

The Effect of Human Resource Analytics on Reducing Time-to-Hire in Talent Acquisition: Evidence from FMCG Organisations in Zambia

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Article Info

Volume 7, Issue 3

Publication history

Accepted on 29 April 2026;

Published: 3 June 2026

Key Words:

HR analytics; Time-to-Hire; Talent Acquisition;
Recruitment Efficiency; Zambia

Article Doi:

10.59413/ajocs/v7.i3.52

Abstract

The efficiency of talent acquisition has become a critical determinant of organisational competitiveness, particularly in sectors characterised by high employee mobility and rapid operational cycles. This study examines the effect of Human Resources (HR) analytics on reducing time-to-hire within selected Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) organisations in Lusaka, Zambia. Grounded in evidence-based human resource management and socio-technical systems theory, the study adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining structured questionnaires (n = 29) and semi-structured interviews (n = 15) across four FMCG organisations. Quantitative findings reveal a statistically significant negative relationship between HR analytics utilisation and time-to-hire ($\beta = -0.56$, $p < 0.001$), while qualitative findings demonstrate that analytics improves recruitment efficiency through enhanced pipeline visibility, sourcing effectiveness, and hiring manager accountability. However, the effectiveness of HR analytics is moderated by organisational culture, technological integration, and HR analytics capability. The study contributes to the limited empirical literature on HR analytics in Sub-Saharan Africa and offers actionable recommendations for organisations seeking to enhance recruitment efficiency through analytics-enabled talent acquisition.

1. Introduction

The increasing complexity of global labour markets and intensified competition for skilled talent have elevated recruitment efficiency as a critical determinant of organisational performance. Among key recruitment metrics, time-to-hire—defined as the duration between job requisition approval and offer acceptance—has emerged as a central indicator of organisational agility, productivity, and cost efficiency (AIHR, 2024). Prolonged time-to-hire has been associated with increased recruitment costs, reduced operational efficiency, and loss of high-quality candidates, particularly in fast-paced sectors such as Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG), where workforce mobility is high and demand for talent is continuous (Bersin & AMS, 2023).

Globally, organisations are increasingly struggling with extended recruitment cycles. Recent evidence indicates that average time-to-hire has risen to approximately 44 days, with significantly longer durations observed in specialised roles (Personnel Today, 2023; Bersin & AMS, 2023). These trends highlight inefficiencies in traditional recruitment approaches and underscore the need for more data-driven and responsive hiring practices.

In response to these challenges, organisations are turning to Human Resource (HR) analytics, defined as the systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of workforce data to support evidence-based decision-making (Odionu et al., 2024). In the context of talent acquisition, HR analytics enables organisations to monitor recruitment pipelines, evaluate sourcing effectiveness, identify process bottlenecks, and improve decision-making speed. Empirical studies suggest that organisations leveraging HR analytics experience faster shortlisting, improved candidate-job alignment, and enhanced recruitment efficiency (CIPD, 2024; Bullhorn, 2024).

Despite growing global adoption, the utilisation of HR analytics remains uneven across regions. Research indicates that while advanced economies have successfully integrated analytics into strategic HR decision-making, many organisations in developing economies are still at a descriptive level of analytics maturity (Zulu, 2023). This limits the ability of HR analytics to influence key performance outcomes such as time-to-hire.

In Zambia, recruitment inefficiencies remain a persistent challenge. Reports from the Zambia Institute of Human Resource Management (ZIHRM) highlight widespread reliance on manual processes, fragmented HR systems, and limited analytics capability within organisations (ZIHRM, 2023; ZIHRM, 2024). Although many organisations have adopted HR Information Systems (HRIS), these systems are often used primarily for administrative purposes rather than strategic analytics, thereby limiting their impact on recruitment performance.

The challenge is particularly pronounced within the FMCG sector, which is characterised by high employee turnover, frequent recruitment needs, and pressure to maintain operational continuity. In such an environment, delays in recruitment directly affect productivity, service delivery, and competitive positioning. While HR analytics has the potential to address these inefficiencies, there is limited empirical evidence examining its effect on reducing time-to-hire within the Zambian context, particularly in sector-specific settings such as FMCG organisations.

This study therefore evaluates the impact of HR analytics on reducing time-to-hire in selected FMCG organisations in Lusaka, Zambia. By providing empirical, context-specific evidence, the study contributes to the limited body of knowledge on HR analytics in Sub-Saharan Africa and offers practical insights into how organisations can enhance recruitment efficiency through data-driven approaches.

2 Literature Review

2.1 HR Analytics and Talent Acquisition

Human Resource (HR) analytics has emerged as a strategic capability that supports organisations to move beyond intuition-driven HR decisions toward evidence-based workforce planning and performance improvement. Broadly, HR analytics refers to the systematic collection, integration, analysis, and interpretation of workforce and HR process data to generate insights that improve decision-making and organisational outcomes. In practice, HR analytics spans a spectrum from descriptive analytics (what happened) to diagnostic analytics (why it happened), predictive analytics (what is likely to happen), and prescriptive analytics (what should be done) (Odionu et al., 2024; Vadithe & Kesari, 2023).

Within talent acquisition, HR analytics is increasingly used to enhance recruitment effectiveness and efficiency by tracking and optimising key process indicators such as recruitment funnel conversion rates, source-of-hire effectiveness, screening accuracy, interview-to-offer ratios, and time-based measures (AIHR, 2024; CIPD, 2024). Analytics-enabled recruitment teams are able to make data-driven choices about which sourcing channels yield the most qualified applicants, which screening criteria predict success, and where delays occur in the pipeline (AIHR, 2024; Bullhorn, 2024).

A key mechanism through which HR analytics strengthens talent acquisition is pipeline visibility. Visibility refers to the ability of HR and hiring managers to see real-time movement of candidates across recruitment stages and to identify bottlenecks that slow hiring decisions. When analytics dashboards and integrated applicant tracking systems are used consistently, organisations can monitor stage-level turnaround times, identify roles at risk of exceeding turnaround time (TAT), and intervene earlier through escalations or process redesign (Bullhorn, 2024; AIHR, 2024).

HR analytics adoption is also increasingly linked with automation and artificial intelligence (AI)-supported recruitment practices. Recent literature highlights that AI-driven analytics can support screening, matching, and forecasting by processing large volumes of candidate data faster than manual methods, thereby improving speed and decision quality (Tripathi et al., 2025; Sharma & Garg, 2024). Although the depth and reliability of AI tools vary across organisations, this body of research reinforces the argument that analytics capability is becoming a core requirement for modern talent acquisition functions (Paramita et al., 2024; Tuttle & Critchlow, 2025).

However, empirical research also cautions that analytics does not automatically deliver recruitment improvements unless it is embedded into decision-making routines. Organisations may generate reports but fail to translate insights into operational actions due to weak governance, low analytics literacy, and limited alignment between HR and line management priorities. In such cases, analytics remains descriptive and does not materially improve recruitment outcomes (CIPD, 2024; ZIHRM, 2024).

2.2 HR Analytics and Time-to-Hire

Time-to-hire is one of the most widely used metrics for assessing recruitment efficiency. It is commonly defined as the duration from job requisition approval to offer acceptance and is used to evaluate how quickly an organisation converts staffing needs into confirmed hires (AIHR, 2024). In operational terms, time-to-hire has implications for productivity, business continuity, staffing cost, and competitive advantage in securing scarce talent. When time-to-hire is prolonged, organisations may incur overtime costs, experience delayed service delivery, lose qualified candidates to competitors, and reduce overall workforce agility (AIHR, 2024; Bersin & AMS, 2023).

Global evidence indicates that time-to-hire challenges remain persistent, despite increased investment in recruitment technologies. Industry benchmarking suggests that average time-to-hire has reached approximately 44 days, and specialist roles frequently take two to three months or longer to fill, reflecting intensified competition for skills and inefficiencies in recruitment workflows (Bersin & AMS, 2023; Personnel Today, 2023).

HR analytics is frequently proposed as a practical mechanism for reducing time-to-hire because it enables organisations to diagnose and correct inefficiencies within the recruitment pipeline. Empirical research indicates that analytics reduces time-to-hire by: (i) improving sourcing accuracy (identifying channels with faster conversion), (ii) strengthening screening efficiency (reducing time spent reviewing unqualified applicants), (iii) improving pipeline management (reducing “idle time” between stages), and (iv) enhancing hiring manager accountability (tracking response time and decision turnaround) (Odionu et al., 2024; AIHR, 2024).

Evidence from global recruitment trends reports further suggests that high-performing recruitment teams that use analytics and automation achieve stronger efficiency outcomes than those relying on manual processes. Such teams typically apply analytics to understand stage-level throughput, measure bottlenecks, and continuously improve turnaround time through process redesign and workflow automation (Bullhorn, 2024; CIPD, 2024).

Nevertheless, the relationship between analytics and time-to-hire is not uniform. Studies indicate that where recruitment data is incomplete, poorly structured, or spread across fragmented systems (emails, spreadsheets, and paper-based workflows), analytics-driven improvements are constrained. Under such conditions, the organisation may struggle to measure time-to-hire accurately, identify root causes of delays, or maintain consistent accountability across stakeholders (ZIHRM, 2024; Sulaiman et al., 2025).

In addition, the literature highlights an important strategic tension: while reducing time-to-hire is valuable, an excessive focus on speed may compromise quality if analytics is used narrowly or without governance. As such, effective analytics should support balanced recruitment performance by reducing unnecessary delays while maintaining integrity in selection processes, fairness, and candidate experience (CIPD, 2024; Paramita et al., 2024).

2.3 HR Analytics in Emerging Economies

Although HR analytics is becoming central to talent acquisition globally, adoption remains uneven across emerging economies due to systemic and structural constraints. Common barriers include limited HR technology infrastructure, insufficient system integration, poor data quality, weak governance frameworks, and low analytics capabilities among HR practitioners and line managers (Sulaiman et al., 2025; Zulu, 2023).

In developing contexts, many organisations use HR information systems primarily for administrative purposes—such as employee records and payroll—rather than decision analytics. This creates a “capability gap” whereby organisations have access to HR technology but lack the skills, culture, and processes required to translate data into actionable recruitment insights (ZIHRM, 2024; CIPD, 2024).

In Zambia, professional and industry reports suggest that recruitment inefficiencies remain a significant HR challenge. The Zambia Institute of Human Resource Management (ZIHRM) has highlighted persistent reliance on manual recruitment practices, limited HR system integration, and low analytics maturity among HR practitioners—factors that contribute to prolonged recruitment timelines and weak measurement discipline around recruitment metrics such as time-to-hire (ZIHRM, 2023; ZIHRM, 2024).

The FMCG sector presents a particularly relevant context for studying HR analytics and time-to-hire. FMCG organisations operate in fast-paced environments characterised by frequent staffing needs, high labour mobility, and strong pressure to sustain operational continuity. In such contexts, long hiring cycles can disrupt supply chains, sales execution, and customer service operations. As a result, recruitment speed and efficiency become strategically important, increasing the potential value of analytics-enabled recruitment systems (ZIHRM, 2024; Bullhorn, 2024).

Despite these pressures, Zambia-specific empirical literature examining HR analytics’ operational effects—particularly on time-to-hire—remains limited. Much of the available information is descriptive (practice reports and trend observations) rather than empirical testing of relationships between analytics and recruitment outcomes within sector-specific contexts (ZIHRM, 2024; Odionu et al., 2024). This limitation justifies further study that produces evidence from Zambian organisations and contributes to the broader emerging market analytics literature.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored in Evidence-Based Human Resource Management (EBHRM) and Socio-Technical Systems (STS) Theory, providing a robust explanation for how and why HR analytics may influence time-to-hire. EBHRM argues that HR decisions should be based on the integration of the best available evidence from organisational data, scientific research, practitioner expertise, and contextual factors. When applied to recruitment, EBHRM suggests that hiring timelines can be improved when decisions are guided by measured evidence such as pipeline data, sourcing metrics, and process turnaround performance (Rousseau & Barends, 2011; Odionu et al., 2024).

From an EBHRM perspective, HR analytics strengthens recruitment performance by enabling systematic diagnosis of delays, objective monitoring of recruitment SLAs, and data-driven resource allocation across sourcing channels and screening practices. Under this theory, time-to-hire improves because evidence clarifies where delays occur, which interventions are likely to work, and how recruitment teams should prioritise actions (AIHR, 2024; CIPD, 2024).

Socio-Technical Systems Theory provides a complementary lens by arguing that organisational outcomes are shaped by interactions between social systems (people, leadership, culture, skills) and technical systems (HRIS, ATS, dashboards, data infrastructure). STS explains why analytics may fail even when technology exists—if social conditions such as leadership support, decision routines, or analytics capability are weak (Trist & Bamforth, 1951; ZIHRM, 2024).

In recruitment contexts, STS implies that HR analytics reduces time-to-hire most effectively when: (i) HR systems are integrated and data is reliable, (ii) HR teams possess analytics skills to interpret insights, and (iii) organisational leadership promotes a culture of accountability and evidence-based decision-making. Conversely, analytics may have minimal impact where recruitment remains manual, data is inconsistent, and hiring managers resist evidence-based practices (Bullhorn, 2024; Zulu, 2023).

Together, EBHRM and STS provide a strong theoretical rationale for the study’s core proposition: HR analytics (independent variable) can reduce time-to-hire (dependent variable), but this effect is shaped by organisational, technological, and capability-related moderators. This integrated theoretical foundation aligns with the study’s objectives and supports a more nuanced understanding of recruitment efficiency in Zambia’s FMCG sector.

3 Methodology

Research Design

A mixed-methods explanatory design was employed to capture both measurable patterns and contextual insights. Quantitative data assessed the extent and impact of HR analytics utilisation, while qualitative data explored practitioner experiences and contextual constraints.

Study Context and Sample

The study was conducted in Lusaka, Zambia, focusing on four FMCG organisations. The target population comprised HR managers, HR officers, talent acquisition specialists, HR business partners, and hiring managers involved in recruitment. Questionnaires were administered to 29 respondents, while 15 participants were purposively selected for interviews.

Data Collection and Analysis

Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics and moderated regression analysis. Qualitative data were analysed thematically to identify recurring patterns related to analytics use and recruitment efficiency. Data triangulation enhanced the credibility of findings.

4 Results and Discussions

4.1 Results

Adoption of HR Analytics

Findings indicate moderate adoption of HR analytics, with most organisations utilising basic reporting tools and limited use of advanced analytics.

Analytics was primarily applied for reporting rather than strategic recruitment decision-making.

Effect of HR Analytics on Time-to-Hire

Regression results show a strong negative relationship between HR analytics utilisation and time-to-hire ($R^2 = 0.659$, $p < 0.001$). Analytics contributed to faster shortlisting, improved sourcing decisions, and enhanced pipeline visibility.

Moderating Factors

Organisational culture, technological integration, and HR analytics capability moderated the effectiveness of analytics. Organisations with integrated HRIS/ATS systems and supportive leadership achieved greater reductions in time-to-hire compared to those relying on fragmented systems and manual processes.

4.2 Discussion

Overview of the Discussion and Link to Objectives

This section interprets the study's quantitative and qualitative findings in relation to the study objectives and existing literature on HR analytics and recruitment efficiency. The discussion is organised around three objectives: (1) the extent of HR analytics adoption and utilisation in talent acquisition, (2) the effect of HR analytics on reducing time-to-hire, and (3) the organisational, technological, and capability-related conditions that shape the effectiveness of analytics. The interpretation is guided by Evidence-Based Human Resource Management (EBHRM) and Socio-Technical Systems (STS) Theory, which jointly explain how evidence (data) and context (people–technology–process interactions) influence HR outcomes.

Objective 1: Extent of Adoption and Utilisation of HR Analytics in Talent Acquisition

The findings indicate moderate but uneven adoption of HR analytics within FMCG organisations. Quantitatively, most respondents reported using basic analytics (55%), followed by partial use (31%), while a smaller proportion (14%) reported minimal or no use. This pattern suggests that HR analytics in the participating organisations is still largely positioned at the descriptive stage (reporting “what happened”), rather than being embedded into diagnostic, predictive, or prescriptive decision-making.

Qualitative responses strengthen this interpretation: participants explained that analytics is primarily used for periodic reporting, while recruitment decisions (shortlisting, screening priorities, and process escalation) still rely heavily on manual routines and managerial judgement. A key implication is that technology presence does not automatically translate into analytics-driven recruitment. Instead, it points to a gap between data availability and data use for decisions—a distinction frequently highlighted in the EBHRM perspective, which stresses that evidence must be actively integrated into decision processes to improve outcomes.

This “reporting-heavy” pattern aligns with the broader argument that organisations often adopt HR systems without achieving analytics maturity because they lack the routines, governance, and skills required to turn insights into action. The findings are consistent with the literature cited in the paper that describes uneven analytics maturity and underutilisation of analytics tools despite increased HR digitisation.

Practical meaning for FMCG recruitment

For FMCG organisations, moderate adoption implies that recruitment teams are likely to achieve some efficiency gains (e.g., tracking stages, reporting pipeline movement), but cannot consistently realise the stronger gains associated with analytics embedded into daily decision-making—such as real-time bottleneck removal and disciplined SLA enforcement.

Objective 2: Effect of HR Analytics on Reducing Time-to-Hire

The quantitative results provide strong evidence that HR analytics reduces time-to-hire. The moderated regression model shows:

$R^2 = 0.659$ (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.622$), meaning the model explains approximately 65.9% of the variation in time-to-hire, which indicates a strong explanatory model for recruitment efficiency in the studied setting.

The overall model is statistically significant ($F = 12.47$, $p < .001$), confirming that the predictors collectively provide a meaningful explanation of time-to-hire differences across respondents/organisations.

HR analytics has a statistically significant negative coefficient ($B = -1.98$; $\beta = -0.56$; $t = -3.82$; $p < .001$). This means that, holding other factors constant, higher HR analytics utilisation is associated with lower time-to-hire. In practical terms, a one-unit increase in HR analytics (as measured in the study scale) predicts roughly a ~ 2 -unit decrease in time-to-hire (consistent with the scale used in the model).

The regression findings are reinforced by descriptive perceptions:

62% of respondents reported a moderate positive effect of HR analytics on reducing time-to-hire, and 21% reported a strong positive effect.

Respondents identified specific mechanisms through which analytics contributes to speed:

pipeline visibility (59%)

sourcing decisions (55%)

faster shortlisting (48%)

hiring manager accountability (41%)

This strengthens the argument that analytics affects time-to-hire through process control mechanisms—visibility, earlier intervention, and accountability—rather than being a purely “reporting” tool.

How qualitative themes explain “why” analytics reduces time-to-hire

Interviews provide deeper causal logic: participants reported that analytics enables earlier identification of bottlenecks (e.g., delayed hiring manager

feedback), helps assess channel performance, flags candidate drop-off points, and provides early warning signals for roles likely to exceed turnaround time. This supports an EBHRM interpretation: analytics improves recruitment performance when it supplies actionable evidence that changes decisions and behaviours (e.g., escalating delays, reallocating sourcing effort, tightening screening).

The results align with the literature cited indicating that analytics-enabled recruitment improves screening efficiency, pipeline control, and sourcing effectiveness, leading to faster hiring outcomes. Importantly, the study extends this evidence into a Zambian FMCG context, where sector dynamics (high turnover and rapid operational cycles) increase the business value of reducing time-to-hire.

Objective 3: Moderating Factors Shaping the Effectiveness of HR Analytics

A key contribution of the results is that HR analytics does not operate in isolation. The model demonstrates that time-to-hire is also influenced by organisational and technological conditions, and that these factors strengthen the effect of analytics:

Organisational factors are significant ($B = -1.12$; $p = .019$)

Technological factors are significant ($B = -0.89$; $p = .025$)

Capability factors are marginal ($B = -0.61$; $p = .070$)—suggesting capability alone may not directly reduce time-to-hire at conventional significance levels, but it still plays an important enabling role.

Crucially, the interaction terms are statistically significant:

HR analytics \times organisational factors ($B = -0.74$; $p = .011$)

HR analytics \times technological factors ($B = -0.81$; $p = .012$)

HR analytics \times capability factors ($B = -0.58$; $p = .039$)

The negative and significant interaction terms indicate that HR analytics reduces time-to-hire more strongly when organisational culture/support, system integration, and analytics capability are stronger. In other words, analytics is most effective in organisations that are ready to use it—where leadership supports evidence-based decisions, systems provide clean/integrated data, and HR teams can interpret and act on dashboards.

How this supports Socio-Technical Systems (STS) theory

This pattern provides strong support for STS theory: recruitment outcomes emerge from interactions between technology (HRIS/ATS, dashboards), people (skills), and organisational context (culture, leadership expectations). The qualitative findings mirror this: participants noted that weak system integration, data quality problems, low data literacy, and reliance on intuition-based decision-making constrain analytics effectiveness.

The moderation results are particularly important for practitioners because they show why some FMCG organisations benefit from analytics while others do not. Where analytics is implemented in a fragmented environment (manual processes, weak dashboards, inconsistent data), improvements in time-to-hire will be limited—even if the organisation “has analytics.”

Integrated Interpretation: What the Findings Mean for FMCG Recruitment Performance

Taken together, the findings suggest that HR analytics is a meaningful driver of recruitment efficiency, but it is best understood as part of a recruitment performance system rather than a standalone tool. The strong explanatory power of the model ($R^2 = 0.659$) indicates that analytics and contextual factors explain most of the variation in time-to-hire across the studied organisations.

From an EBHRM standpoint, analytics reduces time-to-hire because it creates measurable evidence that supports better decisions (where to source, how to prioritise candidates, when to escalate delays). From an STS standpoint, analytics only delivers sustained improvements when technical systems, human capability, and organisational culture are aligned.

5 Conclusion, Recommendations and Implications

5.1 Conclusion

This study set out to evaluate the effect of Human Resource (HR) analytics on reducing time-to-hire within talent acquisition processes in selected FMCG organisations in Lusaka, Zambia. Overall, the findings provide strong evidence that HR analytics is a meaningful driver of recruitment efficiency and contributes to faster hiring outcomes when applied consistently and supported by enabling organisational conditions.

Quantitative results confirm a statistically significant negative relationship between HR analytics utilisation and time-to-hire ($\beta = -0.56$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that increased analytics use is associated with reduced recruitment duration. The regression model demonstrates strong explanatory power, accounting for approximately 65.9% of the variance in time-to-hire ($R^2 = 0.659$), and the overall model fit is statistically significant ($F = 12.47$, $p < .001$).

Descriptive evidence further reinforces these results. A large majority of respondents perceived HR analytics as beneficial for reducing time-to-hire, with 62% reporting a moderate positive effect and 21% reporting a strong positive effect. Respondents identified specific mechanisms through which analytics improves recruitment efficiency, including enhanced pipeline visibility (59%), improved sourcing decisions (55%), faster shortlisting (48%), and improved hiring manager accountability (41%).

However, the study also demonstrates that HR analytics is not a standalone solution. Its effectiveness is moderated by organisational culture, technological integration, and HR analytics capability, meaning that the benefits of analytics are amplified in organisations with supportive leadership, integrated HR systems (HRIS/ATS), reliable recruitment data, and practitioners capable of translating dashboards into decisions. In organisations where recruitment remains heavily manual and analytics is used mainly for reporting, reductions in time-to-hire are less consistent and the strategic value of analytics remains underutilised.

In summary, the study concludes that HR analytics significantly reduces time-to-hire in FMCG organisations when embedded in evidence-based recruitment governance and supported by appropriate socio-technical conditions (people, process, technology).

5.2 Practical Implications

Implication 1: HR analytics should be treated as a recruitment performance system, not a reporting activity.

The findings show that analytics improves time-to-hire primarily through process control: visibility, bottleneck identification, and accountability. This implies that FMCG organisations should integrate analytics into day-to-day recruitment operations (pipeline reviews, SLA tracking, escalation routines), rather than restricting analytics to periodic reporting.

Implication 2: Recruitment speed gains depend on system integration and data quality.

The moderating role of technological factors highlights that when HRIS/ATS systems are fragmented or data is inconsistent, analytics insights become unreliable and the organisation cannot effectively diagnose or resolve delays. Therefore, improving integration and data quality is essential to unlocking analytics value.

Implication 3: Capability and culture determine whether analytics changes decisions.

Although many organisations may have access to HR tools, analytics only reduces time-to-hire when HR practitioners and hiring managers trust the data and use it to drive decisions (e.g., prioritising sources, fast-tracking approvals, escalating bottlenecks). This places emphasis on building analytics skills and strengthening evidence-based decision culture.

Implication 4: FMCG organisations can improve operational continuity by managing time-to-hire as a business KPI.

Given the sector's high turnover and fast operational cycle, reducing time-to-hire should be managed as a business continuity measure—linked to productivity and frontline capacity—rather than as an HR-only metric.

5.3 Recommendations

Recommendations for FMCG Organisations (Governance + Process Actions)

Embed HR analytics into weekly recruitment governance

Establish a weekly recruitment performance review using analytics dashboards (pipeline stage ageing, time-to-hire trend, requisition ageing, offer turnaround time).

Use dashboards to trigger early escalation when roles exceed agreed stage-level turnaround thresholds (e.g., “screening > 5 days”, “interview decision > 3 days”).

Implement and enforce recruitment SLAs using analytics evidence

Define SLA expectations for hiring managers and recruiters (shortlist review time, interview scheduling time, decision turnaround time).

Use analytics visibility to enforce accountability, since “hiring manager accountability” is a key pathway through which analytics reduces time-to-hire.

Standardise recruitment metrics and definitions across FMCG organisations

Standardise time-to-hire measurement (requisition approval → offer acceptance) and ensure consistent stage definitions across the recruitment funnel.

This improves comparability, tracking discipline, and the reliability of analytics insights for bottleneck removal.

Technology and Data Recommendations (HRIS/ATS + Data Governance)

Strengthen HRIS/ATS integration and automation

Configure HR systems to capture recruitment stage timestamps automatically (application received, screened, interviewed, offer made, offer accepted).

Automate candidate tracking and stage progression to reduce manual delays and missing data.

Introduce recruitment data governance controls

Establish data completeness rules (e.g., requisition must have a valid approval date; every candidate must have a stage outcome).

Run monthly recruitment data audits to reduce incomplete entries and improve trust in analytics.

Recommendations for HR Practitioners (Skills + Daily Use of Analytics)

Build analytics capability through targeted upskilling

HR teams should be trained in:

- interpreting dashboards (pipeline ageing, conversion rates),
- basic analysis (bottleneck diagnosis), and
- converting insights into actions (escalation, process redesign).

Shift from descriptive to diagnostic analytics in recruitment routines

Instead of reporting “time-to-hire increased,” diagnose “which stage caused the increase” (e.g., shortlist review delays, interview scheduling delays).

Use evidence to recommend corrective actions such as hiring manager escalation or screening optimisation.

Create ‘Recruitment Analytics Champions’ inside HR teams

Identify one or two individuals per organisation to lead analytics adoption, coach hiring managers, and maintain dashboard discipline.

This supports sustained behaviour change and strengthens evidence-based recruitment practice.

Leadership and Change Management Recommendations

Strengthen evidence-based recruitment culture

Leaders should communicate that recruitment decisions must be guided by evidence (pipeline data, turnaround times, sourcing performance).

Introduce executive-level attention to recruitment dashboards to reinforce accountability and adoption.

Link recruitment performance to managerial accountability

Incorporate recruitment SLA compliance (e.g., response time to shortlists) into hiring managers' performance check-ins.

5.4 Concluding Statement

The study demonstrates that HR analytics can reduce time-to-hire when embedded within supportive organisational, technological, and capability frameworks. For practitioners, this implies integrating analytics into recruitment workflows, strengthening HRIS/ATS integration, enforcing recruitment SLAs, and investing in analytics capability to translate dashboards into action (Bullhorn, 2024; Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, 2024). For professional bodies and policy-makers, the findings support the development of national guidance that promotes analytics-enabled HR practices and capability development to address persistent recruitment inefficiencies (ZIHRM, 2023; ZIHRM, 2024).

Declaration of Competing Interests

The authors declare that they not aware of any competing financial interests or personal relationships that may have influenced the work described in this document.

Funding

This research did not receive specific grants from any public, commercial, non-profit sector funding bodies.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to offer my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who made a contribution to this research

Ethical considerations

The article followed all ethical standards appropriate for this kind of research.

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