of candidate selection process.</li> <li>• It is easy to use.</li> </ul>	Not available
(Trisnadewi & Nasri, 2021)	Teacher recruitment process in Lombok, West Nusatenggara Province, Indonesia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online recruitment has sufficiently capture professional teachers in science subjects.</li> <li>• selection and recruitment system is transparent</li> </ul>	Online recruitment does not measure teacher proficiency in teaching process in the classroom
(Istiqomah & Atsarina, 2019)	Civil Servant recruitment in Indonesia for fiscal year 2018.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid bias in the evaluation and selection of candidate interviews.</li> <li>• Increase efficiency.</li> </ul>	Online recruitment can not eliminate reviewer subjectivity during interview selection stage
(Suswanta et al., 2022)	Digital Civil Servant Recruitment Model	<p>Online recruitment brings about some advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment process is more efficient.</li> <li>• It is easier to reach out a wider audiens.</li> <li>• It reduces labor costs.</li> <li>• It is easier to conduct interviews and process the relevant documents.</li> </ul>	<p>Some advantages are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It will be difficult for participants who do not have adequate internet access.</li> <li>• It require a computer server that support large volume data processing.</li> <li>• It needs more systematic preparation and socialization.</li> </ul>

Some interesting findings is that the key factors contributed to early online recruitment technology adoption in Indonesia are mainly usefulness and easy of use which are inline with study findings reported by (Kumar & Priyanka, 2014). Many HR Management in several organization or corporation as the early adopter focused more on some returns from adopting this technology in terms of recruitment process accountability, efficiency, transparency, high candidate quality, and repetitive manual work reductions. However, many technical aspects might hamper benefits of this technology such as required sufficiently informative socialization about the recruitment process to the target candidates, limited internet access availability from job candidate side, and inadequate performance of computer servers used by the organizations or corporation to process work load in each step of recruitment processes. Those lesson learned are very important for any other organization or corporation in Indonesia to maximize benefit of the online recruitment

technology. In addition, there are some nontechnical drawbacks have been experienced by several early adopter organizations are including: (i) borderless access of internet often become a challenge to advertise available jobs for only Indonesian, (ii) literacy of information technology can limit the reaching out job advertisement to only young generation, (iii) online recruitment system localization become an issue as many job applicant experienced difficulty to understand job advertisement posted in English, (iv) limited capacity of computer facility used by the organization to process application submitted online hamper online recruitment effectiveness. The future of this study is to do some qualitative and quantitative study involving government agencies in central or local government of Indonesia as participating organizations and regulator in online recruitment application in Indonesia.

## V. CONCLUSION

Indonesia experienced early stage in online recruitment technology adoption but show strong potential to adopt this technology in the near future. Usefulness and easy of use of online recruitment system become the key factors of adopting online recruitment technology in many organization in Indonesia for the year to come. Several key success factors for successful adoption of online recruitment, among others, are: company/ organization leadership, open culture, and commitment of all staff levels become the key factor of online recruitment technology adoption. Several drawbacks have been experienced by several early adopter organizations which need to be part of consideration by HR management in many potential organizations or corporations in Indonesia before deciding to adopt this technology. The future of this study is to do some qualitative and quantitative study involving government agencies in Indonesia as participating organizations and regulator in online recruitment application in Indonesia.

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