

The Reality of AI in Recruitment: Too Good to Be True?

PSY 487

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What is AI?

AI, or artificial intelligence, is defined as a group of technologies that are programmed to mimic the behavior of humans (Barney, 2019)


Can be used in various ways across contexts- can be a group of algorithms in a computer, or a physical invention like robots

Has increasing popularity across business areas, especially in HR domain (SHRM, 2015)

AI is here to stay- in 2019, 66% of companies reported their aim to automate more of their organizational processes that year worldwide (Bravery et al., 2019; SHRM, 2015)!

How is AI Used in HR?

AI tools can be used in the areas of screening, recruiting, ATS, learning and development, compensation, and community engagement (Zielinski, 2020).



In the area of selection and recruitment, AI has been implemented to:

Automate tedious, repetitive tasks like screening resumes and scheduling interviews

Integrate data collection of other unique variables

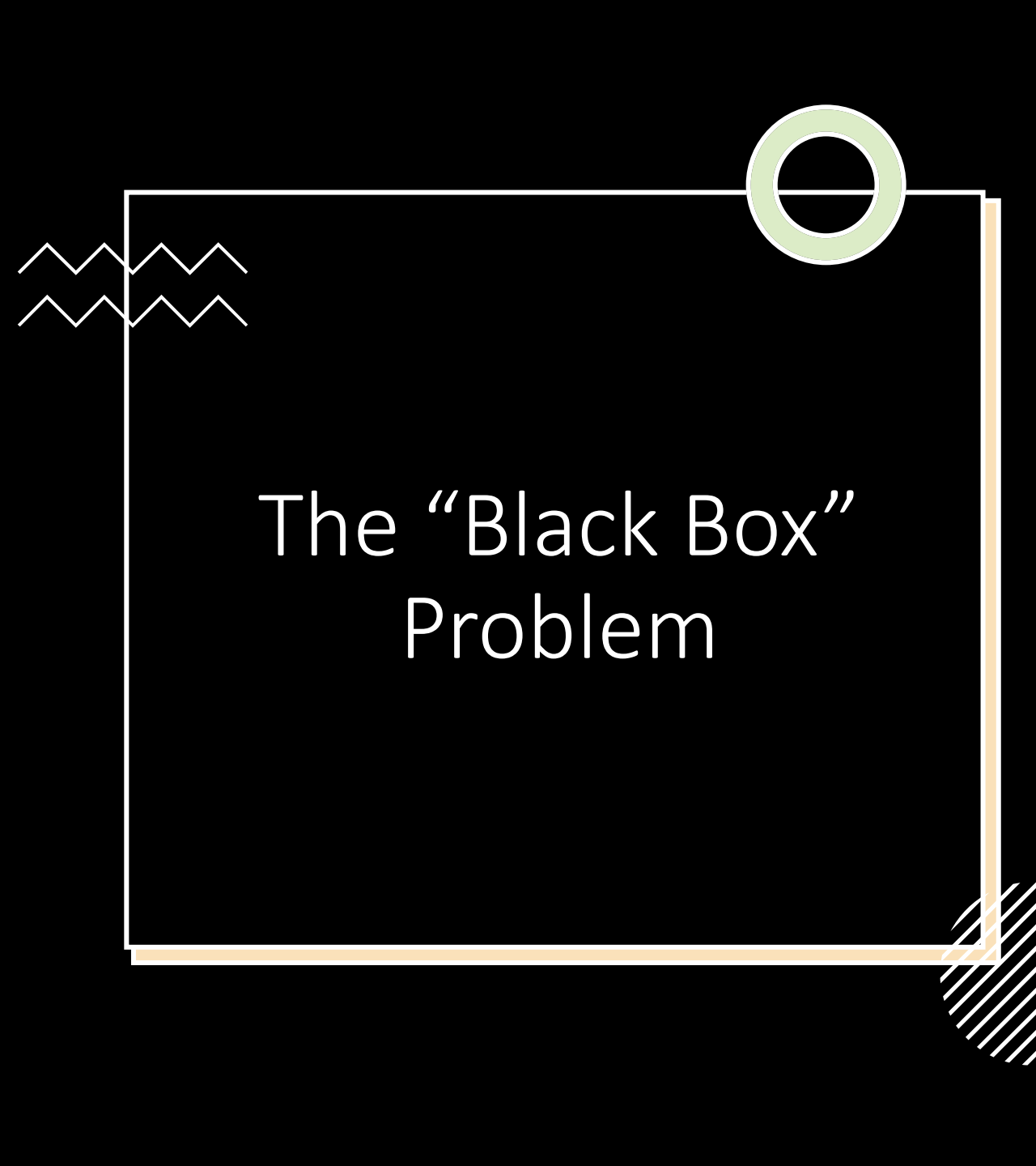
Centralize mass data to make better decisions

Perform validation studies of measures and conduct job analyses (SIOP-Morelli, 2019).



Bias and Fairness Concerns

- Programming can intentionally or unintentionally be biased against women or POC
- AI runs on historical data, so the AI of companies with bias in their hiring practices may mimic past patterns to deliver results
 - Can cause similarity bias
- Also, can be biased if it causes adverse impact when selecting people with certain matching skillsets/keywords
- Employment law would recommend having documented reasons for the rejection of candidates for legal defense – AI may not store this data



The “Black Box” Problem

- “Black box”= the concealed, vague nature of AI technology that is produced by several vendors
- Vendors often don’t disclose their algorithms that determine their outcomes
 - Some use deep-learning technology requires several datapoints and algorithms that make it difficult for companies to interpret their AI models and validate their measures (Landers, 2019; SIOP-Morelli, 2019; Adler & Boyce, 2016).
- This threatens the reliability and validity of using these systems
- Can lead to bias or adverse impact – are they legally defensible?

Other Overall Concerns

- AI is very inconsistent conceptually- can mean a simple keyword search for some companies, or a large system of algorithms for another
- AI misses the opportunity to measure potential in candidates with different experiences
- Face validity concerns- job candidates do not take well that their opportunity for employment is determined by computers
 - Also concerns regarding how to make your resume stand out to computers
 - Can open the door for ghosting/limited communication
- Limits opportunities for recruiters

My Internship Experience

Talent Acquisition
Internship at Princeton IT
Services, INC.

- Our ATS Ceipal had “AI technology” that gave them a competitive advantage – in reality, it was a keyword search and an integrated database to gather potential job candidates
 - Ceipal did not narrow the candidate pool and required recruiters to still comb through the resumes – there is question about its efficiency
 - Also, some resumes did not scan well, so some candidates looked more attractive to recruiters because of information ability – this is a risk for bias/unfairness
- High potential for ghosting

Takeaways

Recommendations For Businesses

- Consider other solutions beside implementing AI tools
- Include human employees in overseeing AI to minimize risks of bias or unfairness
- To overcome the “black box” problem, be sure to ask questions about vendor technology before deciding on one (SIOP-Morelli, 2019)
- Implement a documentation algorithm for AI to explain its rejection of candidates

Recommendations for Job Candidates

- Include several relevant keywords to describe experiences to be considered by ATS (review job description and company statements)
- Avoid using abbreviations and use simple phrasing/avoid creative wording (GetFive, 2021)
- Submit resume as a PDF and keep in mind that resume length is not a consideration for ATS (GetFive, 2021)

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