

Original Researcher Article

Artificial Intelligence in Human Resource Management: Transforming Recruitment and Talent Acquisition in the Textile and IT Industries Sector

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ABSTRACT

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has moved from a peripheral experiment to a core infrastructure layer within Human Resource Management (HRM), and recruitment and talent acquisition (TA) are among its most visible applications. This paper examines how AI-enabled tools resume parsing, conversational chatbots, semantic candidate matching, automated interview scheduling, video-based assessment, and predictive analytics are reshaping hiring practices, using the Indian Information Technology (IT/ITES) and Textile & Apparel industries as contrasting case sectors. The IT sector, characterised by digitally native workflows and large applicant volumes, has emerged as an early and intensive adopter of AI in recruitment, while the textile sector, with its labour-intensive, geographically dispersed, and often informally structured operations, lags considerably despite growing pressure to modernise. Drawing on a structured review of industry reports, market-research data, and secondary case evidence, the study finds that AI adoption in recruitment delivers measurable gains in time-to-hire, cost-per-hire, and sourcing reach, but also introduces new risks around algorithmic bias, data privacy, and workforce trust. The paper develops a comparative framework of AI-adoption maturity across five recruitment sub-functions, identifies sector-specific barriers, and offers a set of practical recommendations for HR leaders seeking to adopt AI responsibly. The findings suggest that sectoral context digital readiness, workforce composition, and regulatory exposure rather than technology availability alone, determines the pace and depth of AI integration in recruitment.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Human Resource Management, Recruitment, Talent Acquisition, IT Industry, Textile Industry, Algorithmic Hiring, HR Technology.

1. INTRODUCTION

Recruitment has historically been one of the most resource-intensive functions within HRM, requiring recruiters to source, screen, interview, and select candidates from an ever-growing pool of applicants. The proliferation of online job boards and applicant tracking systems since the early 2000s multiplied applicant volumes without proportionally increasing recruiter capacity, creating a persistent efficiency gap. Artificial Intelligence has emerged as the primary technological response to this gap. Global spending and adoption figures illustrate the scale of this shift: the AI-in-recruitment market was valued at approximately USD 704.5 million in 2025 and is projected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of around 6.8% through 2032 (Demand Sage, 2026), while over 65% of recruiters report having already implemented some form of AI in their hiring workflow (Demand Sage, 2026).

This transformation is not sector-neutral. Digitally native industries such as Information Technology (IT) and IT-enabled services (ITES) have led AI adoption in recruitment because their operations, applicant pools, and infrastructure are already digitised. In contrast, traditional, labour-intensive manufacturing sectors such as textiles and apparel despite being major employers, particularly in emerging economies like India have been comparatively slow to integrate AI into HR functions, constrained by factory-level informality, workforce diversity, limited capital for HR technology, and weaker digital infrastructure (Fashion Value Chain, 2025).

This paper investigates how AI is transforming recruitment and talent acquisition, using the Indian IT and Textile industries as two contrasting sectoral lenses. It asks: What forms does AI adoption take in each sector? What benefits and risks does it introduce? And what factors explain the differing pace of adoption between a digitally mature sector and a traditionally structured one?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 AI in HRM: Conceptual Background

AI in HRM broadly refers to the application of machine learning, natural language processing (NLP), and predictive analytics to automate or augment HR decision-making across the employee lifecycle from workforce planning and recruitment to performance management and attrition prediction. Within recruitment specifically, AI applications include resume parsing and semantic matching, chatbot-based candidate engagement, automated interview scheduling, AI-proctored or asynchronous video interviews, and predictive scoring of candidate fit.

2.2 Adoption Trends and Benefits

Industry surveys converge on several consistent findings. First, adoption is now mainstream rather than experimental: recent estimates suggest that 87% of companies use some form of AI in recruitment (Demand Sage, 2026), 69% of companies use AI specifically within talent acquisition for screening, communication, and assessment (Talent MSH, 2026), and nearly 90% of companies globally report integrating AI tools such as resume parsers, chatbots, and match-scoring systems into hiring in 2025 (Select Software Reviews, 2026). Second, the efficiency case for AI is well documented: organizations report time-to-hire reductions of 25–50% and an average return on investment of around 340% within 18 months of proper implementation (In Cruiter, 2026), while AI-based sourcing has been found to expand the effective talent pool by an average of 340% and reduce sourcing time by 67% (In Cruiter, 2026). Third, Boston Consulting Group research cited in industry analysis notes that roughly 70% of corporate AI experimentation is concentrated in HR functions, with recruiting the leading use case (HeroHunt.ai, 2025).

2.3 Risks, Bias, and Governance Concerns

The literature also documents significant risks. A notable share of recruiters (around 35%) worry that AI may systematically exclude candidates with atypical career paths or unique skill combinations (DemandSage, 2026), and a large share of jobseekers (around 66% of U.S. adults in one survey) say they would avoid applying to roles that use AI in hiring decisions (DemandSage, 2026). These concerns are not merely theoretical: the ongoing litigation against Workday, in which its AI screening tools have been alleged to discriminate on the basis of race, age, and disability, was granted nationwide collective status in 2025 and survived a motion to dismiss in March 2026, with the company disclosing that its tools rejected applications numbering in the billions during the relevant period (Talent MSH, 2026). This case has become a reference point for HR leaders regarding accountability for third-party AI hiring tools.

2.4 Sectoral Studies: IT and Textiles

Within India specifically, AI adoption in HR has moved from pilot projects toward embedded infrastructure. India reportedly leads global workplace generative-AI adoption, with 92% of Indian employees using generative AI regularly according to Boston Consulting Group's "AI at Work 2025" report, and 47% of Indian enterprises now running multiple AI use cases in production according to the EY-CII Enterprise AI report (The People's Board, 2026). Within IT services specifically, AI-related requirements now appear in roughly 74% of new IT contracts, and major firms such as TCS and Wipro are simultaneously running dozens of AI-focused client engagements while shifting internal recruitment toward specialised AI-skilled hiring rather than mass lateral intake (Metaintro, 2026). This has coincided with a broader slowdown in traditional-role hiring at India's largest IT services firms even as AI-skill wages rise (The Register, 2026); (Whalesbook, 2026).

By contrast, studies of the Indian textile and apparel sector emphasise persistent structural barriers to any digital transformation, including AI: lack of government support and heavy taxation, inadequate capital investment, weak data-protection frameworks, and workforce resistance driven by fear of job displacement (Fashion Value Chain, 2025). A Fuzzy-TISM/Fuzzy-MICMAC modelling study of the sector further identifies interconnected barriers ranging from distraction due to competing legacy projects to a broader lack of adaptability toward new technology that compound one another and slow adoption relative to more digitally mature industries (Behl, 2024). HR-specific literature on the textile sector adds that a large, geographically dispersed, and often semi-skilled workforce raises the baseline HR burden considerably, with many firms depending on external HR outsourcing partners to manage compliance and recruitment at scale (TalentPro India, 2025).

3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. *To examine the extent and nature of AI adoption in recruitment and talent acquisition within the Indian IT and Textile industries.*
2. *To compare the drivers, applications, and adoption maturity of AI-enabled recruitment tools across the two sectors.*
3. *To identify the principal benefits AI delivers to recruitment functions, including efficiency, cost, and candidate-reach gains.*
4. *To identify sector-specific barriers and risks associated with AI-enabled hiring, including bias, data privacy, and workforce trust.*
5. *To propose practical recommendations for responsible AI adoption in recruitment across differing organisational contexts.*

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a descriptive and comparative research design based on secondary data. Data were drawn from a structured review of industry and market-research reports (including (Demand Sage, 2026), (Technavio, 2026), (Maximize Market Research, 2026), (Second Talent, 2026), and (Select Software Reviews, 2026)), sector-specific analyses of the Indian textile and IT industries, and recent business-press coverage of AI-linked hiring trends at major Indian IT services firms. Because primary survey data specific to a matched sample of Indian textile and IT firms was outside the scope of this paper, the comparative adoption figures presented in Section 8 (Figure 3) are constructed as an illustrative synthesis of the qualitative and quantitative evidence reviewed, rather than as findings from a single primary survey instrument; they are intended to represent directional relative maturity

rather than precise point estimates. This limitation is discussed further in Section 9.

The research is exploratory and qualitative-quantitative in nature, combining narrative synthesis with visual data representation (bar charts, line charts, and a process framework diagram) to communicate patterns across the reviewed sources.

5. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: AI ACROSS THE RECRUITMENT VALUE CHAIN

AI does not enter recruitment as a single tool but as a layer of capability distributed across the entire hiring value chain from workforce planning through sourcing, assessment, selection, and onboarding. Figure 4 presents a conceptual framework locating the principal AI touchpoints within this value chain.

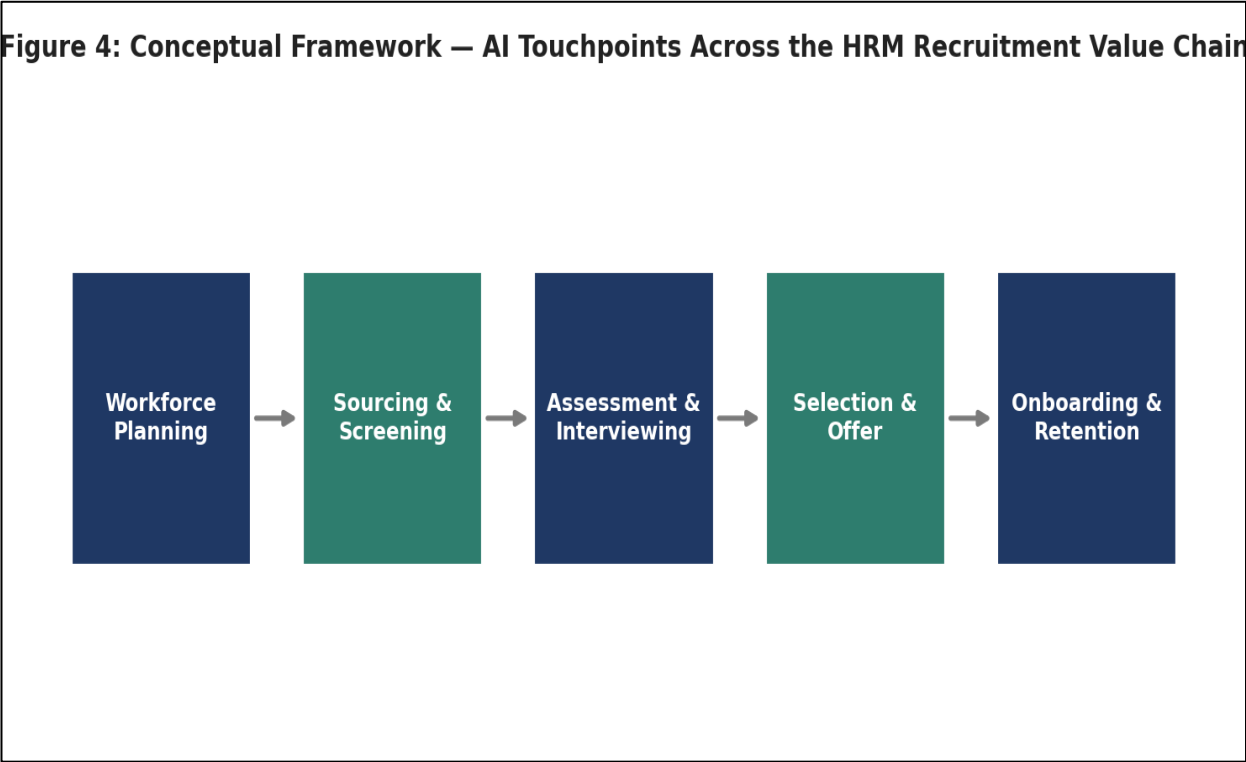


Figure 4. Conceptual Framework AI Touchpoints Across the HRM Recruitment Value Chain (Author's construction, based on reviewed literature).

At the workforce-planning stage, predictive analytics tools forecast attrition and future skill demand. At the sourcing and screening stage the most heavily AI-penetrated stage in the literature reviewed natural-language resume parsers and semantic search tools identify candidates that keyword-based Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) typically miss; one estimate suggests semantic search surfaces 60% more relevant profiles than Boolean queries and reduces false-positive rates by 62%, with roughly 40% of viable mid- and junior-level candidates coming from sources traditional keyword-based ATS tools overlook entirely (InCruiter, 2026). At the assessment stage, one-way video interviews powered by conversational AI now serve as a standard first-round screening mechanism at

many large employers (InCruiter, 2026). At the scheduling and coordination stage, AI scheduling tools have driven substantial efficiency gains: 41% of talent acquisition teams piloted AI scheduling tools in 2025, and organisations with full deployment report coordination-time reductions of 60–80%, with Mastercard cited as reducing interview scheduling time by more than 85% (InCruiter, 2026).

6. AI IN RECRUITMENT: THE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT/ITES) SECTOR

The Indian IT/ITES sector anchored by firms such as Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Infosys, Wipro, HCLTech,

and Accenture's India operations represents one of the most AI-intensive recruitment environments globally, for two reinforcing reasons. First, applicant volumes are extremely high: TCS alone reportedly receives around 3 million applications annually across its entry-level hiring programmes (Metaintro, 2026), a volume that is functionally unmanageable through manual screening alone. Second, the sector's own business model is pivoting toward AI-linked services, which is reshaping what skills recruiters are hired to find. Industry analysis indicates that AI-related requirements now appear in roughly 74% of new IT contracts, with Wipro executing around 83 AI-focused deals and TCS around 81 at the time of reporting (Metaintro, 2026).

This shift has produced a paradox in IT-sector hiring: overall headcount growth has slowed markedly even as demand for AI-specific talent intensifies. Reported data show TCS and HCL reducing headcount by 11,000 and 261 employees respectively in a recent quarter, while the four largest Indian IT services firms collectively added only around 3,910 staff over a full year an unusually slow pace by historical standards (The Register, 2026). At the same time, AI engineering job postings were reported to have risen 59.5% in 2026, and wages for senior AI roles have been rising over 18% annually, with TCS and Wipro offering larger raises than Infosys to retain specialised AI and cloud talent (Whalesbook, 2026). In effect, the IT sector is not reducing recruitment activity so much as re-directing it: from high-volume generalist hiring toward more selective, AI-literate, skills-based recruitment itself increasingly mediated by AI-based skills assessment and screening tools during the hiring process (AceRound Blog, 2026).

Within the recruitment process itself, large Indian IT firms have layered AI extensively onto traditional multi-stage hiring funnels aptitude testing, technical assessment, and HR interview rounds used for graduate hiring programmes such as TCS's National Qualifier Test (NQT), Infosys's InfyTQ, and Wipro's Elite National Talent Hunt (AceRound Blog, 2026). AI tools are now used on both sides of this funnel: by employers, for automated resume screening, aptitude-test proctoring, and communication-round evaluation; and increasingly by candidates themselves, for AI-assisted interview preparation, which is in turn prompting employers to invest in more sophisticated AI-based interview proctoring and anomaly detection to preserve assessment integrity (InCruiter, 2026).

7. AI IN RECRUITMENT: THE TEXTILE & APPAREL SECTOR

The Indian textile and apparel industry presents a markedly different adoption profile. It is the second-largest employer in the country after agriculture and contributes significantly to industrial output and exports, but its workforce is large, dispersed across factories and supplier networks, and often semi-skilled or informally engaged

(TalentPro India, 2025). These structural characteristics create HR challenges of a different order than in IT: high compliance risk, difficulty sourcing technically qualified staff for increasingly automated production lines, and heavy reliance on third-party HR outsourcing to manage recruitment, payroll, and statutory compliance at scale (TalentPro India, 2025).

AI adoption in textile-sector HR functions remains nascent relative to IT, for reasons that are well documented in sector-specific studies. A modelling study using Fuzzy-TISM and Fuzzy-MICMAC methods identifies a hierarchy of interlinked barriers to technology adoption in the sector, including lack of government support, heavy taxation, inadequate capital investment, resistance to change driven by fear of unemployment, distraction from competing legacy projects, and a broader lack of organizational adaptability to new technology (Behl, 2024); (Fashion Value Chain, 2025). A further constraint specific to HR-technology adoption is workflow heterogeneity: unlike IT firms with standardized global processes, textile and apparel operations often have factory-specific attendance rules, buyer-specific documentation formats, and locally variable communication practices that make off-the-shelf AI-HR tools difficult to deploy without substantial customization (YuVerse.ai, 2026). Worker-facing AI tools in this sector such as voice-based systems for attendance and payroll communication also face adoption friction when they fail to accommodate dialectal and linguistic diversity among factory workers, reducing first-use success rates and reinforcing reliance on human intermediaries (YuVerse.ai, 2026).

Where AI is emerging in textile-sector HR, it tends to concentrate on narrower, higher-friction pain points rather than the broad recruitment-funnel automation seen in IT: voice-AI-driven attendance and payroll communication, automated compliance documentation for export-oriented manufacturers, and AI-assisted supplier and order-tracking communication that indirectly affects workforce planning (YuVerse.ai, 2026). Structured resume screening, semantic candidate matching, and AI video interviewing all common in IT-sector recruitment remain comparatively rare at the factory-floor and supervisory hiring levels, where hiring is frequently conducted through local networks, contractors, and walk-in recruitment rather than formal digital applicant pipelines.

8. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Figure 3 synthesises the qualitative evidence reviewed above into an illustrative comparative index of AI-adoption maturity across five common recruitment sub-functions, contrasting the IT/ITES sector with the Textile & Apparel sector. As noted in Section 4, these values are directional estimates derived from the reviewed literature rather than measurements from a single controlled survey, and should be read as indicative of relative gaps rather than precise benchmarks.

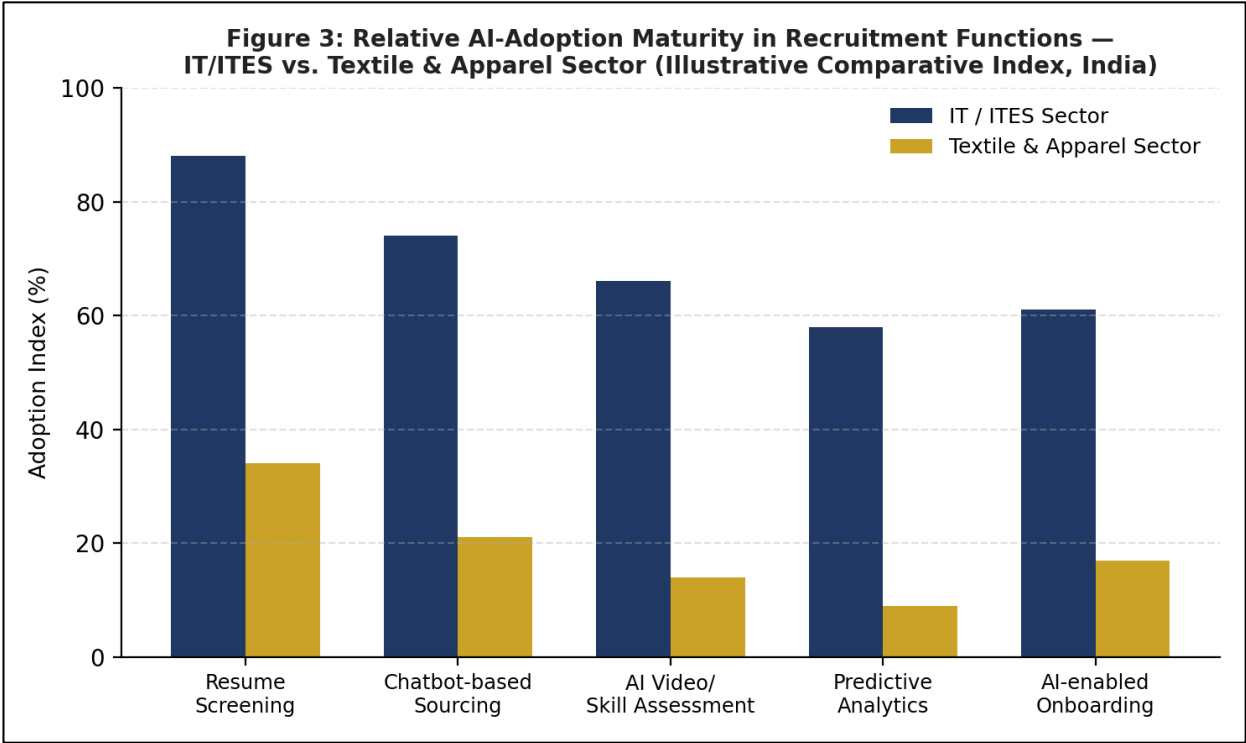


Figure 3. Relative AI-Adoption Maturity in Recruitment Functions IT/ITES vs. Textile & Apparel Sector, India (Illustrative Comparative Index; author's synthesis based on sources cited in Sections 6 and 7).

Three patterns stand out. First, the adoption gap is widest in the most "AI-native" functions predictive analytics and AI video/skill assessment where IT firms have both the applicant volume and digital infrastructure to justify investment, while textile firms have neither the volume concentration nor the underlying HRIS maturity to support such tools economically. Second, the gap narrows somewhat at the resume-screening stage, reflecting the fact that even textile firms increasingly use basic applicant tracking or resume-parsing tools for corporate and supervisory roles, even if factory-floor hiring remains largely manual. Third, chatbot-based sourcing shows a substantial but not extreme gap, consistent with reports of early experimentation with voice- and chat-based worker communication tools in textiles (YuVerse.ai, 2026), even as full sourcing automation remains rare.

Beyond adoption levels, the two sectors also differ in the primary value driver behind AI investment. In IT, the dominant driver is precision at scale: filtering millions of

applications down to a shortlist of candidates with verifiable, in-demand technical skills, particularly in AI, cloud, and cybersecurity domains (Whalesbook, 2026). In textiles, where the dominant HR challenge is compliance and workforce administration across dispersed sites rather than applicant-volume filtering, AI investment is more likely to be justified on administrative efficiency and risk-reduction grounds than on candidate-matching sophistication (TalentPro India, 2025).

8.1 Broader Adoption and Application Patterns

Placing both sectors within the global pattern of generative-AI use in talent acquisition helps explain why IT-sector adoption maps so closely onto general industry trends while textile-sector adoption lags. Figure 2 shows the most common generative-AI applications reported by organisations using AI for talent acquisition globally.

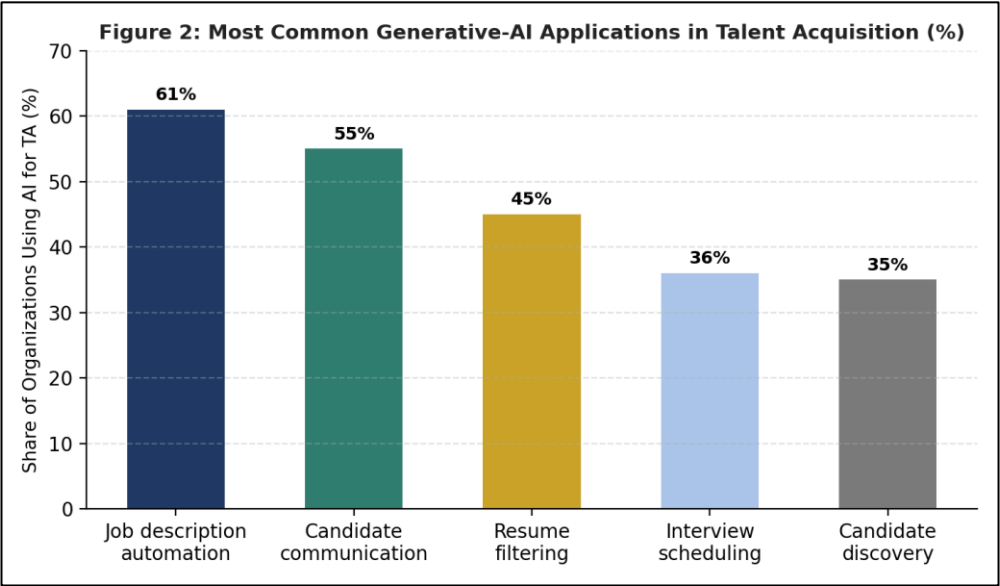


Figure 2. Most Common Generative-AI Applications in Talent Acquisition, Globally (%). Source: HR.com survey data, as reported in Select Software Reviews (2026).

Job-description automation and candidate communication are the two most common applications, together suggesting that organisations are prioritising AI at the "front end" of the funnel attracting and engaging candidates before deeper investment in resume filtering, scheduling, and discovery (Select Software Reviews, 2026). This sequencing is broadly consistent with what is observed in the Indian IT sector, where communication- and screening-stage AI is well established, while it helps explain why textile-sector adoption, which has barely engaged even the front-end applications at scale, remains at an earlier point on the same curve.

The overall growth trajectory of the global AI-recruitment market, shown in Figure 1, underscores that this is a rapidly expanding rather than static field, which has differing implications for the two sectors: IT firms are positioned to capture efficiency gains from an increasingly mature vendor ecosystem, while textile firms risk a widening capability gap unless targeted, sector-appropriate tools and government or industry-body support become available (Maximize Market Research, 2026); (Fashion Value Chain, 2025)

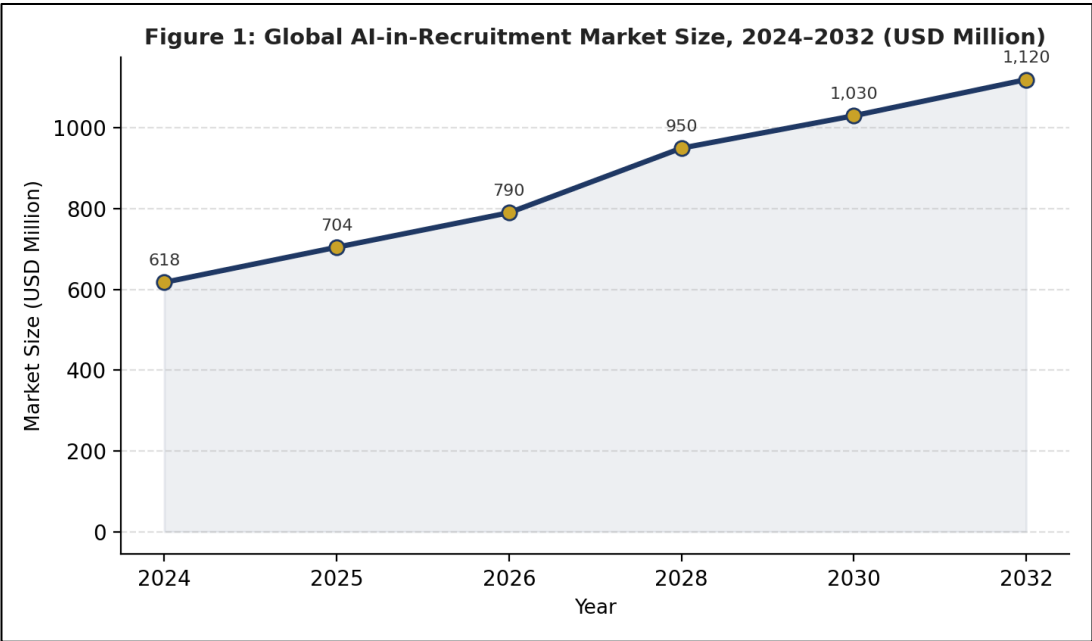


Figure 1. Global AI-in-Recruitment Market Size, 2024–2032 (USD Million). Sources: DemandSage (2026); Maximize Market Research (2026); intermediate years interpolated for illustrative trend continuity.

9. CHALLENGES, RISKS, AND LIMITATIONS

9.1 Cross-Sectoral Risks

6. Algorithmic bias and legal exposure: The Workday litigation illustrates that AI screening tools can produce discriminatory outcomes at massive scale if not properly audited, exposing both AI vendors and the employers who deploy their tools to legal and reputational risk (Talent MSH, 2026).
7. Candidate trust deficits: A significant share of jobseekers report reluctance to apply to roles that use AI in hiring decisions, suggesting that poorly communicated AI use can shrink rather than expand the applicant pool (DemandSage, 2026).
8. Integration with legacy systems: Analysts consistently identify integration with existing HR systems as a key barrier to realising AI's benefits, regardless of sector (Technavio, 2026).

9.2 Sector-Specific Risks

9. IT sector: Over-reliance on AI screening risks narrowing candidate diversity if models are trained predominantly on historically successful hires, and rising use of AI by candidates themselves (for interview preparation and, in some cases, undisclosed real-time assistance) is creating an assessment-integrity arms race (InCruiter, 2026).
10. Textile sector: Data protection gaps, workforce resistance rooted in fear of job displacement, and the sheer heterogeneity of factory-level processes make even modest AI-HR pilots harder to scale than in more standardised industries (Fashion Value Chain, 2025; YuVerse.ai, 2026).

9.3 Methodological Limitations of This Study

This paper relies on secondary industry and market-research data rather than a primary survey of matched Indian textile and IT firms; consequently, the comparative index in Figure 3 should be read as an illustrative synthesis rather than a statistically validated benchmark. Future research using a structured primary survey across a representative sample of firms in both sectors would allow the comparative adoption gap to be quantified with greater precision.

10. KEY FINDINGS

1. AI has become the default rather than the exception in recruitment among large, digitally mature organisations, with IT-sector firms in India at or near the leading edge of global adoption.
2. The efficiency case for AI in recruitment is strong and consistent across sources: reported time-to-hire reductions of 25–50%, sourcing-time reductions of up to 67%, and average ROI of roughly 340% within 18 months.

3. Sectoral context applicant volume, workforce structure, and digital infrastructure explains adoption gaps more than technology cost or availability; the textile sector's barriers are structural and organisational as much as financial.
4. The IT sector's AI-driven recruitment shift is reshaping the nature of hiring itself, from high-volume generalist recruitment toward selective, skills-based hiring concentrated on AI, cloud, and cybersecurity capabilities.
5. Where AI is adopted in the textile sector, it tends to target administrative and compliance pain points (attendance, payroll, documentation) rather than the core recruitment funnel, reflecting a different value proposition than in IT.
6. Bias, legal exposure, and candidate trust remain unresolved risks in both sectors, and are likely to shape the next phase of regulatory attention to AI in hiring.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 For IT/ITES Sector HR Leaders

1. Institute regular bias audits of AI screening and assessment tools, given the scale of applications processed and the precedent set by ongoing algorithmic-discrimination litigation.
2. Invest in AI-proctoring and integrity-verification tools proportionate to the rising use of AI-assisted interview preparation and potential real-time candidate assistance.
3. Balance AI-driven efficiency with transparent candidate communication about how and where AI is used in the hiring process, to mitigate trust deficits.

11.2 For Textile & Apparel Sector HR Leaders

1. Prioritise AI investment at high-friction administrative points (attendance, payroll compliance, documentation) where value is clearest and workflow customisation needs are lower, rather than attempting full recruitment-funnel automation immediately.
2. Pilot AI-HR tools at corporate and supervisory hiring levels first, where processes are more standardised, before extending to dispersed factory-floor recruitment.
3. Engage industry bodies and policymakers to advocate for capital-investment incentives and shared data-protection frameworks that reduce the cost and risk of sector-appropriate AI adoption.

11.3 Cross-Sectoral Recommendations

1. *Adopt a phased, function-by-function AI adoption roadmap rather than a single enterprise-wide rollout, sequencing investment according to where applicant volume or administrative burden is highest.*

2. *Build internal AI governance capability covering data privacy, model auditing, and legal compliance ahead of scaling AI-HR tools, rather than retrofitting governance after adoption.*

12. CONCLUSION

Artificial Intelligence is fundamentally reshaping recruitment and talent acquisition, but not uniformly. In India's IT/ITES sector, AI has become deeply embedded across the recruitment value chain, driven by extreme applicant volumes and a business model that is itself pivoting toward AI-linked services producing a paradoxical environment of slowing overall headcount growth alongside intensifying competition for AI-skilled talent. In the textile and apparel sector, by contrast, AI adoption in HR remains constrained by structural barriers capital limitations, workforce heterogeneity, weak data-protection frameworks, and change resistance that are organisational and economic as much as technological. The comparative evidence assembled in this paper suggests that closing this gap will require sector-appropriate tools and targeted institutional support rather than the simple diffusion of IT-sector recruitment technology into textile-sector contexts. As AI in recruitment matures globally, the central management challenge for HR leaders in both sectors will be balancing efficiency gains against emerging risks of bias, legal exposure, and candidate trust an agenda that is likely to define the next phase of research and practice in AI-enabled HRM.

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