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INSTITUTIONAL PERCEPTION OF E-RECRUITMENT ADOPTION IN NEPAL: EVIDENCE FROM STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELING

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ABSTRACT. Awareness of the significance of adapting e-recruitment and applying various management strategies has increased in private corporate organizations. This study aims to investigate the institutional perception of e-recruitment adoption in Kathmandu valley, Nepal by employing the notion of Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Self-Disclosure Theory (SDT). Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and AMOS softwares are used to analyze data gathered from 286 Nepalese private organizations in Kathmandu valley between February 13 and March 10, 2022. The results indicate that private organizations in the Kathmandu valley are wary of completely embracing e-recruitment due to trust and privacy issues. This paper can be seen as an important message to Nepalese Human Resources sector, policymakers, the government and customers. Moreover, it has important theoretical implications explained from the standpoint of TAM and SDT theories. Practically, this is one of the latest attempts to assess and report on the breadth of e-recruitment adoption in Nepal's private sector.

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Introduction

Due to globalization, technological advancement and economic upheaval (Gobble, 2018), businesses today are becoming more complex and they operate in a more dynamic environment (Irabor & Okolie, 2017) using advanced IT-based technologies for different management tasks including employees communications (Davidavičiene et al., 2023; Roshchik et al., 2022). Technological advancement has influenced on all aspects of hiring, allowing job seekers to find employment in any part of the world (Nivlouei, 2014) and making it possible for employers to communicate with current and future working candidates in real time (Breugh, 2008). In 1994, the world's first internet technology company to perform web-based recruiting was moster.com (Breugh, 2008). Since then, recruiters have been using the internet to post job opportunities on websites and job boards, that allowed the rise of online recruitment strategies. This further encourages job seekers to take greater control of their online careers, which allows them far greater impact on their professional success than traditional recruitment methods do.

Internet and other electronic digital technologies are used to find, select, and hire qualified employees for a firm via e-recruitment process (Allden & Harris, 2013). Even gamification is sometimes employed to entice candidates and speed up the hiring process (Gupta et al., 2016). Currently, human resource management (HRM) systems are widely used by modern firms to manage everyday operations, covering all aspects of human resources, while social media profiles are increasingly being used to screen applicants (Reddy, 2019; Karacsony et al., 2020). Moreover, Hmoud & Laszlo (2019) revealed that due to their time-intensive and laborious nature, the conventional methods of recruiting a candidate are no longer successful. Thus, e-recruitment carries a huge potential as an alternative hiring strategy to the traditional recruitment process. However, privacy, confidentiality of data, and security are key concerns for both companies and employees because of which companies and industries must develop systems to protect their privacy and confidentiality (Bag et al., 2021).

In Nepal, there are still room for further adoption of globally accepted technologies, as the country's current technological landscape may not be on par with international standard (Rajbhandari et al., 2022). Finding a job that aligns with one's talents can be quite difficult task in today's competitive labor market (Goleman, 2003). It is worth noting that many industries in Nepal contain significant number of job vacancies, although locating these positions can be a bit challenging. In addition, it appears that candidates may have been unaware of job opportunities due to limited access to information channels (Lautrette et al., 2007). It has been noted by Yadav et al. (2020) that several enterprises in Nepal have utilized third-party job management systems, and there are also efforts by certain government and public-sector organizations to establish their own recruiting platforms for enhanced convenience and efficiency. While there are many social and cognitive factors that play a significant role in attracting candidates (Paudel et al., 2018; Sabir et al., 2019) being an important constituent of the employer value proposition (Bite & Konczos-Szombathelyi, 2020; Samoliuk et al., 2022),

it is crucial for online recruitment systems to effectively attract applicants (Poudel, 2018; Yadav et al., 2019, 2020).

Though, e-recruiting has many advantages and benefits, it is important to consider that firms may occasionally encounter challenges in acquiring high quality workers due to inherent unpredictability and potential discomfort associated with the declining availability of technological resources (Hadass, 2011; Jayabalan et al., 2019). In today's global economy, e-recruitment has become a valuable tool for organizations seeking to efficiently and strategically manage their hiring process. Furthermore, this study highlights a potential opportunity for improvement in communication and recruitment practices between the employees and employers. It suggests that there may be a need for a more comprehensive recruitment system within the industry verticals of Nepalese HR market. Additionally, the objective of this research is to examine the extent to which Kathmandu Valley institutions incorporating an e-recruitment system in their recruiting processes. Aside from that, e-recruitment research has been primarily conducted by a limited number of specialists in Nepal. One of the areas that could benefit from further exploration in Nepal's human resources market is the research on e-recruitment through the eye of technology acceptance and self-disclosure.

With further exploration and clarification through research this domain assists organizations. What are the prevailing opinions within the industry regarding the adoption and processes of e-recruitment? What are the barriers associated with implementing e-recruitment? What are the managerial solutions of e-recruitment from the perspective of the industry? In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of how institutions perceive the progress of e-recruitment across various recruiting platforms, conducting thorough research would be beneficial. Therefore, this research aims to explore the perspective of institutions in Kathmandu Valley regarding the adoption of e-recruitment. The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) has been utilized to explore the relationship between Perceived Ease of Use (EOU), Perceived Usefulness (PU), Privacy Concern (PC), Trust in Medium (TM), and Actual Use of Technology (UT). Additionally, the concepts of Social Trust (ST) and Self-Disclosure (SD) have been examined through the lens of Self-Disclosure theory.

This study has been divided into five different sections. Section 2 focuses on comprehensive literature review followed by a detailed exploration of the research methodology in Section 3. Section 4 provides an in-depth overview and analysis of the data that has been collected. Finally, Section 5 presents the conclusions derived from this study.

1. Methodological approach

Theoretical background and research model

This study incorporates the principles of Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and self-disclosure theory. TAM is an excellent fit for research in the fields of psychology & human resources, as it explores how users learn to accept and effectively use technology (Davis, 1989). Likewise, when it comes to utilizing technology, individuals' behavioral intentions play a crucial role. Consequently, the attitude towards the technology (Buil et al., 2020; Kashi & Zheng, 2013) has an influence on behavioral intention (BI), which pertains to consumers' acceptance and adoption of technological change. This is often influenced by the behavior of computer users who serve as role-models. TAM offers a comprehensive framework that helps companies assess their behavioral intention and attitude towards technology adoption. Likewise, self-disclosure theory is widely recognized phenomenon in the field of psychology that pertains to intentional sharing of information during interpersonal interactions (Krämer & Schäwel, 2020; Luo & Hancock, 2020). Similarly, it can be beneficial to facilitate the

establishment of identity through the creation of user profiles and exchange personal information, feelings/emotions, photos, and status updates that may involve sharing personal details with others. This act of sharing information about oneself with others can be seen as a social phenomenon (Sharif et al., 2021). The self-disclosure theory provides a perspective on the importance of sharing personal information with others in order to foster trust and promote the acceptance of technology in the online recruiting process.

Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework that examines perceptions regarding the adoption of e-recruitment. It focuses on factors such as perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, privacy concerns, trust in the medium, social trust, self-disclosure behavior, and actual use of technology. TAM helps to predict the future technology adoption decisions made by users. As per Asiaei and Nor (2019) & Carter and Bélanger (2005), it appears that a computer's acceptability is influenced by the perceived usefulness and ease of use of the technology.

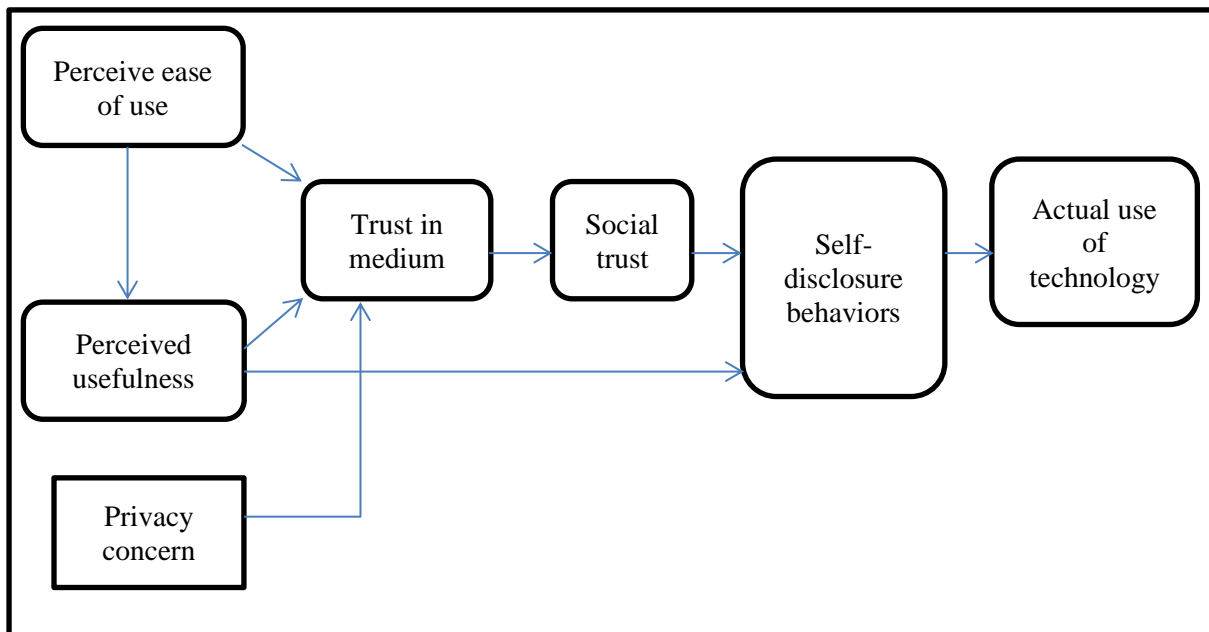


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

Source: *modified and adapted from Sharif et al. (2021)*

Hypotheses formulation

Perceive ease of use: Perceived ease of use refers to the degree to which an individual perceives the utilization of a particular technology, accessing various websites, and engaging in online activities as straight forward or effortless (Sharif et al., 2021; Grimaldo et al., 2020; Davis, 1989). It is based on the meaning of "easy," which denotes the absence of complexity or significant exertion. Effort is a valuable resource that individuals allocate to the various tasks they are accountable for. According to Sharif et al. (2021), it is generally observed that users may be less inclined to accept complex systems due to additional effort and difficulties involved in using them and vice versa.

Trust, however, plays a vital role in all forms of interaction, especially in the virtual domain. Trust in e-recruitment mediums is a crucial aspect that encompasses the confidence and belied applicants have in the reliability, integrity, and security of the e-recruitment process. This encompasses factors such as having confidence in the organization advertising the job,

ensuring the confidentiality of personal information, and ensuring a fair and unbiased selection process. When applicants have a positive experience with the e-recruitment process, they tend to view it as a user-friendly and dependable. An interface that is easy to navigate and procedures that are clear can contribute to a feeling of ease and assurance in the system. The following hypotheses have been formulated regarding the perceived usefulness and trust in medium.

H1: Perceive ease of use has significant and positive impact to perceived usefulness

H2: Perceive ease of use has significant impact and positive on the trust in e-recruitment medium

Perceived usefulness: According to the definition provided by Parikh et al. (2021), the extent to which an individual perceives that utilizing a particular system would enhance their job performance is considered. It is important for private organizations to prioritize to the establishment and upkeep of trust with applicants, as these applications often involve the provision of personal information. Building trust is an important factor that can impact the adoption of technological applications. Additionally, Sherief et al. (2020) have highlighted the significance of perceived usefulness in predicting trust in a technology/medium as well as its impact on self-disclosure behaviors. As a result, the implementation of such system is deemed beneficial when it enhances organizational performance in terms of recruiting. Therefore, the effectiveness of these systems is a key factor in their evaluation. Therefore, it is worth considering the following hypotheses:

H3: Perceive usefulness has significant influence on self-disclosures of trust in a medium

H4: Perceived usefulness of sharing personal information has a beneficial influence on self-disclosure behaviors/sharing personal information behavior

Privacy concern and trust in medium: Privacy is characterized as a personal mechanism for establishing boundaries and managing the privacy levels with others. On the contrary, privacy issues arise when users express their apprehension regarding the individuals of entities that may potentially access the information they share on social media platforms (Sharif et al., 2021). Likewise, Mutimukwe et al. (2020) discussed the way in which technology enables organizations to effectively manage and utilize personal data. The increasing prevalence of the internet has been accompanied by a rise in consumers' concerns regarding privacy. This, in turn, may impact individuals' confidence in their ability to control their personal information and heighten their perception of potential privacy risks. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H5: In the use of e-recruitment, privacy concern has significant impact on trust in a medium

Trust in medium: Trust in a medium has been defined as a user's inclination to rely on the platforms within the context of social networking sites and other digital recruitment platforms. Consumer trust plays a significant role in the adoption of recruitment platforms, as it is closely tied to individuals' confidence in the abilities, reliability, and trustworthiness of others (Sharif et al., 2021). As individuals develop confidence in user-friendly e-recruitment systems and perceive them as reliable, this confidence can also extend to encompass trust in the organizations utilizing these platforms and in fellow applicants. The perception of the recruitment process's fairness and transparency plays a crucial role in fostering broader social trust. Furthermore, the provision of reassurance regarding data privacy and security plays a crucial role in enhancing trust in online interactions. Additionally, when individuals have

positive experiences with e-recruitment, they are more likely to share favorable recommendations through word-of-mouth, thereby reinforcing social trust in these processes.

H6: Individual's faith in the medium has significant influence on social trust

Social trust and self-disclosure behavior: Social trust has been explored from various disciplines such as economics, psychology, anthropology, philosophy, and history over the past decades (Hasan et al., 2010). Similarly, Heggde and Shainesh (2018) explored the impact of social media usage on social trust in social networking sites, highlighting the significant influence that social trust has on the dissemination of information through social media. In virtual communities, trust plays a vital role as the absence of established norms necessitates individuals to depend on the socially acceptable conduct of others. Furthermore, Sharif et al. (2021) highlighted that individuals' faith in social networking platforms is strengthened by social trust. Individuals who possess a strong sense of social trust tend to be more inclined to engage in self-disclosure, as they perceive the e-recruitment process and the organization involved as being secure and trustworthy and vice versa. Organizations that prioritize transparent data handling practices and effective communication have the potential to promote social trust. This, in turn, can lead to increased self-disclosure from applicants, ultimately enhancing the accuracy and depth of the information provided.

H7: Social trust has a significant influence on self-disclosure behavior

Social-disclosure behaviors and actual usage of the technology: The level of individuals' social-disclosure behavior has a notable impact on their capacity to embrace and utilize e-recruitment technology effectively. The openness displayed in sharing personal and professional information online can greatly influence their interactions with digital job search platforms. Individuals who are comfortable with sharing personal information are more likely to be receptive to using e-recruitment tools, as their willingness to be open suggests a familiarity with the digital environment. This behavior has advantage on various aspects of technology utilization, such as enhancing the personalization of job recommendations, fostering increased engagement with the platform, building trust and confidence in its security measures, improving efficiency in matching job opportunities, and encouraging active participation in user feedback loops for ongoing improvement. Sharif et al. (2021) depict that social-disclosure behavior plays a significant role in how individuals navigate and utilize e-recruitment technology, ultimately impacting the outcomes of their job search efforts.

H8: Social-disclosure behavior has significant impact on adapting and use of the technology

To facilitate the study, we have utilized the variables outlined in *Table 1*.

Table 1. Variable table

Construct	Indicators	Variables	Details
Perceived ease of use (EOU)	EOU1	Learning	Knowledge of handling e-recruitment platforms
	EOU3	Easy to access	Physical accessibility and information accessibility to system
	EOU4	Skill	Easy to become skillful at using platform
	EOU5	Task handling	Easy to perform tasks using e-recruitment technology
Perceived usefulness (PU)	PU5	Performance	Improves the job performance
	PU6	Useful	Believes online system is useful
	PU7	Valuable	Believes online system is valuable
	PU8	Quick and easy	Online system would give me quick and easy access of information
Privacy concerns (PC)	PC3	Identity theft	Concerned about identity theft on/from the platform
	PC4	Misuse	Use posted information incorrectly or for the wrong reason from the platform.
	PC5	Intruding private information	getting illegal access to data on a computer or system due to wrong algorithm
Trust in medium (TM)	TM1	Honest	Believing the platform is honest
	TM2	Sincere	Believing the platform deals sincerely with users
	TM3	versatile and genuine	Believe that platform is versatile and genuine
Social trust (ST)	ST1	Network trustability	Platform friends can be trusted
	ST2	Fairness	Platform friends trying to be fair
	ST3	Helpful	Platform friends can be helpful
	ST4	Authenticity	trust the authenticity of application documents provided by the developers
Self-disclosure (SD)	SD1	Personal information	Sharing personal information in social media and e-recruitment platform
	SD2	Pictures	Uploading pictures in platform
	SD3	Videos	Uploading videos in platform
Actual use of technology (UT)	UT2	Update	Giving/uploading recent information
	UT3	Active user	To know the level of engagement
	UT4	Dependence	Supporting and governing in/from the technology

Note: EOU2, EOU6, PU1, PU2, PU3, PU4, PC1, PC2, TM4, TM5, ST5, SD4, SD5, UT1, UT5 and UT6 are the indicators that were discarded during the data analysis in SPSS since their factor loadings are < 0.50 which does not meet the threshold criteria for data analysis.

Source: *own compilation based on literature review*

Study area and population

The Kathmandu valley has been selected as the research region (*see Figure 2*) due to the presence of numerous organizations and their head offices in these cities. The Kathmandu valley is a 583-square-kilometer bowl-shaped (Panday & Prinn, 2009) intermontane valley in the center of the Himalayas, with a floor elevation of 1400 meters and surrounding mountains ranging in height from 2000 to 2800 meters (Gautam et al., 2004). The Kathmandu valley is located in Nepal's central mountain area, between 27°32'13" and 27°49'10" N and 85°11'31" and 85°31'38" E (Yadav et al., 2018). Due to varying levels of infrastructure development and services in other regions of the nation, the Kathmandu valley has emerged as a prominent center for numerous enterprises and has become a hub for various commercial and service operations (Devkota et al., 2022). Due to the high population density and concentration of significant businesses, conducting research in the Kathmandu valley can provide more precise and reliable data. The population under consideration comprises private firms. Based on Economic Survey 2020/2021, it has been observed that a significant number of business entities, specifically 20,639, have been registered and renewed as of mid-March of fiscal year 2020/21. Out of these, a majority of 18,986 are private enterprises (Government of Nepal, 2021). Based on the latest data from the Office of Company Registrar (2021), it is observed that Nepal has a significant number of registered businesses, totaling 238,920. According to the latest data from Investopaper (2022), there is a significant presence of both private limited businesses, with a count of 233,214, and public limited firms, with a count of 1,608, among the total number of registered companies.

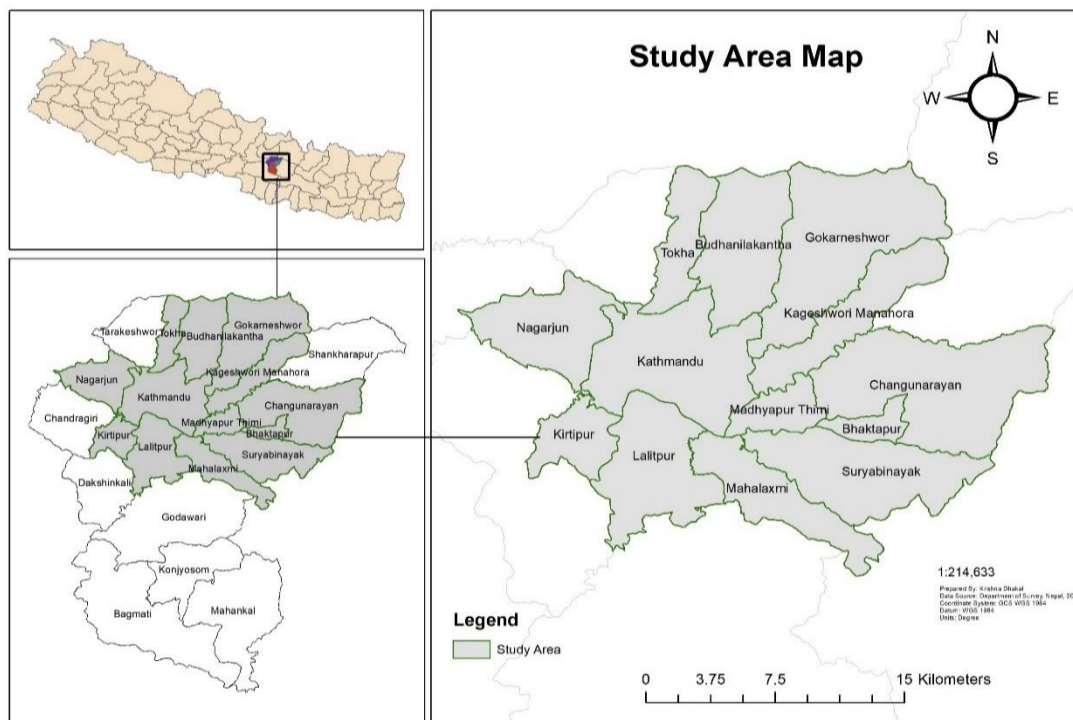


Figure 2. Study area map

Source: own, derived using ArcGIS

Sampling, data collection and analysis

As population of the study is known, this study follows systematic sampling technique. Sharma (2014) argued that this type of sampling is good while the sample is distributed more

equally across the population, and it is less time-consuming to perform than a standard random sample. The sample size is thus calculated using sample size formula recommended by Taherdoost (2016) as:

$$n = N * X / (X + N - 1) \dots\dots\dots (i)$$

$$\text{Here, } X = Z_{\alpha/2}^2 * p * (1-p) / \text{MOE}^2 \dots\dots\dots (ii)$$

Here, $Z_{\alpha/2}$ is the critical value of the traditional distribution at $\alpha/2$ (e.g., for a confidence level of 95%, α is 0.05 and also the critical value is 1.96), MOE is the margin of error, p is the sample proportion and N is the population size. With the given values, X is 267, and the final sample size is also 267. We added 5% non-response error (i.e., 13), which gives us total sample requirement of 280.

The structured questionnaire using KOBO Toolbox is thoughtfully organized into various sub-sections. The first section includes a series of demographic questions, followed by an exploration of private institutions' perspectives on e-recruitment in the second. The third section includes Likert-based items, which are followed by discussions on challenges and potential managerial solutions in the fourth and fifth sections. This study utilized a 5-point Likert scale, where respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement on a scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). A preliminary survey of 14 samples was conducted to assess the instrument's consistency and accuracy. The final questionnaire was distributed, and interview was conducted to gather feedback from private industry and institutions in Kathmandu valley from February 13 to March 10, 2022. The data analysis involved the use of both descriptive and inferential methods. The inferential approach included application of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to examine multiple latent constructs. On the other hand, the descriptive analysis involved the presentation of various charts, tables, and figures. The data analysis was conducted using KOBO Toolbox, Microsoft Excel, SPSS and AMOS.

2. Results and discussion

Socio-demographic Factors

This study reveals that the average age of the respondent is 36 years where 19 is lowest and 59 is highest and majority (56.64%) respondents were male in private organizations. They had a larger possibility of adapting e-recruitment processes where the employees between the ages of 31-40 years carried more active understanding of handling and administering e-recruitment platforms than those between the ages of 21-30 years (*see Table 2*). Suggestively, the younger generation is growing adept at using e-recruitment platforms. Furthermore, workers of all ages have increased their abilities in dealing with online recruiting platforms. Parikh et al. (2021) found that 20-35 years of age interval people cover majority of the respondents in their study area, which termed as a youthful generation to adapt the e-recruitment and are more tech-friendly. Findings imply that the sample is well-educated. Most private companies are in the education domain (16.43%) followed by HR companies with 12.24% with a strength of 10–50 employees meaning that most of the companies are small-to medium-scale industries and have 94.41% of the employees working full-time. A similar study was carried out in Pakistan by Nasreem & Khan (2016) which found that the majority of the respondents had been with the organizations for less than a year; and the organizations had fewer than 50 workers again pointing towards small to medium scale setup of organizations. This suggests that developing countries like Nepal have a long way to go in terms of industrial development and human resources for the sole adoption of e-recruitment.

Table 2. Socio-demographic factors

Variable	Number	Percentage (%)
Sex		
Male	162	56.64
Female	124	43.36
Age		
Below 20	2	0.75
21-30	113	39.51
31-40	119	41.60
41-50	44	15.35
50 above	8	2.79
Education level		
Higher secondary	20	6.99
Bachelor's level	117	40.91
Master's and above	149	52.1
Company types		
Educational sector	47	16.43
HR company	35	12.24
Hotel industry	35	12.24
Financial institution	33	11.54
Others	134	47.55
No. of employees		
Upto 10 employees	50	17.48
10-50 employees	114	39.8
50-250 employees	92	32.17
More than or equal to 250 employees	30	10.49
Nature of employment		
Full-time	270	94.41
Part-time	16	5.59

Source: *field survey, 2022*

Status of e-recruitment on private organizations

This section provides an overview of the various perspectives on e-recruitment from different institutions in the Kathmandu valley. The data indicates that a modest percentage of private companies, specifically 3.14% have fully embraced e-recruitment systems (*see Figure 3*). This suggests that the majority of the private companies still rely on a combination of e-recruitment and traditional methods, such as ad campaigns through posters and pamphlets, highlighting the need for continued investment and social acceptance of e-recruitment in the long run. As a result, several private companies have relied on conventional recruitment methods to fulfill their positions. Benoit-Piau et al. (2020) in their study highlighted that traditional strategies were found to be more effective in terms of recruitment outcomes. However, it is worth noting that e-recruitment had the advantage of providing a greater number of professional references, which contributed to enhancing recruitment efficiency. Moreover, private firms engage in an average of 54 e-recruitments annually. A significant portion, approximately 38.33% of the companies, utilizes e-recruitment for over 6 years. These companies primarily focus on filling middle-level positions (95.47%) followed by lower-level positions (79.79%). In comparison, it is worth noting that a significant portion (37.28%) of top-level positions is fulfilled through the utilization of (97.91%), which stands as the primary social media platform. Additionally, it is observed that Nepalese private organizations tend to heavily

rely on Facebook, while LinkedIn is also gaining popularity in the context. Despite the availability of professional platforms that connect job seekers and employers, some employers may still face challenges in finding the ideal candidates for their job openings. Thus, it may take some time for e-recruitment to become the preferred choice among individuals, unless a particular segment is introduced to the public.

Job boards, social networking platforms and personal websites are effective methods for both job seekers and employers to connect. A significant percentage of institutions recruit from these platforms, and many companies actively utilize popular social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, TikTok and others to share information about job opening. It accentuates the communication between recruits and recruiters. Hence, the utilization of social media by businesses further supports the ongoing trend of internet usage. According to Gravili and Fait (2016), a similar study, highlighted the benefits of utilizing e-recruiting methods such as commercial job websites and online recruitment, as well as vacancy pages on company websites, for effectively attracting and recruiting candidates. Our findings align with aforementioned literatures on how organizations manage e-recruitment. While discussing technology, it is worth noting that 47% of private organizations believe that the current technology is adequate for adopting e-recruitment platforms, while 53% feel that new technology is necessary for adopting e-recruitment. This suggests that as the technological epoch advances and global integration increases, current technologies may no longer suffice. Therefore, private organizations may consider developing their own recruitment tools internally or adopting existing one from the global community.

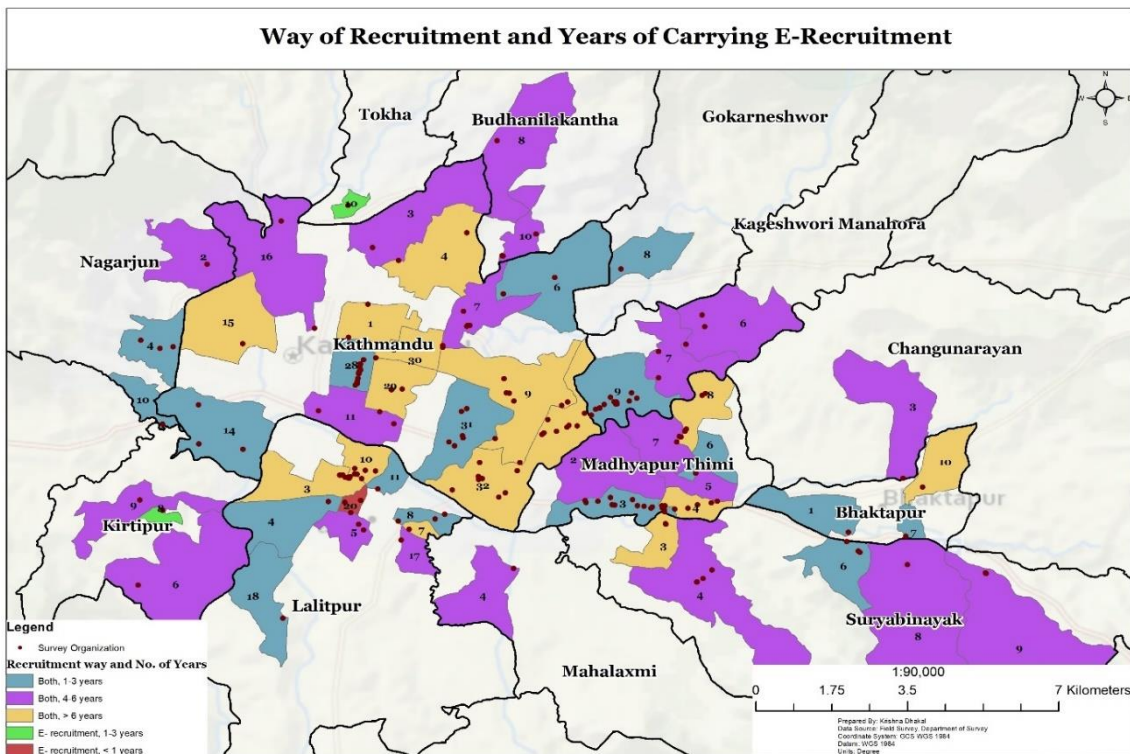


Figure 3. Way of recruitment
Source: own, derived from ArcGIS, 2022

Factors affecting e-recruitment adoption and perceptions

The variables used (and measured on a Likert scale) to assess the institutional perception of adoption of e-recruitments in Kathmandu Valley encompass *perceived ease of use*, *perceive*

usefulness, privacy concerns, trust in medium, social trust, self-disclosure and actual usage of technology. It reveals that majority of institutions, 80.10%, express that they find e-recruitment tools and technologies to be user-friendly and straightforward. This suggests that perceived ease of use is relatively high and they possess a strong grasp of managing e-recruitment platforms and have developed proficiency in utilizing them. It is widely acknowledged that e-recruitment platforms and social media platforms have proven to be valuable tools for gathering information and enhancing accessibility for management. Consequently, it can be inferred that a significant number of institutions in the Kathmandu valley, Nepal, have found e-recruitment platforms to be user-friendly and effective for their recruitment process. Thus, based on this study, it can be inferred that when a system is adaptable, individuals and organizations can effectively manage it without significant additional effort, provided that employees possess the necessary skills to utilize any of the available e-recruitment platforms. It may be advantageous for individuals to have some familiarity with the system's usability and function, as it could potentially facilitate their completion of tasks.

Likewise, Perceived Usefulness results illustrate that 74.82% of private organizations agree that employing e-recruitment tools are useful and thus employing the e-recruitment technology will improve their work performance believing that an online system will provide them with quick and simple access to information at disposal. Thus, greater the perceived usefulness of e-recruitment tools, the more favorable users' attitude toward their use. The perceived usefulness of an online tool has a considerable impact on job seekers' as well as job providers' attitudes about using it (Grimaldo et al., 2020). Similarly, privacy concerns' findings indicate that 75.52% of private organizations in the Kathmandu valley agreed that they are concerned about identity theft on/from the platform, information exploitation, in which someone uses organizational information incorrectly or for the wrong reason from the platform. According to the study of Zhang and Fu (2020), female users' online disclosure is influenced by privacy concerns more than male users. It's not only the medium that raises privacy problems; the community that surrounds that medium should also be trusted when it comes to exchanging information. Self-disclosure is influenced by users' trust in the information they provide (Salehan et al., 2018).

Further, trust in medium results show that 58.39% of businesses agreed that technology and other digital recruiting platforms are honest with their consumers, making the platform trustworthy and acceptable. Salehan et al. (2018) argued that the attitude toward Social Networking Sites (SNS) is substantially influenced by trust in SNS, which is predicted by the user's perceived security and privacy on the website. Individuals establish trust in the medium only if they feel that surfing social networking sites through the internet is safe. Individuals' privacy concerns about a medium, on the other hand, have a detrimental impact on that medium's trustworthiness. Likewise, Sharif et al. (2021) revealed that higher privacy concerns were linked to lower intents to use online services. Likewise, social trust results indicate that 61.88% of individuals and professionals who make up their network are attempting to be helpful in the majority of cases, but they hesitate to declare that people on the various digital platforms are always attempting to be fair in terms of recruitment and self-disclosing information. Questions are also raised on faith in the developers' application docs. Thereby, in the development of new connections, trust is less important in face-to-face interactions which demonstrates that the presence of trust and readiness to disclose information on an online site does not always imply new social engagement (Dwyer et al., 2007).

Similarly, self-disclosure findings indicate that 71.68% agreed to share personal information by uploading organizational photos and videos to different social media and e-recruitment platforms in order to improve their brand reputation and networkability, which will lead for higher level of user engagement in their platforms. In this study, the high self-disclosure

means most of the firms are disclosing themselves in the social medias and recruitment platforms. Masur (2019) revealed that low self-disclosure is a sign of self-repression and a lack of ability to grow as a person whereas self-disclosure on social networking sites contributes to the creation of social capital, connection and relationships (Sharif et al., 2021). Finally, actual usage of technology shows that 69.83% of businesses agree to provide up-to-date information about their businesses as well as job openings on social media sites. The degree of user involvement will also be high if their network range is large. As a result, private businesses are prepared to assist and regulate all job seekers and other users who use their digital platforms in search of employment, job advertisements, and career sites. It can conclude that, recruiters and job seekers with a more positive attitude regarding the tools are more likely to use them (Grimaldo et al., 2020).

The research confined that 79.92% of the institutions have positive perception, whereas 16.78% of institutions have neither positive nor negative perception and only 3.30% of institutions have negative perception on institution adoption of e-recruitment in Kathmandu valley (see Figure 4).

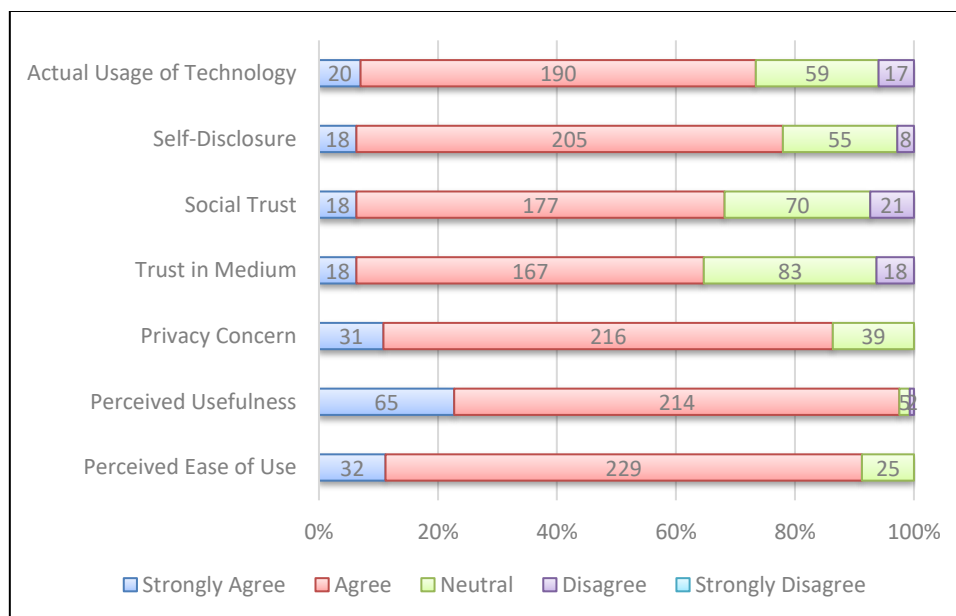


Figure 4. Overall discussion of variables

Source: *field study, 2022*

2.1. Inferential analysis

Reliability and validity test

The responses' mean and standard deviation are 3.63 to 4.19 and 0.43 to 0.74, respectively, indicating that the majority of the responses do not deviate considerably from the mean data. Skewness is a feature that reveals the symmetry of a random variable's probability distribution (Sharma & Ojha, 2020). The data in this study has a negative skewness i.e., the left side of the distribution has a larger tail ranging from -2 to +2. Kurtosis measurements are in the range of -3 to +3, suggesting that the data is normal and acceptable. The goal of exploratory factor analysis (EFA) is to identify the smallest number of hypothetical constructs that can explain the covariation seen among a set of observed variables (Watkins, 2018). The applicability of the data is checked using KMO and Bartlett's Test and researchers obtained that

the value is 0.802, which meets the 0.70 minimum requirement. Similarly, the data is significant since the Bartlett's Test result is 0.000, which is less than 0.05, suggesting that there is no problem with data dependability and validity as well as it indicates that the data is significant (Lee et al., 2021). In addition, Cronbach's alpha is used to assess internal consistency - a higher number implies stronger internal consistency (Hayes & Coutts, 2020). Similarly, Harman's Single Factor Test is used to determine whether the study exhibits common method bias (Kock et al., 2021) or not. The dataset used in this study revealed that Cronbach's alpha is larger than 0.906, and variation explained by a single component is 21.927%, which is less than 50% and that affirms strong internal consistency among variables, and thus negating the issue of Common Method Bias.

To evaluate assessment reliability and validity, we use confirmatory factor analysis (Pan et al., 2021). The confirmatory measurement model was used to test convergent and discriminant validity in this investigation. The model fit for this study is exceptional since all of the indicators meet the requirements (*see Table 3*). It proves that our model is more reliable and has better validity.

Table 3. Model fit status

Name	Good fitting	Acceptable value	Obtained value	Decision for model fit
Chi- square/df (CMIN/df)	<3 excellent; <5 sometimes permissible	<5 it can be accepted	1.442	Excellent
Root Mean Squared Residual (RMR)	<0.08	<0.08	0.011	Excellent
Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)	>0.90	>0.80	0.916	Excellent
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	>0.95	>0.90	0.984	Excellent
Turker-Lewis Index (TLI)	>0.95	>0.90	0.981	Excellent
Incremental Fit Index (IFI)	>0.95	>0.90	0.984	Excellent
Root Mean Square Error of Approximately (RMSEA)	<0.08	<0.08	0.039	Excellent

Source: *own calculation*

Measurement model and hypothesis testing

Convergence validity and discriminant validity were used to establish the data's reliability and validity. As per Rajbhandari et al. (2022) and Maharjan et al. (2022) the dataset must meet two conditions in order to be verified – convergent and discriminant validity. As per Thapa et al. (2022) convergent validity requires to fulfill $AVE > 0.5$, $CR > 0.7$, and $CR > AVE$. Similarly, for discriminant validity (correlation) are the requirements for convergent validity, $AVE > MSV$, $AVE > ASV$, and $AVE > r$. The assessment shows validity condition, which revealed that all indicators used for the study accurately represent the construct to which they belong. Details are presented in *Table 4* and *Table 5*.

Table 4. Reliability and validity

Constructs	Indicators	Factor loading	Cronbach's alpha	CR	AVE	MSV
Perceived ease of use	EOU1	.883	0.945	0.945	0.811	0.066
	EOU3	.842				
	EOU4	.863				
	EOU5	.863				
Perceived usefulness	PU5	.883	0.953	0.953	0.836	0.047
	PU6	.885				
	PU7	.895				
	PU8	.850				
Privacy concern	PC3	.863	0.925	0.924	0.803	0.009
	PC4	.881				
	PC5	.873				
Trust in medium	TM1	.858	0.92	0.921	0.795	0.055
	TM2	.891				
	TM3	.849				
Social trust	ST1	.897	0.946	0.947	0.817	0.055
	ST2	.854				
	ST3	.857				
	ST4	.865				
Self-disclosure behavior	SD1	.841	0.906	0.908	0.768	0.066
	SD2	.889				
	SD3	.815				
Actual use of technology	UT2	.917	0.949	0.950	0.864	0.066
	UT3	.940				
	UT4	.878				

Source: *own calculation*

Table 5. Latent construct correlation

	SD	EOU	PU	TM	PC	ST	UT
SD	0.876						
EOU	0.227	0.901					
PU	0.173	0.216	0.914				
TM	0.109	0.141	0.105	0.892			
PC	0.021	0.095	0.017	-0.008	0.896		
ST	0.137	0.085	-0.019	0.234	-0.033	0.904	
UT	0.256	0.257	0.172	0.149	0.054	0.022	0.930

Source: *own calculation*

SEM is used to evaluate regression analysis, variable analysis, and the normalization pattern in the research. On the basis of latent variables vs. observable variables, the various components were assessed (*see Figure 5*). The model fit demonstrates an exemplary shape. A p value of less than 0.05 indicates a substantial relationship between latent and observable variables. A p-value of less than 0.05 indicates that all of the hypotheses in this study are broadly accepted and more than 0.05 all the hypotheses in this research are rejected. As shown in table 6, (H3 and H5) = $p > 0.05$ are rejected that implies insignificant relationship. On the other hand, (H1, H2, H4, H6, H7 and H8) = $p < 0.05$ are accepted and implies that there is significant relationship between variables. From the result, it is clearly indicates that all contingent factor

hypotheses are ruled out, meaning that all independent variables examined have a substantial influence on all contingent factor hypotheses.

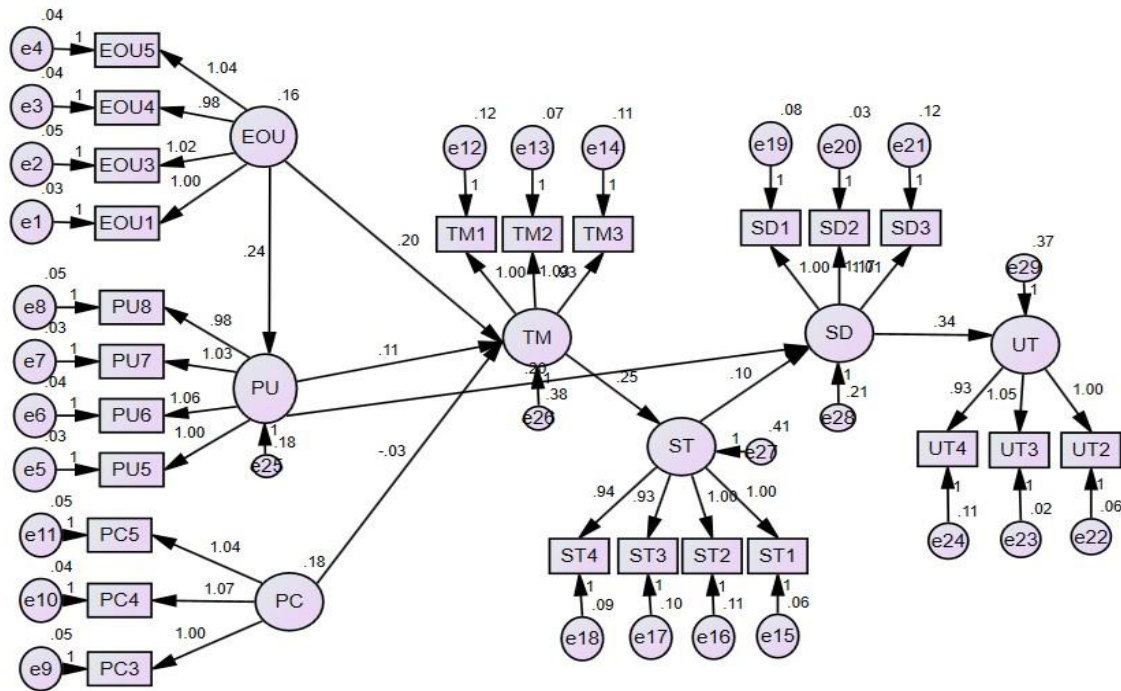


Figure 5. Structural model

Source: own compilation

To establish and test the correlation among the variables, the reliability test and multiple linear correlations were employed. Table 6 depicts that almost all hypotheses were accepted with a $p < 0.05$.

Table 6. Path estimation for structural model

Hypothesis	Estimate	S.E	C.R.	P	Significant
H1: Perceived ease of use → Perceived usefulness	.238	.067	3.539	***	Significant
H2: Perceived ease of use → Trust in medium	.198	.101	1.963	.050	Significant
H3: Perceived usefulness → Trust in medium	.111	.092	1.207	.228	Insignificant
H4: Perceived usefulness → Self-disclosure behavior	.195	.067	2.907	.004	Significant
H5: Privacy concern → Trust in medium	-.031	.092	1.207	.228	Insignificant
H6: Trust in medium → Social trust	.248	.065	3.783	***	Significant
H7: Social trust → Self-disclosure behavior	.102	.044	2.289	.022	Significant
H8: Self-disclosure behavior → Actual use of technology	.340	.081	4.213	***	Significant

Source: own calculation

The results are further discussed as per hypothesis derived in Table 6. For hypothesis 1, companies that believed social media and other digital recruitment platforms to be simple to use, agreed with the perceived usefulness, i.e., they could be utilized successfully, was proven to be true. In hypothesis 2, private organizations that believed that the system's lack of difficulty

or significant efforts will be able to instill trust and motivate applicants to contribute personal information.

According to Hypothesis 4, the perceived benefits of personal information sharing practices and increasing an organization's work performance have a substantial impact on self-disclosure behavior. In the viewpoint of the user/organization, a system with a high perceived usefulness has a favorable link between usage and performance. Hypothesis 6 demonstrated that trust in the medium has a significant positive impact on the development of social trust. From Hypothesis 7, social trust has a substantial effect on an organization's practice of disclosing personal information. In Hypothesis 8, the organization's self-disclosure behavior was discovered to have a substantial influence on the utilization of technology.

Again, companies that feel social media and other digital recruitment tools are simple to use and effective also believe that exposing personal information on social media platforms is a risky practice. Self-disclosure behavior is heavily influenced by the predicted advantages of personal information sharing practices and improving an organization's job performance whereas privacy concerns erode the trust in social media and other digital recruitment methods. Trust in the medium was found to have a major impact on the development of social trust. They would save time and effort while also boosting their work performance if they used e-recruitment platforms.

Regarding limitation, the research was focused on subject and had time constraints. The researchers have made every effort to use a bigger sample size and investigate the factors more thoroughly. More research on this issue is required in various parts of the country in order to have a comparative understanding of the issue. Apart from the questionnaire survey, a few in-depth interviews or focused group discussions would hold merit in discovering the underlying reasons of perceived positive and negative impacts, satisfaction, and participation in e-recruitment adoption. Investigations should also focus on examining the physical, biological, and socioeconomic effect on private companies in order to have a better understanding of the adoption of e-recruitment. It is critical to examine how private companies are responding to perceived repercussions, support for e-recruitment development, trust in private institutions, and participation in e-recruitment planning and development. Legal implications of e-recruitments platforms on firms and organization becomes crucial for future studies.

Conclusion

This study concludes that still many private organizations rely on conventional recruiting methods, but they are moving towards active social media presence by routinely posting job vacancies, making it easier for candidates and recruiters to connect. Existing technologies, they believe, are insufficient for the adaptation of e-recruitment in the context of private organizations in Nepal. Though HR field is thriving, it lacks the government sector that monitors the readiness as well as other activities related to HR but there are sub-division under Nepal's government that makes laws and policies related to HR.

Private firms encounter a lot of challenges when it comes to implementing e-recruitment such as employer branding, communication, privacy and security issues, lack of understanding of modern and informative recruitment tools along with lack of trust just to list a few. Time, money, personnel, and other resources related to online recruitment will be squandered if a faulty hiring selection is made. To overcome these challenges, private firms should make the best recruiting selections possible, contact with candidates often so that they feel valued, and employ advanced and informative recruitment technologies to create user-friendly job pages that are secure and confidential. To save resources and energy throughout the recruitment process, a candidate's monitoring system should be established. Overall, this study indicates

that e-recruitment carries a huge potential as an alternative strategy of hiring to overcome the traditional recruitment process. Private organizations don't trust the medium fully as they prefer hybrid recruitment methods that include both traditional and modern methods of recruitment and are adapting to the use of e-recruitment using social media recruitment through Facebook and LinkedIn.

Finally, SEM results reveal that perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, social trust, and self-disclosure behavior play statistically significant roles in the adoption of the e-recruitment process by private institutions in the Kathmandu valley. Thus, the use of information technology and communication can elevate the practices of e-recruitment in the Nepalese HR society and the findings of this study can be used as a basis for the development of future research in the field of HRM in Nepal. Enhancing e-recruitment drives, establishing separate governmental departments for human resources development and implementation of better organizational policies and practices are some recommendations regarding online recruitment in the Nepalese context.

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