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## Organizational Justice and Performance in Saudi Public Entities: E-Recruitment as a Mediator and AI Trust as a Moderator

Dr. Saleh Hamed Hemdan Alharbi

Associate Professor, Department of Management, Faculty of Business Administration,  
University of Tabuk, Tabuk, Saudi Arabia

Dr. Mohammed Saad Alshamrani

Assistant Professor, Department of Management and Law  
King Fahd Naval College

### Abstract:

This study investigates the relationships between organizational justice, e-recruitment, and organizational performance in public sector entities, with a focus on the moderating role of trust in artificial intelligence (AI). As public organizations increasingly adopt digital recruitment processes, understanding the impact of perceived fairness and AI trust on recruitment effectiveness and organizational outcomes is critical. Data was collected from a sample of 353 academic and administrative staff in Saudi public universities and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with SMART-PLS. The results reveal a significant positive relationship between organizational justice and both e-recruitment effectiveness and organizational performance. Additionally, e-recruitment positively influences performance, highlighting its potential to streamline hiring and attract qualified candidates. AI trust emerged as a significant moderator, strengthening the relationship between organizational justice and e-recruitment effectiveness. These findings underscore the importance of fairness in recruitment processes, enhanced by trust in AI tools, to optimize performance in public sector organizations. The study provides valuable insights for HR practitioners and policymakers, advocating for balanced integration of justice, technology, and trust to foster sustainable organizational growth.

**Keywords:** Organizational Justice, E-Recruitment, Organizational Performance, Artificial Intelligence Trust, Public Sector.

العدالة التنظيمية والأداء في المؤسسات العامة السعودية: دراسة عن الوساطة التي يقدمها

التوظيف الإلكتروني والتأثير المعدل للثقة في الذكاء الاصطناعي

د. محمد بن سعد الشمراني

د. صالح بن حامد حمدان الحربي

الأستاذ المساعد بقسم الإدارة والقانون

الأستاذ المشارك بقسم الإدارة،

كلية الملك فهد البحرية

كلية إدارة الأعمال جامعة تبوك

الملخص:

تبحث هذه الدراسة في العلاقات بين العدالة التنظيمية، والتوظيف الإلكتروني، وأداء المنظمات في الجهات الحكومية، مع التركيز على دور الثقة في الذكاء الاصطناعي كعامل وسيط. ومع تزايد اعتماد المنظمات الحكومية على عمليات التوظيف الرقمية، يصبح من الضروري فهم تأثير تصور العدالة وثقة الأفراد في الذكاء الاصطناعي على فعالية التوظيف والنتائج التنظيمية. تم جمع البيانات من عينة مكونة من 353 من الكوادر الأكاديمية والإدارية في الجامعات السعودية الحكومية، وتم تحليلها باستخدام نمذجة المعادلات الهيكلية (SEM) عبر برنامج SMART-PLS. أظهرت النتائج وجود علاقة إيجابية وذات دلالة إحصائية بين العدالة التنظيمية وكل من فعالية التوظيف الإلكتروني وأداء المنظمة. كما أظهر التوظيف الإلكتروني تأثيراً إيجابياً على الأداء، مما يبرز دوره في تحسين عمليات التوظيف وجذب المرشحين المؤهلين. ظهرت الثقة في الذكاء الاصطناعي كعامل وسيط مهم، يعزز العلاقة بين العدالة التنظيمية وفعالية التوظيف الإلكتروني. تؤكد هذه النتائج على أهمية العدالة في عمليات التوظيف، مدعومة بالثقة في أدوات الذكاء الاصطناعي، لتحسين الأداء في المنظمات الحكومية. وتقدم الدراسة رؤى قيمة لممارسي الموارد البشرية وصناع السياسات، مشددة على ضرورة التكامل المتوازن بين العدالة، والتكنولوجيا، والثقة لتعزيز النمو المستدام للمنظمات.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** العدالة التنظيمية؛ التوظيف الإلكتروني؛ الأداء التنظيمي؛ الثقة في الذكاء الاصطناعي؛ القطاع العام.

## 1. Introduction

Human Resource Management (HRM) is a strategic and core function in all organizations, especially in light of ongoing social, economic, and technological changes (Jatobá, 2019). HRM continuously evolves to align with the work environment, where employees are considered the most valuable assets. This leads organizations to establish suitable procedures that match their demands, allowing them to remain competitive and achieve their targets. All HR functions are important throughout the employee life cycle. The strong interconnection between HR functions means that employees' behavior and attitudes significantly influence the overall performance of their organizations. Therefore, recruiting and selecting employees is crucial, as it directly impacts job performance. Furthermore, the treatment of employees during the selection process and in the workplace also affects their job performance, which in turn influences the success of the organization (Hermanto & Srimulyani, 2022).

A fair recruitment and selection process contributes to employees' trust in the organization and its procedures (Iqbal & Ahmad, 2016). When employees perceive fairness, it positively affects their behavior and attitudes toward the organization (Rita & Caetano, 2014). In this context, organizational justice maximizes employee performance and ensures a cooperative workplace environment. When employees perceive fairness in organizational practices, it enhances their willingness to share knowledge and experiences, leading to higher organizational success and performance (Imamoglu et al., 2019). Moreover, recruitment plays a significant role in overall organizational performance. Organizations view human resources as key assets, and hiring the wrong candidates can negatively affect performance and task achievement. Recruitment is the process of generating a pool of qualified candidates for organizational job vacancies (Selase, 2018)). The recruitment of employees and the implementation of equitable practices are intrinsically connected to the overall performance of an organization. Organizations recognize the importance of employees as a source of success (Hitt et al., 2001), and recruitment aims to meet organizational needs by attracting qualified candidates (Price & McGillis 2014). Hence, recruitment and organizational justice are crucial dimensions that enable organizations to achieve high performance levels.

In recent years, information technology (IT) and the rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI) have become influential factors in HRM (Mikalef et al., 2023; Tambe et al., 2019). AI technology uses computers to perform tasks that traditionally require human intervention. Researchers have increasingly worked to integrate AI into HRM, exploring its benefits across various HR functions (Yadav & Kapoor 2024). While AI is recognized as a powerful tool in HRM, academic research in this area remains limited. Nedelkoska and Quintini (2018) highlight the need for more data on the pace of AI development and its potential risks, particularly for low-skilled jobs.

Although several studies have explored the relationship between organizational justice and organizational performance, this study seeks to fill the research gap by examining the impact of organizational justice on performance, with e-recruitment as a mediating factor and trust in AI as a moderating variable. This study aims to clarify the relationships among these concepts and contribute to the literature by offering a comprehensive framework.

The increasing integration of e-recruitment and AI in HRM processes has transformed how organizations attract and manage talent. However, there is limited research on how these technologies impact organizational performance, especially concerning organizational justice. While past studies have shown that recruitment processes and fairness influence organizational outcomes, the specific role of e-recruitment as a mediator and the moderating effect of AI trust remain underexplored. This study addresses this gap by investigating the effects of organizational justice and e-recruitment on organizational performance, while also examining how trust in AI moderates these relationships in public sector entities. The study questions as follows:

1. How does organizational justice influence organizational performance in public sector entities?
2. What is the mediating role of e-recruitment in the relationship between organizational justice and organizational performance?
3. To what extent does trust in AI moderate the relationship between e-recruitment and organizational performance?

#### 4. How do organizational justice, e-recruitment, and AI trust collectively impact the performance of public sector organizations?

This study contributes to the academic and practical understanding of HRM in several important ways. First, it addresses a research gap by exploring the relationships between organizational justice, e-recruitment, and organizational performance, with a specific focus on the moderating role of AI trust. The findings will provide valuable insights into how fairness in HR practices and the adoption of AI in recruitment can enhance organizational performance in public sector entities. Second, this study highlights the increasing importance of AI in HRM and offers a framework for understanding how trust in AI influences recruitment processes and organizational outcomes. Given the growing reliance on technology in HR, the findings of this study will provide practical guidance for public sector organizations on integrating AI tools in a way that fosters trust among employees and optimizes recruitment processes. Finally, the study contributes to the body of literature by providing empirical evidence on the interplay between organizational justice, e-recruitment, and AI trust, and their combined effects on organizational performance. This knowledge is crucial for HR professionals and policymakers seeking to improve organizational effectiveness and employee satisfaction in an era of rapid technological change.

This manuscript is structured as follows: the second section provides a thorough review of relevant literature to ground the hypotheses. The methodology section outlines the research design, data collection, and analytical approach. Results are then presented and discussed in relation to previous findings, offering insights into the practical implications of the study. The manuscript concludes with a discussion of limitations and directions for future research, ensuring a holistic understanding of the topic and its broader implications for HRM practices.

### 1. Literature review

#### 1.1. Organizational Justice

Organizational justice theory identifies three types of fairness: distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice (Greenberg, 1987). Distributive justice refers to the perceived fairness of the outcomes that employees receive. It is often understood as the ratio of outcome to input, where employees assess whether the rewards they receive are commensurate with their efforts and contributions. Procedural justice concerns the fairness of the processes used to allocate outcomes. For a process to be deemed fair, it should be consistent, accurate, and free from bias. Interactional justice relates to fairness in interpersonal interactions, focusing on the quality of treatment employees receive from others. This type of justice is associated with providing honest, specific, and respectful communication, especially when delivering information about decisions affecting employees (Colquitt et al., 2013).

Organizational justice has become a dominant framework for understanding fairness in the HRM literature, with these three types representing employees' perceptions of fairness regarding outcomes, the procedures used to determine these outcomes, and the quality of interpersonal treatment they receive (Otake-Ebede et al., 2016). Distributive justice is closely tied to equity theory (Adams, 1965), which posits that individuals feel treated fairly when the ratio of their inputs (e.g., effort) to outcomes (e.g., rewards, whether tangible or intangible) aligns with their expectations. Employees evaluate this ratio against certain standards to gauge the fairness of the rewards they receive based on their contributions.

Procedural justice encompasses the entire decision-making process, valuing consistency, freedom from bias, and reliance on accurate information (Konovsky, 2000). Fair procedures are highly valued not only as instrumental means to achieve fair outcomes but also because they offer employees a sense of control over decision-making processes, leading to more objective and trustworthy decisions.

Interactional justice addresses the social dimensions of organizational practices (Chou, 2009), focusing on how those in authority—such as managers responsible for benefits and rewards—treat employees. Bies & Moag (1986) described this concept as the quality of interpersonal treatment. Employees assess interactional justice by evaluating whether their supervisors treat them with respect and dignity, and they may perceive unfairness if treated disrespectfully or denied adequate explanations for decisions affecting them. Furthermore, Cropanzano et al., (2007) note that organizational justice can mitigate conflict, foster trust, enhance customer satisfaction, and ultimately lead to improved performance.

A substantial body of literature underscores the importance of justice expectations in shaping applicants' reactions to recruitment processes (McCarthy et al., 2017; Konradt et al., 2017; Gilliland, 1993). Applicants tend to evaluate not only the outcomes of the selection process but also the fairness of the process itself. Gilliland (1993) suggests that candidates use their experiences during the selection process to infer their potential employment situation, and these experiences subsequently influence their beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors.

Organizational justice is recognized as a foundational element in enhancing performance, trust, commitment, and customer satisfaction (Cropanzano et al., 2007). Greenberg (1987) refers to organizational justice as a basic requirement for organizational success, as perceptions of justice and equity significantly impact employee behavior and attitudes in the workplace. Research indicates that employees assess workplace fairness on multiple levels, which in turn affects their attitudes and behaviors and can lead to improved job performance. For example, a positive perception of fairness in the selection process has been shown to enhance job performance (Huy et al., 2020). Thus, we propose;

*H1: There is a positive relationship between organizational justice and employee performance.*

### **1.2. Organizational Performance**

Globalization has driven organizations to adopt modern structures and processes to remain competitive in the international market. This competitive environment pressures organizations to implement strategies that enhance their competitive advantage, including improving capital structure, adopting innovative technologies, enhancing product or service quality, and minimizing operational costs. Akdemir et al., (2010) emphasize that human factors are the most important issue in high-performance organizations. Hamza et al. (2021) further elaborate that performance is a major multidimensional construct aimed at achieving results and has a strong link to the strategic goals of an organization. Performance is defined as the degree of achievement of the mission at the workplace that builds up an employee's job.

Since the 1990s, organizations have increasingly recognized human resources as a critical source of competitive advantage (Hitt et al., 2001). A substantial body of research examines how human resource management (HRM) impacts organizational performance. Björkman and Xiucheng (2002) found that firms that effectively recruit, develop, and motivate employees can achieve significant competitive advantages. Recruiting qualified candidates is, therefore, a core function of HRM, and it plays a crucial role in sustaining high organizational performance. According to Akdemir et al., (2010), HRM departments fulfill a vital role in ensuring high performance by attracting and recruiting qualified candidates for job vacancies. Similarly, Price and McGillis (2014) note that the primary objective of recruitment is to meet an organization's needs by securing a pool of qualified candidates.

In recent years, technology has also become a significant contributor to improving organizational performance. Yadav & Kapoor (2024) state that AI has shown great potential in changing HRM landscapes. One of AI's major impacts is its ability to reduce operational costs. For example, in 2017, IBM reported saving \$107 million in operational costs by integrating AI into its operations. Increased adoption of AI is also believed to have a positive influence on HRM practices. Recent studies highlight AI's potential to enhance HRM performance by automating and optimizing HR functions (Yadav & Kapoor 2024). Faliagka et al. (2014) suggest that AI provides substantial benefits to organizations by improving the performance of HRM processes. However, some researchers, such as Tambe et al., (2019), argue that many organizations are not yet ready to adopt AI in HRM due to a lack of expertise and necessary infrastructure.

### **1.3. Organizational Justice and E-Recruitment Effectiveness**

Organizational justice plays a vital role in shaping candidate perceptions, especially in the context of digital recruitment processes. As e-recruitment becomes a common tool for sourcing and hiring candidates, the fairness and transparency embedded within these processes have a direct impact on their effectiveness. Organizational justice, encompassing distributive, procedural, and interactional justice, can significantly enhance candidates' trust and engagement in e-recruitment platforms, leading to more effective recruitment outcomes (Gilliland, 1993; Chapman & Webster, 2003).

Distributive justice, the perceived fairness of outcomes, is particularly relevant in e-recruitment where digital tools often streamline the applicant pool and prioritize candidates based on algorithms.

When candidates perceive that the distribution of recruitment outcomes (e.g., selection for interviews or hiring decisions) is fair and unbiased, they are more likely to trust the e-recruitment process and view the organization positively (Colquitt et al., 2001). Research suggests that perceived fairness in recruitment decisions improves candidates' organizational attraction and enhances the credibility of e-recruitment platforms (Konradt et al., 2017). This aspect of justice helps foster a positive candidate experience, essential for the effectiveness of e-recruitment.

Procedural justice, which focuses on the fairness of processes used to make decisions, is essential in e-recruitment, where algorithms and automated processes often drive decision-making. Fair processes in e-recruitment should involve consistent, transparent, and unbiased criteria to avoid perceptions of favoritism or discrimination. Studies show that when applicants perceive e-recruitment procedures as fair, their trust in the organization increases, leading to higher levels of engagement with the application process and a greater likelihood of accepting job offers if selected (Walker et al., 2013). Transparency in how e-recruitment algorithms work, as well as offering clear feedback mechanisms, enhances procedural justice and encourages candidates to view the process as reliable and trustworthy (Bauer et al., 2006).

Interactional justice refers to the quality of interpersonal treatment candidates receive throughout the recruitment process, including respect, transparency, and communication. In an e-recruitment context, candidates often engage with virtual platforms and may have limited direct interaction with recruiters. However, research highlights the importance of ensuring respectful and clear communication, even in digital settings, as this can significantly influence candidates' perceptions of justice and willingness to continue with the application (Colquitt, 2001; Smither et al., 1993). Automated messages, timely updates, and clear responses to inquiries during e-recruitment processes can enhance interactional justice, making candidates feel valued and respected.

Organizational justice, when applied across all aspects of e-recruitment, can transform digital recruitment processes, making them more effective at attracting and retaining top talent. Studies indicate that a combination of fair outcomes, transparent procedures, and respectful communication leads to a positive overall experience in e-recruitment, increasing candidates' perception of organizational attractiveness (Gilliland, 1993; Bauer et al., 2006). By fostering justice in digital recruitment, organizations can strengthen their employer brand, improve candidate engagement, and enhance recruitment efficiency. These findings align with research suggesting that justice-oriented e-recruitment practices increase application rates, reduce dropout rates, and improve the quality of hires.

H2: There is a positive relationship between organizational justice and e-recruitment effectiveness.

#### **1.4. E-Recruitment process**

Electronic recruitment or "E-recruitment" refers to the use of internet-based platforms and digital technologies in the hiring process. It has become a transformative approach in human resource management, significantly altering how organizations attract, screen, and select candidates. The advantages of e-recruitment are well-documented; studies show that it offers increased efficiency, cost savings, and access to a larger, more diverse pool of candidates (Kapse et al., 2012). By automating various stages of recruitment, such as job posting, resume screening, and candidate shortlisting, e-recruitment allows HR departments to streamline their processes and improve the overall quality of hires (Holm, 2012). Moreover, e-recruitment has also enhanced candidate experience by simplifying the application process, enabling applicants to apply and communicate with potential employers more conveniently and transparently (Cappelli, 2001).

Recent research emphasizes the importance of e-recruitment as a strategic tool in public sector organizations, where traditional recruitment processes are often seen as slow and cumbersome (Dwivedi et al., 2019). E-recruitment enables public sector entities to modernize their hiring practices, thus allowing them to compete more effectively with private sector organizations in attracting top talent. Additionally, as the global workforce increasingly values digital convenience, e-recruitment is essential for meeting these expectations and building an employer brand that appeals to technologically savvy job seekers (Mamatha et al., 2022).

One critical factor in the effectiveness of e-recruitment is the incorporation of AI. AI-driven recruitment tools, such as chatbots, resume-screening algorithms, and predictive analytics, are becoming popular for their ability to make the recruitment process more precise and less time-consuming (Upadhyay & Khandelwal, 2018). These tools can quickly assess qualifications and predict potential job



performance, aiding recruiters in making more data-informed decisions (Chamorro-Premuzic et al., 2017). However, studies also highlight concerns related to AI in recruitment, particularly regarding issues of fairness, bias, and transparency. Trust in AI technology among HR professionals and candidates alike plays a crucial role in the adoption and effectiveness of AI-enhanced e-recruitment (Tambe et al., 2019).

While e-recruitment offers numerous benefits, it also poses challenges, especially in terms of maintaining fairness and transparency. Research indicates that a perceived lack of justice in e-recruitment processes can negatively impact candidate experience and organizational reputation (Lievens & Harris, 2003). Ensuring fairness in e-recruitment involves creating transparent selection criteria, providing clear communication with candidates, and using AI tools that adhere to ethical guidelines. Thus, the relationship between e-recruitment, organizational justice, and organizational performance is increasingly relevant as organizations navigate technological advancements in hiring. In public sector organizations, where the perception of fairness is paramount, understanding how e-recruitment can be both efficient and equitable is crucial for fostering trust, engagement, and organizational success.

Recruitment is a critical function for organizational success, as it plays a central role in securing the talent needed to drive performance and competitiveness (Walker et al., 2013). Organizations that effectively attract and retain top candidates gain a competitive advantage in the marketplace (Fathmath et al., 2021). Conversely, a poor approach to recruitment and selection can lead to increased absenteeism and turnover (Hawke, 2012). Recruitment remains an ongoing challenge for organizations, as rising competition for top talent often hinders employers' efforts to attract highly qualified individuals (Ployhart, 2006). As Ployhart et al., (2011) note, organizations that effectively address these recruitment challenges can gain a substantial advantage, as organizational performance is heavily influenced by human capital. Walker et al. (2013) emphasize that effective recruitment is crucial for the long-term survival of organizations. Therefore, we hypothesize:

*H3: There is a positive relationship between E. recruitment and organizational performance.*

### **1.5.Trust in Artificial Intelligence**

Trust in the workplace is fundamental, as it influences organizational dynamics and employee behavior. Workplace trust and its impact have been extensively studied, revealing that human trust is often influenced by factors like physical appearance (Duarte et al., 2012). Mayer et al., (1995) define trust as the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party. In recent years, the concept of trust has expanded to include trust in institutions and technologies, with specific distinctions between human-human trust and human-institution trust (Glikson & Woolley, 2020). Trust generally leads to positive behaviors, but in an era of rapid IT innovation, exploring users' trust in emerging technologies like AI has become essential.

With the rise of AI and data-driven technologies, researchers are increasingly focused on trust and ethical concerns surrounding AI applications in the workplace. Despite the global popularity of AI-based tools, a notable lack of trust in these technologies persists, especially regarding concerns over fairness, transparency, and ethical implications in workplace applications (Budhwar et al., 2022). This trust issue is particularly relevant as AI is expected to play a transformative role in HR practices, including recruitment (Fritts & Cabrera, 2021). Charlwood & Guenole (2022) suggest that AI has the potential to enhance fairness and efficiency in HR management, although it also risks undermining fairness if not carefully managed.

However, the use of AI in recruitment introduces potential biases, a common objection to algorithmic decision-making in hiring (Kleinberg et al., 2020; Fritts & Cabrera, 2021). Although empirical research on trust issues related to AI in recruitment is limited, these biases are of growing concern. The recruitment process typically involves three main stages, each of which could be affected by AI-driven bias (Fritts & Cabrera, 2021). In the first stage, sourcing candidates, AI-based tools can autonomously generate a pool of potential applicants, reducing the need for extensive advertising. In the second stage, screening, AI algorithms prioritize résumés and predict candidate suitability based on organizational needs and culture. During the final stages, such as interviews, AI tools may assist in



evaluating candidates' performances, potentially impacting final hiring decisions (Yadav & Kapoor 2024).

The complexity of AI technology poses additional challenges for recruitment. AI tools often require specialized IT knowledge, and their sophisticated features may limit accessibility and usability in recruitment processes (Wang et al., 2010). Empirical evidence suggests that this technological complexity can sometimes hinder, rather than help, the hiring process, leading some organizations to hesitate to fully integrate AI in recruitment (Yadav & Kapoor 2024). Consequently, the balance between AI's benefits and potential challenges underscores the importance of building trust in AI tools to ensure their effective application in HR.

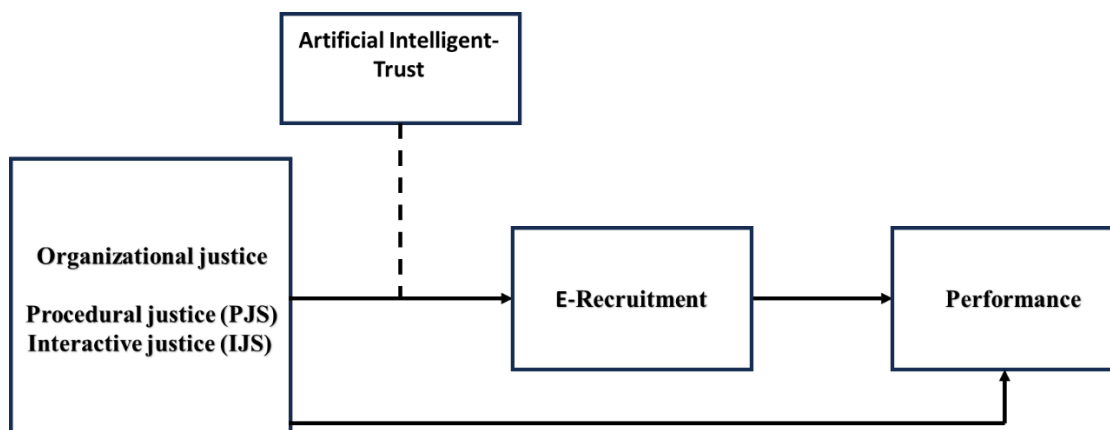
AI is increasingly being utilized across various industries to perform specific functions. As noted by Vrontis et al. (2022), AI-based tools are now being adopted by multiple departments within organizations. While many HR professionals recognize the potential benefits of AI, there remains some reluctance to fully integrate these technologies into HR practices (Palos-Sánchez et al., 2022). Yadav & Kapoor (2024) describe AI as a powerful tool in HRM, especially within recruitment, where it is one of the latest technological trends (Horodyski, 2023; Alam et al., 2020). Mikalef & Gupta (2021) suggest that AI in recruitment does not necessarily replace human roles but rather enhances human capabilities by automating time-consuming, repetitive, and complex tasks. AI technologies stand apart from other IT tools due to their intelligent features, allowing them to handle tasks that require adaptability and analysis (Rab-Kettler & Lehnervp 2019). Today, many recruiters employ AI tools in hiring, especially in stages of the process that can be efficiently managed without human intervention. For example, AI can streamline the selection of qualified applicants from a diverse pool, making it invaluable for automating repetitive recruitment tasks (Horodyski, 2023). So, we propose:

*H4: Artificial intelligence moderates the relationship between organizational justice and e-recruitment effectiveness.*

#### **The Proposed Framework**

The framework of this study is designed to explore the relationships between organizational justice, e-recruitment, and organizational performance, with AI trust serving as a moderating variable. Organizational justice, encompassing procedural and interactional justice, is hypothesized to directly influence both e-recruitment effectiveness and overall organizational performance, reflecting the idea that fair practices foster positive perceptions and engagement among employees. E-recruitment, as a central HRM function, is also posited to positively impact organizational performance by enhancing the efficiency and quality of the hiring process. The framework further integrates AI trust, proposing that employees' trust in AI technology strengthens the relationship between organizational justice and e-recruitment. This moderating effect of AI trust highlights how technological acceptance can amplify the perceived fairness and efficacy of recruitment processes. Overall, this conceptual framework provides a comprehensive structure to examine how justice, recruitment, and AI trust interact to shape organizational outcomes, offering insights into optimizing HRM practices in a technology-driven environment.

**Figure 1 The Proposed Formwork**



## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1. Research Design and Sampling**

This study adopts a quantitative research design to examine the relationships among organizational justice, e-recruitment, and organizational performance, with artificial intelligence (AI) trust as a moderating variable. Data was gathered from a sample of academic and administrative staff at public universities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Saudi public universities are rapidly expanding and play a significant role in contributing to the country's sustainable development goals under Saudi Vision 2030.

A simple random sampling technique was employed to ensure representative sampling. Data was collected from seven Saudi Universities through an electronic survey. A total of 500 questionnaires were sent out, of which 400 were returned. After quality review and verification of data completeness, 353 questionnaires were deemed valid for statistical analysis. The survey was pilot-tested for reliability using internal consistency, yielding satisfactory results.

### **2.2. Measures**

**Organizational Justice:** The study used the scale developed by Niehoff and Moorman (1993), focusing on two dimensions: procedural justice (six items) and interactional justice (nine items). Procedural justice assesses the formal procedures and their implementation, while interactional justice evaluates the fairness and transparency in interpersonal interactions at the workplace.

**Artificial Intelligence Trust:** AI trust was measured using an eight-item scale from Hoffman et al. (2018) to assess employees' trust in AI tools. Notably, one item (item 6) was negatively framed to enhance reliability.

**E-Recruitment:** The scale proposed by Baratelli and Colleoni (2022) was adapted, including five items that evaluate the accuracy, velocity, objectivity, reliability, and fairness of AI-assisted recruitment processes.

**Organizational Performance:** The contextual dimension of employee performance, based on Pradhan and Jena's (2017) scale, was used, encompassing ten items. All items across the scales utilized a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree").

### **2.3. Data Analysis**

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using Smart-PLS version 4 was applied for data analysis. SMART-PLS (Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling) is an advanced statistical tool widely used for complex data analysis, particularly in social sciences, business, and marketing research. It is designed to model complex relationships between observed and latent variables, making it especially useful for studies involving multiple constructs and hypotheses. Unlike traditional covariance-based SEM, SMART-PLS operates on a variance-based approach, allowing it to handle smaller sample sizes and non-normal data distributions effectively. It is also well-suited for exploratory research where the objective is to predict relationships or test theoretical frameworks. SMART-PLS version 4, utilized in this study, supports both measurement model evaluation through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural model testing to examine causal relationships. The software also includes various tools for assessing model fit and reliability, such as the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) and Normed Fit Index (NFI), which help ensure the robustness of the model. By employing SMART-PLS, this study benefits from a flexible and comprehensive analysis, providing insights into the relationships among organizational justice, e-recruitment, and performance, while also considering the moderating role of AI trust.

Model fit was assessed through the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) and the Normed Fit Index (NFI). The SRMR value of 0.06 and an NFI of 0.92 indicated a good model fit. Reliability values across constructs ranged from 0.88 to 0.95, meeting acceptable thresholds. The Fornell-Larcker criterion was applied to confirm discriminant validity, with average variance extracted (AVE) values above the 0.5 cutoff, ranging between 0.59 and 0.77. The variance inflation factor (VIF) for all constructs was below 5, indicating no multicollinearity issues.

### **2.4. Hypothesis Testing**

Hypothesis testing in this study was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) through SMART-PLS, employing a bootstrap resampling technique to assess the statistical significance of the proposed relationships. This approach enabled a robust evaluation of direct, mediating, and moderating

effects among the study variables: organizational justice, e-recruitment, and organizational performance, with AI trust as a moderator. Each hypothesis was tested for path significance by examining beta coefficients ( $\beta$ ), t-values, and p-values. Results indicated that most relationships were statistically significant, with strong t-values and p-values below the 0.05 threshold, supporting the study's hypotheses. Additionally, the moderating effect of AI trust was tested by centering variables and analyzing interaction effects, confirming AI trust's significant role in enhancing the relationship between organizational justice and e-recruitment. Overall, this hypothesis testing process provided empirical validation for the conceptual framework, allowing for a deeper understanding of the dynamics between justice, recruitment, and performance in public sector organizations.

### **3. Results of the analysis**

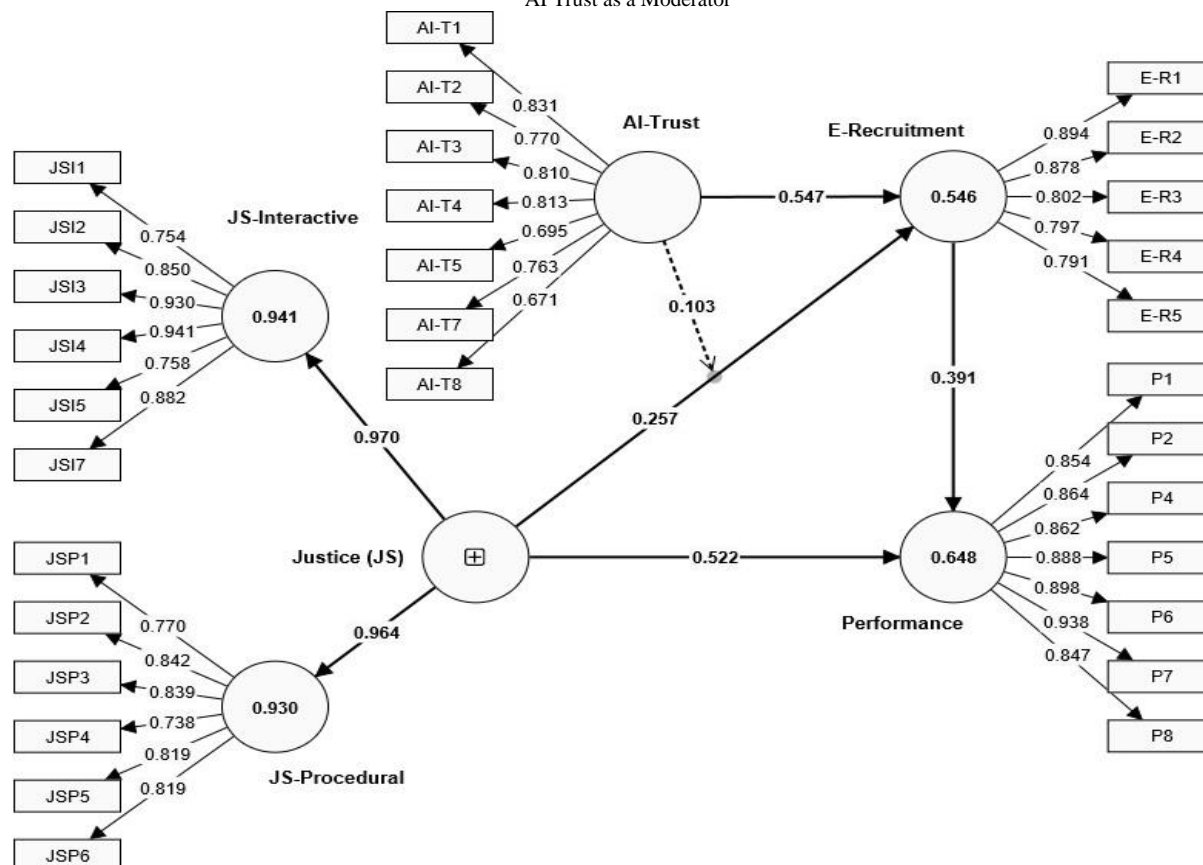
#### **3.1. Model Evaluation**

As illustrated in Figure 1 and Table 1, the model was analyzed in a single block, with all items initially included. Items with loadings below 0.6 were removed, resulting in the elimination of items JSI6, JSI8, JSI9, AI-T6, P3, P9, and P10. The first step in evaluating model fit was conducted using SMART-PLS version 4, which assesses the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) and the Normed Fit Index (NFI) (Hair, 2006). An SRMR value of 0.06 and an NFI of 0.92 indicated a good model fit, thus confirming the model's adequacy.

Reliability values for the constructs ranged between 0.88 and 0.95, satisfying reliability requirements. However, to fully assess construct validity, the Fornell–Larcker criterion was applied (Henseler et al., 2015). Discriminant validity was confirmed as each latent variable's square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) exceeded its correlations with other latent variables, with AVE values between 0.59 and 0.77, all above the minimum threshold of 0.5 (Morgan, 1989). Additionally, the lowest square root of the AVE (0.77) exceeded the highest correlation (0.75) in the correlation matrix, further supporting discriminant validity (Chin, 1998).

The  $R^2$  values for e-recruitment and performance were 0.546 and 0.648, respectively, indicating strong predictive power for the model (Henseler et al., 2009). As indicated in Table 2, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) for each variable was below 5, confirming the absence of multicollinearity concerns (Chin, 1998).

#### **Figure 2 The final model outputs**



**Table 1: The construct validity**

Construct	AVE	Composite reliability	Cronbach alpha	AI-Trust	E-Recruitment	JS-Interactive	JS-Procedural	Performance
AI-Trust	0.59	0.88	0.89	<b>0.77</b>				
E-Recruitment	0.70	0.89	0.89	0.75	<b>0.84</b>			
JS-Interactive	0.73	0.93	0.93	0.50	0.58	<b>0.84</b>		
JS-Procedural	0.65	0.89	0.90	0.52	0.57	0.75	<b>0.81</b>	
Performance	0.77	0.95	0.95	0.67	0.66	0.70	0.73	0.89
The model fit: SRMR=0.06, NFI=0.92								
AVE = Average Variance Extracted.								
$p \leq 0.05$ ; $p \leq 0.01$ ; $p \leq 0.001$								
Note: the correlations were significant at 0.001								

## 4.2. Hypothesis Testing Results

The hypotheses in this study were tested using SEM with SMART-PLS, applying a bootstrap resampling technique to examine the significance of each hypothesized path. The analysis evaluated the direct relationships between organizational justice, e-recruitment, and organizational performance, as well as the moderating role of AI trust in these relationships.

The results in Table 2. indicate a statistically significant positive relationship between organizational justice and performance, with a beta coefficient ( $\beta$ ) of 0.522, t-value of 12.482, and p-value  $\leq 0.001$ . This strong relationship supports H1: There is a positive relationship between organizational justice and organizational performance. Suggesting that perceptions of fairness in the organization are positively linked to enhanced performance.

The analysis showed a significant positive association between organizational justice and e-recruitment, with  $\beta = 0.257$ , t-value = 5.363, and p-value  $\leq 0.001$ , supporting H2: There is a positive relationship between organizational justice and e-recruitment effectiveness. This suggests that fair organizational practices enhance the effectiveness of e-recruitment, as fair treatment may increase trust and engagement in the recruitment process.

The structural path between e-recruitment and performance was also significant, with a  $\beta$  of 0.257, t-value of 5.363, and p-value  $\leq 0.001$ . This finding supports H3: There is a positive relationship between e-recruitment and organizational performance. Indicating that the use of e-recruitment processes contributes positively to organizational performance, likely by improving hiring efficiency and matching candidate fit.

To assess the moderating effect of AI trust, the interaction between organizational justice and AI trust was analyzed. The results demonstrated a significant moderating effect, with  $\beta = 0.103$ , t-value = 3.365, and p-value  $\leq 0.01$ . This supports H4: AI trust moderates the relationship between organizational justice and e-recruitment effectiveness. Confirming that higher trust in AI strengthens the positive relationship between organizational justice and e-recruitment. The moderation effect suggests that trust in AI tools enhances the perceived fairness and efficiency of e-recruitment practices.

These findings collectively support the conceptual framework, highlighting the importance of organizational justice and e-recruitment in driving performance, with AI trust playing a crucial moderating role in this dynamic.

**Table 2 Path coefficient**

<i>The relationship</i>	<i>VIF</i>	<i><math>\beta</math></i>	<i>T statistics</i>	<i>P values</i>	<i>Mark</i>
Justice (JS) -> E-Recruitment	1.34	0.257	5.363	0.000	Accepted
Justice (JS) -> Performance	1.42	0.522	12.482	0.000	Accepted
E-Recruitment -> Performance	1.40	0.391	7.529	0.000	Accepted
AI-Trust -> E-Recruitment	1.23	0.547	11.774	0.000	Accepted
AI-Trust x Justice (JS) -> E-Recruitment	1.07	0.103	3.365	0.002	Accepted

*p*≤0.05; *p*≤0.01; *p*≤0.001

#### 4. Discussion of the Results

The findings of this study provide important insights into how organizational justice, e-recruitment, and AI trust influence organizational performance. First, the strong positive relationship identified between organizational justice and performance supports previous research indicating that fair and transparent practices in the workplace foster a more committed and productive workforce. Employees who perceive fairness in decision-making and interactions are more likely to trust and invest in their roles, which, in turn, enhances organizational performance. This outcome aligns with Cropanzano et al., (2007), who observed that organizational justice can reduce conflict and increase satisfaction. In the context of public sector institutions, these findings underscore the need for fair practices to maintain high levels of employee motivation and retention, particularly as these entities often face unique challenges around transparency and accountability.

The positive association between e-recruitment and organizational performance highlights the effectiveness of technology-enhanced recruitment methods. As e-recruitment systems streamline the hiring process, organizations can attract and retain qualified candidates more efficiently, ultimately contributing to stronger organizational outcomes. This result aligns with the views of Walker et al. (2013), who emphasized that effective recruitment practices are crucial for long-term organizational success. Additionally, the automation and scalability offered by e-recruitment platforms allow organizations to reduce costs and save time in the hiring process, which is particularly advantageous in competitive labor markets. For public sector organizations, where recruitment processes can be lengthy and bureaucratic, adopting e-recruitment systems could be instrumental in improving responsiveness and ensuring that positions are filled by the most suitable candidates.

The study also confirmed a positive relationship between organizational justice and e-recruitment effectiveness, suggesting that fair practices can enhance the success of digital hiring initiatives. When organizations demonstrate fairness in recruitment processes, candidates are more likely to view these processes positively and consider the organization trustworthy and desirable. This finding is supported by the work of Konradt et al. (2017), who noted that perceptions of fairness influence applicants' attraction to an organization. By fostering a culture of justice, public sector organizations can increase candidate engagement and trust, making e-recruitment not only more effective but also more appealing to a broader pool of applicants. This is particularly relevant for organizations aiming to strengthen their employer brand and attract diverse talent in a competitive job market.

Lastly, the study found that AI trust significantly moderates the relationship between organizational justice and e-recruitment effectiveness, indicating that higher levels of trust in AI tools amplify the positive effects of justice on recruitment processes. This result suggests that as employees and applicants become more comfortable with AI-driven recruitment tools, their confidence in the fairness and reliability of these tools increases. Such trust can make AI-enhanced recruitment processes more acceptable and attractive, reducing resistance to technology adoption in HR functions. This aligns with findings by Vrontis et al. (2022), who emphasized the importance of AI trust in successful HR implementations. For public sector organizations, building trust in AI technologies is critical for reaping the benefits of digital transformation, as AI can optimize hiring, reduce biases, and promote fairness when used responsibly.

## **5. Conclusion**

This study provides a comprehensive analysis of the relationships between organizational justice, e-recruitment, and organizational performance, with AI trust playing a moderating role. The findings underscore the critical importance of fairness in organizational practices, as perceptions of organizational justice are strongly associated with improved employee performance. This highlights that when employees feel valued and treated fairly, their engagement and commitment to organizational goals significantly enhance, particularly in public sector entities where transparency and equity are paramount.

The study also emphasizes the effectiveness of e-recruitment systems in boosting organizational performance by streamlining the hiring process, attracting top talent, and reducing recruitment costs. As organizations increasingly adopt digital recruitment tools, e-recruitment serves as a vital component of modern HR practices, enabling public sector organizations to remain competitive and responsive in a dynamic job market.

Moreover, the positive relationship between organizational justice and e-recruitment effectiveness suggests that fair practices create a favorable environment for digital recruitment processes. When organizations incorporate fairness into their recruitment strategies, they can foster a strong employer brand and attract a diverse range of applicants, increasing the overall effectiveness of e-recruitment.

Finally, the role of AI trust as a moderator reveals that confidence in AI tools amplifies the positive impact of organizational justice on e-recruitment. This finding points to the importance of fostering trust in AI technologies to facilitate their successful adoption in HR functions. Public sector organizations, in particular, should focus on building trust and transparency in AI applications to maximize the benefits of digital transformation in recruitment and other HR practices. In summary, this study offers valuable

insights for both HR practitioners and policymakers, underscoring the need for fairness, technological innovation, and AI trust to achieve optimal organizational performance.

### **Practical Implications**

The findings of this study offer several practical implications for human resource management (HRM) practices, especially within public sector organizations. First, the strong link between organizational justice and performance underscores the need for HR departments to implement transparent and fair policies. Fairness in both procedural and interactional aspects can lead to greater employee engagement, satisfaction, and retention. HR managers should prioritize justice-oriented practices across recruitment, selection, and everyday operations to foster a positive work environment that supports high performance.

The positive impact of e-recruitment on organizational performance suggests that public sector organizations can benefit significantly from adopting digital recruitment platforms. E-recruitment streamlines the hiring process, improves efficiency, and enhances the organization's ability to attract a larger pool of qualified candidates. By adopting e-recruitment tools, HR departments can reduce costs associated with traditional recruitment methods and respond more quickly to staffing needs, ultimately improving organizational responsiveness and competitiveness.

The study also highlights the importance of integrating fairness into digital recruitment practices. Organizations that embed principles of organizational justice into e-recruitment are likely to attract better-qualified candidates who perceive the hiring process as transparent and equitable. For instance, setting clear criteria for AI-based assessments, offering candidates transparent feedback, and minimizing biases in AI algorithms can build trust in the recruitment process. HR leaders should ensure that e-recruitment systems reflect the organization's commitment to fair treatment to strengthen employer branding and appeal to diverse talent.

Lastly, the moderating role of AI trust suggests that public sector organizations should work on fostering confidence in AI-driven recruitment tools. Training employees on the benefits, ethical considerations, and operational aspects of AI tools can help demystify the technology and build trust among both employees and candidates. Public sector organizations should focus on promoting AI transparency and accountability to enhance trust, as this can lead to more successful AI adoption in HR processes. By balancing innovation with fairness and transparency, organizations can optimize their recruitment strategies and support sustainable, high-performance outcomes.

### **Limitations and Future Studies**

While this study provides valuable insights into the relationships between organizational justice, e-recruitment, AI trust, and organizational performance, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study focuses exclusively on public sector organizations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other contexts or private sector organizations. Future research should consider replicating this study across different industries and geographic regions to validate the results and assess the applicability of these findings in diverse organizational settings.

Second, the study relied solely on quantitative data gathered through surveys, which may not capture the full range of perspectives on justice, recruitment processes, and AI trust. Incorporating qualitative methods, such as interviews or focus groups, could provide a deeper understanding of employees' experiences and perceptions regarding AI in recruitment and organizational justice. Future studies could adopt a mixed-methods approach to explore nuanced insights that quantitative data alone might overlook.

Additionally, this study examines AI trust as a moderating factor but does not delve into other potential influences on the relationship between organizational justice, e-recruitment, and performance. For example, organizational culture, leadership styles, and employee demographics may also affect these dynamics. Future research could expand the framework by incorporating these variables to provide a more holistic view of the factors influencing organizational performance in relation to justice and technology adoption.

Finally, given the rapid advancement of AI technologies, future studies should explore the evolving role of AI in HR functions beyond recruitment, such as performance appraisals, training, and career development. Longitudinal research would be particularly valuable in tracking how trust in AI develops over time and how it impacts the long-term effectiveness of HR practices. By addressing these areas,



future research can continue to expand our understanding of the impact of justice, technology, and trust on organizational outcomes.

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