

Connecting the dots between subjective norms, perceived ease of operational use, and intention towards shaping AI adoption strategies for talent acquisition

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Abstract This study aims to conceptually and empirically investigate the role of subjective norms (SN) and perceived ease of operational use (PEU) in influencing the behavioral intention (BI) of human resources (HR) professionals to adopt artificial intelligence (AI) strategies for talent acquisition within the Egyptian banks and across their supply chains. This study applied a quantitative approach by surveying 100 HR professionals within various banks in Egypt through a snowball sampling technique. The hypotheses were subsequently tested using structural equation modeling (SEM). The results indicate that SN and PEU play a significant role in shaping the BI towards AI adoption among HR professionals in the Egyptian banking sector. The findings of this study produce several remarkable multidisciplinary practical implications for AI technology experts, strategic human resources leaders and operations and supply chain managers to develop effective strategies for AI adoption in the Egyptian banking sector and other similar industries and countries. Thereby, this multidisciplinary research contribution is resulted from the integration of the literature of technology adoption (i.e., AI adoption), human resources management (i.e., talent acquisition), and strategic, operations, and supply chain management (i.e., developing functional strategies encompassing the adoption of AI systems with an ease of operational use within organisations and across supply chains).

Keywords Artificial intelligence adoption strategies, Talent acquisition, Perceived ease of operational use, Technology-enhanced operations and supply chain management, Strategic Human Resources Management

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1. Introduction and motivation

Strategic human resources management as well as operations and supply chain management have undergone significant changes over the years in response to evolving business needs and technological advancements (Roy *et al.*, 2025; Sharma & Khan, 2023). Technology has evolved in these fields from primarily performing administrative tasks to playing a strategic role within organisations and among supply chains (Roy *et al.*, 2025; Sharma & Khan, 2023; Adel & Younis, 2023). Also, with an increased realisation of the human capital as the greatest asset of an organisation/supply chain, strategic human resources management (SHRM) has developed as one of the drivers of a successful organisation/supply chain (El-Sharkawy et al., 2023). At the center of this evolution is the area of talent acquisition (TA), TA is crucial in ensuring that the workforce of an organisation/supply chain is aligned with its broad strategic objectives (Pillai & Sivathanu, 2020). It entails long-term strategies related to manpower planning, sourcing, attraction, hiring, and onboarding qualified candidates to occupy particular jobs in these organisations and across their industries' supply chains (Vedapradha et al., 2023). While the process of TA is highly challenging, technology has made it more effective and efficient for HR employees to accomplish and to access their potential candidates (Pillai & Sivathanu, 2020). Accordingly, most of the world industry leaders are embracing technology in their TA practices, which make traditional TA methods to become insufficient in coping with increasing talent competition (Chen, 2023). Amongst the most influential evolving technologies in SHRM is artificial intelligence (AI). According to Schmidt (2020), HR experts are optimistic about the effect of AI on boosting their TA process. This is because AI can execute several cognitive functions and mimic the human intelligence, which can reduce repetitive HR duties and automate several complex and time-consuming operations (George & Thomas, 2021; Younis & Adel, 2020). Figure 1 demonstrates AI benefits in the strategic HRM area according to the prior literature (Alshahrani et al., 2025; Das & Samal, 2025; Fernández-Morante *et al.*, 2021; George

& Thomas, 2021; Mohamed *et al.*, 2018; Roy *et al.*, 2025; Schmidt, 2020; Younis & Adel, 2020). Despite these benefits, the adoption of AI is still developing in Egypt with an increasing number of organisations and supply chains that are taking steps towards its implementation in order to enhance their TA practices, but there is still a considerable number of organisations/supply chains in Egypt that seem hesitant to adopt AI strategies in their operations. Hence, this research will examine the underlying drivers of the intention to incorporate AI strategies into TA among HR employees working in the Egyptian banking sector. This research reviewed the studies related to the technology acceptance model (TAM) in the literature review before investigating the relationship between the subjective norms, perceived ease of operational use, and intention towards shaping AI adoption strategies for talent acquisition.

Information and communication technologies (ICT) including AI applications are digitally transforming the field of business administration particularly the strategic HRM as well as the operations and supply chain management functions in various industries (e.g., healthcare, automotive, and higher education) in Egypt (Adel, 2015; Adel & Allam, 2014; Adel, 2016; Adel *et al.*, 2018; Adel *et al.*, 2024) especially in the banking industry (Adel & Younis, 2023). The Egyptian banking sector is selected to be investigated in this research due to its significant positive impact on the Egyptian economy and GDP (Galal, 2025) especially after starting to formulate AI-oriented HRM strategies across its banking supply chains. Thus, this research will guide the formulation of effective AI adoption strategies that address the unique needs of Egyptian HR employees and other similar emerging economies since it produced empirical practical findings and implications that have been derived from the Egyptian context. In addition, the present research contributes to the multidisciplinary literature on the adoption strategies of AI for TA across the banking supply chains and its practical implications are directed for the future of digital workplace and the deployment of technology in sustainable AI-powered banks.

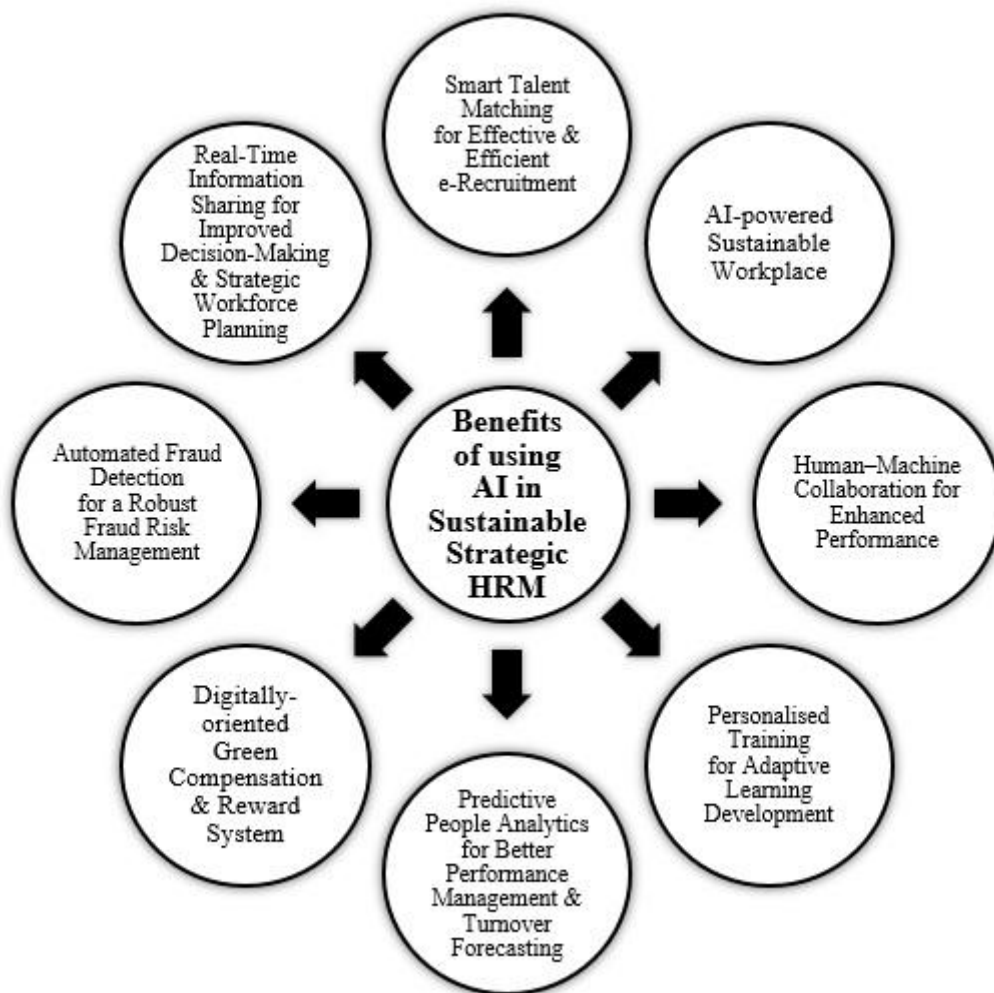


Figure 1: Benefits of using artificial intelligence in sustainable strategic HRM

Source: The authors' own work

2. Literature review and hypotheses development

2.1. Subjective norms and behavioral intention towards AI adoption

Behavioral intention (BI) is one of the central TAM constructs, which contributes to the conceptual model of this study (Davis, 1989). BI is defined as the extent of willingness/likelihood of an individual to perform or not perform a given behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). Similarly, Gado *et al.* (2022) described BI as an aim, target, or plan for

using a technology or even just learning more about it. As per Biala (2022), it is a measure of one's future action behavior, rather than actual technology usage. In other words, without developing a strong BI, actual adoption or usage is unlikely to happen, no matter how positive the user's perceptions are. In line with this study, BI can refer to a situation where an HR employee expresses their desire to adopt AI technology, which reflects their readiness to formulate and implement AI-driven corporate and functional strategies. In the context of the current study, BI can refer to an HR employee declaring their desire to implement AI technology, which indicates their readiness to employ AI technology in conducting their TA practices. According to Hmoud and Várallyai (2020), BI to adopt technology has extensively been utilised in different prediction models for the purpose of developing technology-oriented innovative strategies in various areas of application including technology-enhanced education (Radhamani et al., 2021), e-commerce (Hamid et al., 2023), e-government (Hooda et al., 2022), autonomous vehicles (Keszey, 2020), FinTech (Darmansyah et al., 2021), human resource information systems (Alkhwaldi et al., 2023), and e-healthcare (Alhasan et al., 2022). A limited number of studies examined the BI of adopting AI specifically for TA. For example, Kaoutar and Abdelaziz (2024) conceptually investigated BI towards AI adoption for TA but from the candidates' perception instead of measuring the intention of usage among HR professionals. Furthermore, there is a lack of research that specifically addressed the relationship between SN, PEU, and BI to adopt AI for TA in the Egyptian banking context. Recent studies have highlighted the potential role of subjective norms (SN) to shape individuals' BI to adopt new technologies (Kucuk, 2020; Songkram et al., 2023; Sujood et al., 2024; Troise et al., 2021). SN is conceptualised as the societal pressure/influence that individuals perceive during considering whether or not they should conduct a certain behavior or in other words what is perceived as being socially acceptable (Ajzen, 1991; Goh et al., 2022). It is related to the impact of family, networks, and cultural beliefs on an individual's decision-making (Adewale, 2024).

As discussed by Buabeng-Andoh (2018), when an individual finds out that a behavior is being strongly supported by the ones who are important to him/her, there is a greater probability that this individual will perform that behavior.

As for the context of technology adoption within organisations and among supply chains, SN implies the pressure exerted by other significant stakeholders, such as peers, leaders, partners, suppliers or customers, on an individual's/organisation's/supply chain's adoption of new technologies (Adewale, 2024). It measures to what extent a person or an institution believes that important stakeholders approve or disapprove the use of a specific technology. Positive SN indicate that important stakeholders, of an individual or an organisation or a supply chain, accept or endorse the use of a particular technology, while negative SN reject or disapprove using that technology (Adewale, 2024). Similarly, HR employees are likely to incorporate AI in the process of TA based on the pressure and influence from other stakeholders. Although earlier research has investigated the impact of SN on BI in different contexts, few studies have investigated the SN-BI relationship towards AI adoption strategies for TA especially in the banking industry. Despite the existence of the above-mentioned studies that concluded a significant positive SN-BI relationship, there are other studies (e.g., Danurdoro & Wulandari, 2016; Kumar et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2025) that reported an insignificant SN-BI relationship. Besides, very few studies have been conducted within the Egyptian market. In order to address these gaps and mixed findings reported in the literature, the following hypothesis was shaped:

H1: SN positively affects the BI towards AI adoption strategies for TA.

2.2. Perceived ease of operational use and behavioral intention towards AI adoption

Perceived ease of operational use (PEU), as a factor in the TAM model, refers to

the belief that the utilisation of a specific technology would not involve additional effort (Davis 1989). As claimed by Al-Rahmi et al. (2019), the level of complexity/difficulty of a technology is the most influential determinant that estimates the BI of the user to utilise that technology. This means that the greater the capability of a system to be easier in its operational usage, the more users would desire to adopt this new technology. On the contrary, individuals/organisations/supply chains may be discouraged to adopt a technology that they perceive to be hard to use. Therefore, the ease of operational use is crucial in estimating whether individuals/organisations/supply chains will adopt a new technology or not. The ease of operational use, as investigated in the present study, is the degree to which a human resources employee expects AI usage to be simple to operate with reduced effort. PEU has been empirically investigated in studies within several research contexts (Na et al., 2022; Sudaryono et al., 2023; Xu et al., 2020). For instance, To and Trinh (2021) concluded that PEU significantly influenced customers' intentions to make use of the mobile wallet services. This indicates that when they perceive this technology as convenient and simple in its operations, they become more willing to exploit it. Moreover, Wang and Shin (2022) found out that PEU affects positively the intention to operate the metaverse in the learning context because the easier learners believe that this new technology is easy to operate, the more probably they are going to try this technology.

Moving to the studies that have examined the factors affecting the AI adoption intention in the field of human resources management, Abaza and Eltobgy (2025) conducted a study in Egypt where the employment of AI was investigated in the recruitment and selection practices but its application was on the tourism sector not the banking industry, which is the contribution of the current study. At the same time, there are mixed findings related to the existing literature, which studied the PEU-BI relationship. Despite the existence of the above-mentioned studies that concluded a significant positive PEU-BI relationship, there are other studies (e.g., Aji et al., 2021;

Esen & Erdoğan, 2014; Kumar *et al.*, 2020) that reported an insignificant PEU-BI relationship. To investigate this research gap, this paper studies the effect of the ease of operational use on BI of adopting AI strategies for TA in the Egyptian banking context. Accordingly, the authors proposed the following hypothesis:

H2: The perceived ease of operational use of AI positively affects the BI to adopt it for TA.

3. Methodology

The current study employed a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional design, where an online questionnaire served as the primary data collection tool. After conducting a comprehensive scanning of the relevant literature, a conceptual model consisting of three variables has been proposed by the authors to examine HR employees' intentions to adopt AI for TA. Figure 2 depicts the hypothesised relationships between these variables. The aim of this study is to explore the impact of SN and PEU (as independent variables) on the BI of HR employees to adopt AI for TA (as dependent variable).

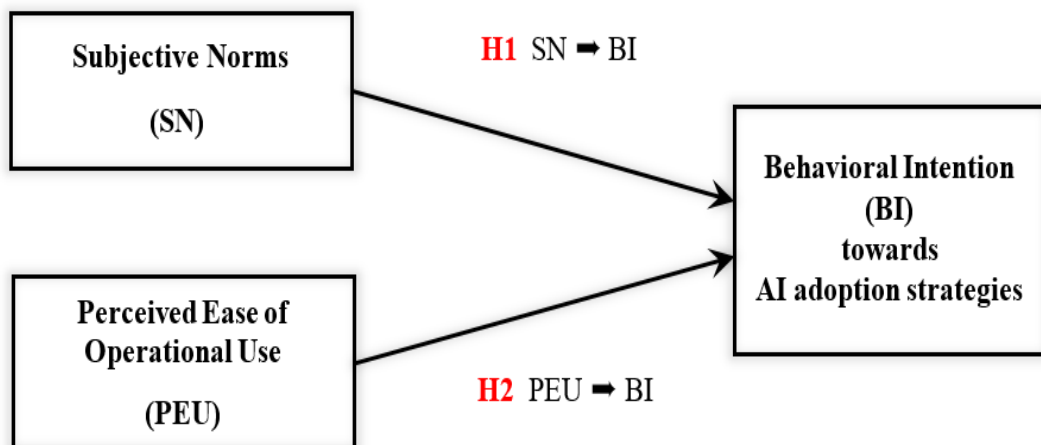


Figure 2: The research model
Source: The authors' own work

The population of the current study consists of all the HR employees who work in the area of TA in private and public banks in Egypt. This includes individuals from different roles and job titles within the area of TA, such as TA managers, specialists, generalists, and other relevant positions. Since there was no sample frame available, following Younis and Adel (2020), this study used non-probability sampling technique, which started with judgmental sampling, where the authors selected a number of suitable banks for the data collection in relevance to the research topic, and continued with the snowball technique based on the recommendations of the respondents. The data collection process provided 100 valid responses from HR professionals working in TA within the Egyptian banking sector. The questionnaire items were derived from the literature and adapted according to this study context. The questionnaire has 12 items measuring the three research variables, using a 5-point Likert scale, as recommended in the survey-based management studies (Nagy & Adel, 2025), ranging from 1= “strongly disagree” to 5 = “strongly agree”. SN was assessed using 5 adapted measurement-items by Izquierdo-Yusta *et al.* (2022). Whereas, PEU and BI were examined using 7 adapted measurement-items from Kucukusta *et al.* (2015). Before the quantitative data collection, a pilot testing was carried out with 15 HR professionals from the target population. These qualitative interviews helped establishing the content/face validity of the measurement-items by checking whether the questionnaire items reflected the model’s variables that the authors intended to assess (Lim, 2024). Based on the feedback from the interviewees/participants, the measurement-items were adapted by the authors in order to enhance their clarity and reflect the research context and area of application of the current study.

4. Results and findings

Partial least squares–structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) is used in the present study for hypotheses testing. The PLS-SEM analysis was conducted through

SmartPLS software [version 4.1.0.9] in two main stages, as described by [Hair *et al.* \(2020\)](#). In the first stage, the measurement model was assessed by means of confirmatory composite analysis (CCA), and the second stage focused on the structural model to investigate the hypothesised relationships among the variables.

Concerning the CCA, findings confirmed that the model's variables/statements were both reliable and valid. As evident from [Table 1](#), all the measurement-statements' loadings were above the acceptable value of 0.708, with the lowest loading being 0.726. Each construct's reliability was proven as well since the Cronbach's alpha values in addition to the composite reliability (CR) values were all above the 0.70 threshold value. The lowest Cronbach's alpha value was 0.874, while the lowest CR value was 0.907 (as evident from [Table 1](#)). In addition, the convergent validity was also established as all the average variance extracted (AVE) values of all constructs were more than the minimum threshold value of 0.50 ([Hair *et al.*, 2019](#); [Hair *et al.*, 2020](#)) with the lowest AVE recorded at 0.661.

Table 1. Constructs' Reliability and Validity

Variabl es	Items	Items Loading	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted
BI	BI1	0.933	0.925	0.952	0.870
	BI2	0.930			
	BI3	0.935			
PEU	PEU1	0.836	0.891	0.925	0.754
	PEU2	0.810			
	PEU3	0.909			
	PEU4	0.915			
SN	SN1	0.726	0.874	0.907	0.661
	SN2	0.794			
	SN3	0.868			
	SN4	0.846			
	SN5	0.824			

Source: Generated by the authors using SmartPLS

Furthermore, the discriminant validity was also examined/proven using the Fornell-Larcker criterion as well as the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT). [Table 2](#) indicates that the Fornell-Larcker criterion was met since the square root of each factor's AVE exceeds its correlations with other constructs. Besides, all the HTMT values, as exemplified in [Table 2](#), were less than the recommended threshold of 0.85, with the highest HTMT value of 0.539, which also confirms the discriminant validity (Hair *et al.*, 2019; Hair *et al.*, 2020).

Table 2. Discriminant Validity based on the Fornell-Larcker and HTMT Methods

Variables	BI	PEU	SN
BI	0.933		
PEU	0.498 (0.539)	0.868	
SN	0.433 (0.452)	0.476 (0.534)	0.813

Source: Generated by the authors using SmartPLS

Notes: Bold values show the square root of AVE; HTMT ratios are shown in brackets.

To assess the multicollinearity, the variance inflation factor (VIF) values between the factors were computed, which were found to be below the threshold of 3, and therefore no multicollinearity was observed (as revealed in [Table 3](#)).

Table 3: The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)

Variables	BI (Dependent Variable)
PEU	1.293
SN	1.293

Source: Generated by the authors using SmartPLS

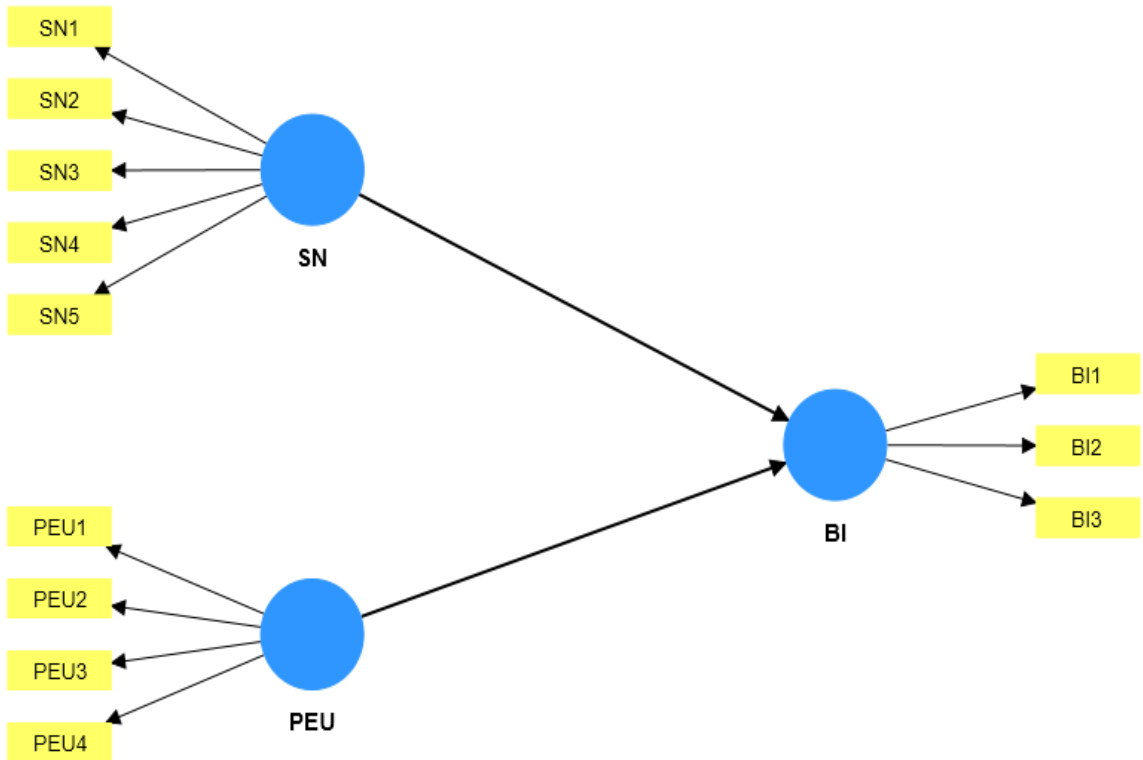


Figure 3: Structural Model
Source: Generated by the authors using SmartPLS

The structural model was then tested to examine the relationships among SN, PEU, and BI (as depicted in [Figure 3](#)). As disclosed in [Table 4](#), the effects of SN and PEU on BI were statistically significant. SN affected BI positively and significantly by 25.4% (99% confidence level), thereby, supporting H1. While PEU impacted BI positively and significantly by 37.7% (99.9% confidence level), thus, supporting H2. These findings emphasise the important roles of PEU and SN on the development of the behavioral intention to adopt AI strategies for TA by HR professionals working in the Egyptian banking sector. Both of the hypothesised relationships were statistically significant and consistent with the theoretical assumption. Therefore, this

supports the nomological validity of the model, which is the degree to which the investigated relationships between the constructs align with the established theory and the literature (Lim, 2024).

Table 4: Path Coefficients and Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis	Path	Path Coefficient (β)	<i>p</i> -value	Outcome
H₁	SN $\rightarrow$ BI	0.254	0.003	Supported
H₂	PEU $\rightarrow$ BI	0.377	0.000	Supported

Source: Generated by the authors using SmartPLS

5. Conclusions and strategic, operations and human resources managerial implications

The continuous process of developing, implementing and evaluating technology-oriented strategies in the management field is still in need for more empirical research, which bridge the theoretical-practical gap of maintaining strategic human resources management within sustainable organisations in the digital transformation era (Mahrous & Adel, 2017; Adel *et al.*, 2024). The purpose of this publication was to study the determinants of the intention of HR professionals to adopt AI strategies for TA in the Egyptian banking sector. This research identified and tackled a clear research gap in the existing management literature related to our research topic. At the same time, there are mixed findings related to the existing literature, which studied the SN-BI and PEU-BI relationships as will be clarified further in this section. Although there has been a significant global attention towards the integration of AI into human resources management practices, there is a lack of empirical studies investigating contemporary AI adoption strategies within the strategic human resources management of the Egyptian banking sector so far. Furthermore, there is a lack of research that specifically addressed the relationship between SN, PEU, and BI to adopt AI strategies particularly for TA in the Egyptian banking context. Based on

the related multidisciplinary literature of strategic, operations and human resources management, the conceptual model was proposed to include SN, perceived ease of operational use, and BI towards AI adoption strategies for TA. The model was empirically analysed through a quantitative approach using a structured online questionnaire. Data were gathered from 100 HR professionals working in TA within various banks in Egypt, and afterwards were analysed using PLS-SEM. In addition, 15 qualitative interviews were conducted with HR professionals to help in validating (i.e., face/content validity) the questionnaire's statements (Adel & Younis, 2023) and further interpreting the quantitative results.

From a social perspective and according to the results of H1 in this study, SN showed a significant positive influence on BI, which is *consistent with the outcomes of a number of prior studies* that highlighted the social impact on the technology-oriented adoption decisions (Aji *et al.*, 2021; Al Kurdi *et al.*, 2021; Gupta *et al.*, 2024). This supports the idea that the banking professionals' intention towards adopting new AI-driven strategies are influenced by the views and perception of others around them. One interviewee pointed out that: “*when I see my colleagues or other banking professionals from my network are adopting new technology-related strategies or are trying new technologies for recruitment and talk positively about them, I feel a responsibility to explore them too*”. However, this result is *inconsistent with the findings of other studies* (e.g., Danurdoro & Wulandari, 2016; Kumar *et al.*, 2020; Wang *et al.*, 2025), who found out that SN was statistically insignificant in influencing the intention towards the adoption of new technologies.

From an operational perspective and based on the results of H2 in the current study, the perceived ease of operational use also had a significant positive effect on BI towards adopting new AI-driven strategies and this finding is in agreement with a number of prior management studies (e.g., Alshurideh *et al.*, 2024; Nafea, 2021; Rini & Khasanah, 2021; Wardana *et al.*, 2022). Conversely, a number of other studies (e.g., Aji *et al.*, 2021; Esen & Erdoğan, 2014; Kumar *et al.*, 2020) generated opposite

findings to the present research. The interviewees of the current study agreed that the ease of operational use plays a major role in shaping their willingness to adopt new AI-driven strategies in TA. They shared the same insight that when a system appears to be complex or shows difficulty in usage, it becomes an operational barrier towards trying it out. One of our respondents explained this insight by stating that “*if it shows difficulty in its operational usage or takes additional time to learn, no one will even attempt it because we are already overloaded*”.

In accordance with these findings, several managerial implications and recommendations can be extracted as follows:

1. This study contributes conceptually and empirically to the TAM studies through investigating in one model the *operational (i.e., ease of operational use) and social (i.e., subjective norms) factors* that affect the intention towards adopting AI strategies for talent acquisition among HR professionals in the Egyptian banking industry. Figure 4 shows this research multidisciplinary contribution through integrating the literature of technology adoption (i.e., AI adoption), human resources management (i.e., talent acquisition), and strategic, operations, and supply chain management (i.e., developing functional strategies encompassing adopting AI systems with an ease of operational use), which resulted into the investigated area of this research (i.e., AI adoption strategies for TA within organisations and across supply chains).
2. The research implications can be boosted through future relevant publications that can study additional factors such as the supply chain stakeholders’ support or the organisational and supply chain innovation climate to measure the impact on AI adoption across the whole supply chain.
3. Management researchers may also consider applying the model to other industrial sectors in Egypt and assessing the adoption of AI strategies towards enhancing other HRM practices (e.g., training or performance management) or towards boosting supply chain management (SCM) practices (e.g., e-supply chain integration and real-time information sharing across the whole supply chains).
4. For Banking Operations Managers, the research emphasises the importance of facilitating adequate resources that support the implementation of AI within their banks. For IT and HR Managers, the research suggests the importance of building digital readiness with the right ease of operational use of their AI advanced

systems as well as developing the suitable training programmes on how AI tools can maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of recruitment. Regarding the policy makers and regulators, they are advised to develop national frameworks with clear policies that promote the ethical use of AI across the whole industries' supply chains while protecting stakeholders' rights.

As for the current study's limitations, the use of a cross-sectional design and a non-probability sample of 100 HR professionals may limit the generalisability of the findings. Additionally, the focus on AI strategies adoption for TA only within the Egyptian banking sector may not reflect other AI adoption strategies in other organisational/supply chain functional areas or within other industries in Egypt or other countries. Thus, future studies are advised to conduct comparative longitudinal research with larger samples in order to be able to evaluate the long-term changes among different sectors in Egypt or between developed and other emerging industries' supply chains among different countries.

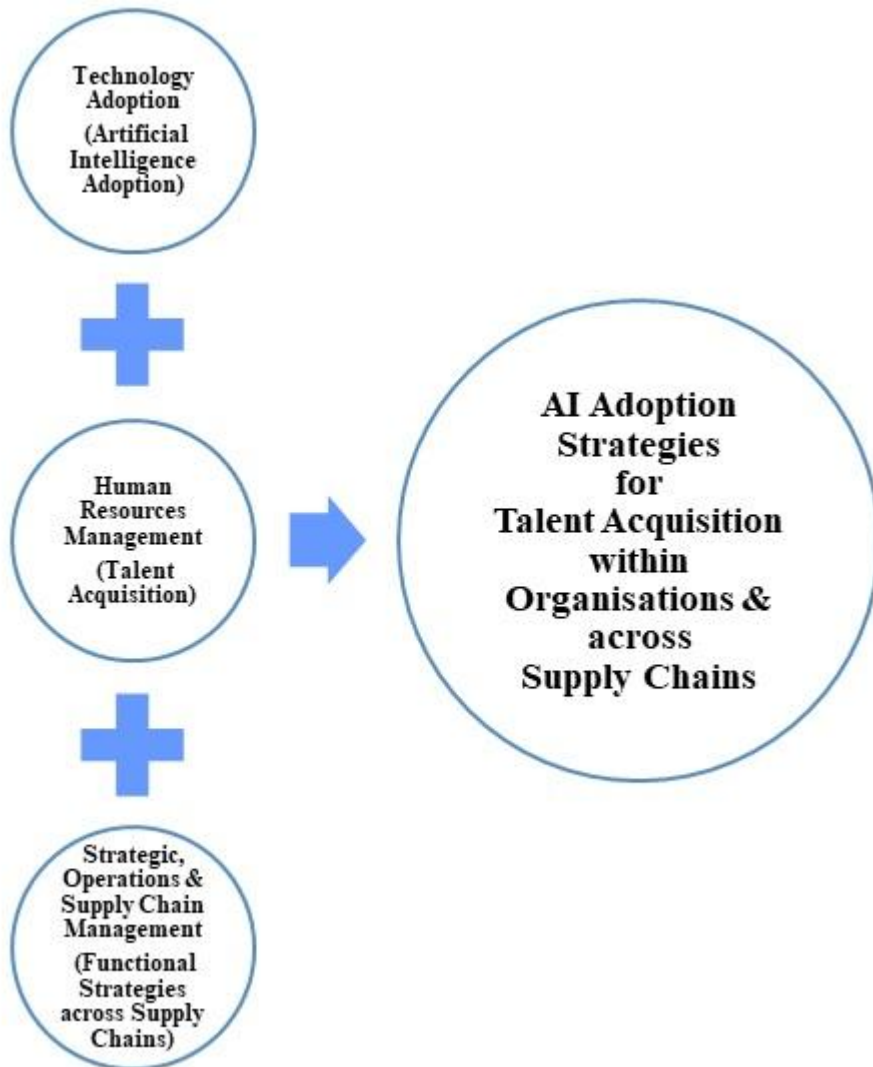


Figure 4: This multidisciplinary research contributed to the area of AI adoption strategies for talent acquisition within organisations and across supply chains
Source: The authors' own work

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