

## Chatbots in HR: Enhancing Candidate and Employee Experiences

**G. Dhivya**

*Final Year MBA Student*

*M.O.P Vaishnav College for Women,  
Chennai*

**P. Deepika**

*Final Year MBA Student*

*M.O.P Vaishnav College for Women,  
Chennai*

**V. Pavithra**

*Final Year MBA Student*

*M.O.P Vaishnav College for Women,  
Chennai*

**T. Selvalakshmi**

*Final Year MBA Student*

*M.O.P Vaishnav College for Women,  
Chennai*

### Abstract

The fast pace of using Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Natural Language Processing (NLP) has also changed the face of Human Resource Management (HRM), and chatbots have become one of the most popular innovations. The present paper discusses the significance of chatbots in improving the experiences of the candidates and employees through their use in the recruitment, onboarding, training, and day to day HR processes. Chatbots enhance efficiency and allow personalized and transparent communication by automating the process of resume screening, scheduling interviews, processing queries, and gathering feedback. The real-life case studies of Unilever, IBM, TCS, Marriott, and Infosys point to

quantifiable advantages such as cut down time in hiring, increased engagement, and productivity. Nevertheless, the deficiencies in the emotional intelligence, data security threats, and excessive dependence on automation still are the major concerns. This paper concludes that chatbots cannot substitute human empathy in HR, yet they are a strategic enabler to complement HR professionals and enable them to work on high-value activities. The future of HR chatbots is becoming smarter and more emotional with the development of AI and sentiment analysis, and will become more closely connected to employee well-being and career development.

**Keywords:** Chatbots, Human Resource Management, Artificial Intelligence, Digital HR Transformation.

## **I.INTRODUCTION**

Human Resource Management (HRM) has undergone major transformation in the recent years, driven by rapid advances in technology. From manual paperwork and face-to-face interviews to automated application tracker system and online/virtual interviews, the HR function has evolved to match the digital-first era. Among these innovations, chatbots have emerged as one of the most impactful tools, changing how firms communicate with candidates and employees.

### **What are chatbots?**

In the current competitive business terms a competitor should therefore ensure that it builds an employer brand image through candidate and employee experience. Long response times, absence of feedback and the perplexity of procedures tend to demoralize the candidates in the recruiting process. Similarly, an employee would feel alienated when his or her HR issues are not tended to as soon as possible. Chatbots fill this gap with 24-hour service, prompt feedback, and personalized communication and, therefore, create more comfortable experiences of both prospective hires and employees.

In addition, the increasing usage of the artificial intelligence (AI) and natural language processing (NLP) ensures that the HR chatbots are no longer confined to the answering of simple FAQs. They can review profiles of their candidates, schedule interviews, give during onboarding instructions and even receive employee feedback. This has relegated chatbots not only as a support tool, but as a strategic tool that enhances employee engagement and talent management.

The paper discusses the applicability of chatbots in the HR environment with particular attention given to the way that they can improve the experiences of candidates and employees. It also explains how they are used in the recruitment, onboarding, daily HR activities, and learning and development efforts and mentions practical examples of its use, advantages, and drawbacks.

## **Chatbots in Recruitment**

### **1. Resume screening and shortlisting**

Recruiters frequently spend hours looking for suitable skills and keywords in resumes. Artificial intelligence (AI)-enabled chatbots are able to automatically analyze applications, match job criteria with talents, and rank applicants based on those matches. This guarantees that only eligible applicants advance to the next round while also saving a significant amount of time.

- Example: Unilever used a recruitment chatbot to screen over 2,50,000

Candidates, saving recruiters nearly 70,000 hours.

### **2. Answering candidate FAQs**

Typically, candidates have a lot of queries concerning interview processes, corporate policies, job roles, and application status. These commonly requested queries can be answered instantly, around-the-clock, by a recruitment chatbot. This lessens the strain for recruiters while also improving the candidate experience.

- Example: Many IT firms in India, like TCS, use chatbots to address queries related to job descriptions, career growth, and benefits.

### **3. Interview scheduling**

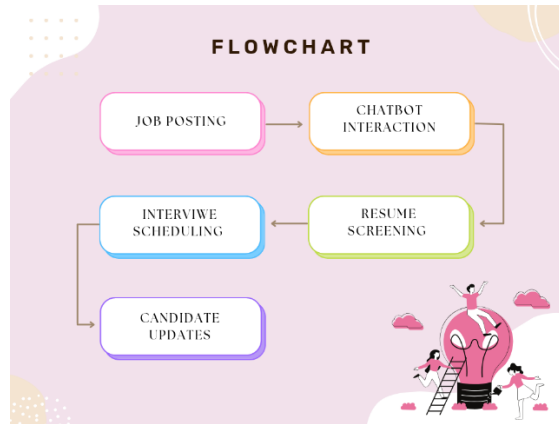
Manually scheduling interviews often requires candidates and recruiters to communicate back and forth. Schedule interviews, give reminders, and even reschedule if necessary, using chatbots that are connected to calendars (Outlook, Google Calendar, etc.). This enables a flawless process without human errors or delays.

### **4. Pre-screening with chatbot Interviews**

Certain employers use chatbots for pre-interview communications where the bot asks candidates some standard questions like: availability, salary expectations, or levels of technical skills. The system uses these replies to narrow down feasible candidates before referring them to the human recruiters. This solution increases productivity, decreases time to hire.

### **5. Candidate engagement**

One primary challenge when it comes to recruitment relates to the "communication gap," where candidates feel unheard after their application. Chatbots reduce the communication gap by providing its applicants & candidates updated statuses on their applications in real-time. This builds trust, as the applicant feels they are not missing out on anything, and makes the company appear as if they are listening, responsive, and not just a consideration for candidates.



**Fig.1: Shows the process of recruitment process that involves chatbot as flow chart**

Chatbots open new horizons in the recruitment process due to faster results, transparency, and easy and convenient recruitment process by making it candidate friendly, in addition to relieving the HR professionals of the manual tasks associated with recruiting and allow them to be involved with higher-level duties.

### **Enhancing Candidate Experience**

The outcome of any recruitment process is not determined simply by fulfilling the vacancy, but also by the candidate's evaluation of the organization during the entirety of the process. A positive candidate experience is ultimately what builds a great employer brand. Alternatively, delays, poor communication, and ambiguity can create even more disengagement for candidates who were once very interested. HR chatbots are an effective mechanism for producing the candidate experience, free of friction, transparent, and engaging.

#### **1. Personalized engagement**

Candidates want personal service instead of generic emails. Chatbots, with Natural Language Processing (NLP), can say, "Hello [{candidate name}]." In addition, they will be able to share tailored job recommendations and share relevant information about the company. This starts the candidate off with personal service, letting them feel important and part of the family right away.

#### **2. Real-time status updates**

For job seekers, one of the biggest irritations is not knowing where they stand with their application. With Instant Chatbots, you could know your application is pending, shortlisted, or rejected right away! This eliminates the anxiety of not knowing and breeds trust in the recruitment process.

**3. 24/7 Availability**

Chatbots are available 24/7, unlike human recruiters, who work variable hours. A candidate, applying from a different time zone, or a working professional who can only apply after hours, can speak with a chatbot at any time, thus, assuring that each query is answered.

**4. Instant query resolution**

Often candidates are unclear about a company policy or benefit, likely career advancement opportunities, or perhaps even the interview format. These questions can cause candidates to lose clarity and feel disconnected to the process. The instant response function of chatbots helps alleviate these challenges, creating a more satisfying recruitment experience overall.

**5. Faster Time -to-Hire**

A long recruitment process can make top candidates lose interest or accept offers from competitors. Chatbots speed up the hiring cycle by automating repetitive tasks like screening and scheduling, ensuring that candidates move quickly from one stage to the next.

**6. Reducing Bias**

Chatbots built on ethical AI principles can also reduce subconscious human bias in the shortlisting stage to ensure that candidates are assessed purely on their skills and experience.

❖ **Mini case Example**

□ Marriott **International** uses recruitment chatbots to engage job applicants and answer over **80% of candidate questions** instantly. As a result, their application completion rates increased significantly.

□ Unilever's **chatbot system** not only reduced hiring time by **75%** but also improved candidate satisfaction because of transparent communication.

<b>Traditional Candidate Experience</b>	<b>Chatbot-Enhanced Candidate Experience</b>
Delayed email responses	Instant, 24/7 responses
Generic messages	Personalized messages with candidate name
Long waiting period for status	Real-time updates on application status
Limited recruiter availability	24/7 chatbot assistance
Human bias in shortlisting	AI-driven fair shortlisting

## **Chatbots in Employee Lifecycle**

Recruitment serves as the gateway for an employee; however, once an employee is hired with your organization, the challenge for HR truly begins. Employees must be retained, engaged, and communicated with - all of which are necessary for any organization to survive as a business. Chatbots, far and away, are part of the employee lifecycle management landscape - there is no reason for a hiring department not to have the ability to ensure easy access to support - fast and personalized, through chatbots for all employee lifecycle stages - onboarding, training, and performance support.

### **1. Onboarding assistance**

The first few days of an employee's journey are important. Onboarding traditionally consists of paperwork, long emails, and a variety of HR conversations. Chatbots streamline this process by:

- Helping employees submit documents.
- Answering popular FAQs about policies, benefits, and culture.
- Delivering easy checklists to help employees acclimate to their new role.
- Example: **Accenture's HR chatbot** provides new hires with information about policies, team introductions, and training schedules, making onboarding faster and stress-free.

### **2. Daily HR operations**

Employees often have questions about leave requests, attendance, pay slips, and reimbursements. Instead of waiting to speak with HR staff, they simply speak with a chatbot for instant answers.

- Leave applications and requests.
- Accessing payslips/tax information.
- Accessing information about holiday leave, company policies, travel, or any general company information.

This is much faster for employees, while reducing interruptions from routine questions to HR staff.

### **3. Learning and Development**

Chatbots act as **personal learning assistants**, reminding employees about upcoming training sessions, suggesting courses based on their job profile, and even answering simple questions about training modules. This makes learning more engaging and accessible.

- Example: Some organizations integrate chatbots with **Learning Management Systems (LMS)** to guide employees through e-learning platforms.

#### **4. Employee feedback and survey**

Feedback is the main way to know how engaged and satisfied employees are. Chatbots can run short / quick surveys, or pulse checks in a conversational format, which is easier for employees than taking a long-form. The bot can have the ability to consume the feedback and provide the HR with information about employee morale overall.

#### **5. Performance support**

At times, employees need quick answers while they are working, including “How do I claim expenses?” or “What’s the process for internal job transfers?” Chatbots and other systematized assistance can help solve these inquiries right away by providing employees with information quickly that reduces frustration and downtime, while allowing them to continue work productively.

#### **6. Employee well-being**

Furthermore, modern HR chatbots are now being integrated into wellness apps. For example, they can promote mental health resources, monitor employees' stress levels via surveys, and send employees nudges to boost healthy work activity.

<b>HR Function</b>	<b>Traditional Approach</b>	<b>Chatbot Approach</b>
Onboarding	Manual paperwork & emails	Instant digital guidance & checklists
Leave Management	Emails to HR / Manager	Self-service via chatbot
Payroll Queries	Waiting for HR reply	Instant payslip & tax info
Training Reminders	Email notifications	Personalized reminders & suggestions
Feedback Collection	Long survey forms	Conversational feedback in real-time



**Fig.2: Represents the Lifecycle of an employee in an organization from onboarding to offboarding**

### Case Studies and Real-Life Examples

To grasp the thought of chatbots within HR, it is important to look at organizations around the world and how they are coming to grips with this technology. These case studies will demonstrate the effectiveness of chatbots in improving candidate and employee experiences.

#### 1. Unilever

Unilever incorporated AI-powered chatbots into their global hiring practices to support over 250,000 job applications annually. The chatbot would review resumes, hold first assessments with candidates, and even helped schedule interviews.

##### ✓ Results:

- Decreased hiring time by 75%.
- Saved recruiters 70,000+ hours of tedious work.
- Increased candidate experience with instantaneous communication.

#### 2. IBM (Watson in HR)

IBM employs Watson chatbots for recruitment and internal HR processes. The chatbot acts as a virtual employee, providing employees with instant answers to questions on policies, benefits, and career growth.

##### ✓ Results:

- Employees instantly answered over 50,000 HR questions every month.
- Dramatically reduced HR response times
- Allowed HR to devote significantly more time to the strategic aspects of their job rather than being bogged down by routine questions.



### **3. Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)**

TCS launched an internal chatbot to help over 500,000 employees across the globe. The bot answers questions about leave, payroll, travel policies, and training opportunities.

✓ Results:

- Reduced reliance on HR team's behalf of employees for repeatable questions.
- Increased employee engagement by being able to access information more swiftly.
- Increased productivity, minimizing downtime.

### **4. Marriott International**

Marriott uses chatbots on its career site and recruiting channels to engage job candidates. These chatbots interact with candidates by answering FAQs, guiding candidates through the application process, and providing updates.

✓ Results:

- Higher job application completion rates.
- Better candidate engagement with 24/7.

### **5. INFOSYS**

Infosys implemented a chatbot to provide quick answers for areas like travel booking, leave approvals and payroll inquiries. The chat bot can be accessed through mobile apps which made it more accessible to employees across geographies.

✓ Results:

- Increased efficiency in HR.
- Increased employee satisfaction with faster answers.

## **Challenges and Limitations of HR Chatbots**

While chatbots are changing HR practices, they do have limitations. Relying too much on automation and technical issues can sometimes lead to more problems than solutions. It is important to closely look at the challenges and risks related to HR chatbots.

### **1. Lack of emotional intelligence**

HR deals with delicate matters of employee complaints, disagreements or professional advice. Even with AI going forward, chatbots do not have the human touch, empathy, and emotional intelligence they need to deal with such concerns. When bots are used to address the concerns of the employees alone, they may feel that they are not connected or appreciated.

### **2. Limited understanding of complex queries**

Chatbots are effective when dealing with procedural and repetitive work. They can give irrelevant, inaccurate answers to complex, ambiguous, or heavy questions. This may aggravate the employees and candidates rather than making them to have better experience.

**3. Language and culture Barriers**

Even though the chatbots of our modern world are able to support several languages, they cannot cope with regional dialects, slang, and cultural peculiarities. Poor communication may cause confusion and decrease the efficiency of chatbot communication.

**4. Privacy and data security concerns**

HR chatbots deal with extensive volumes of sensitive information like personal data of employees, payroll, and resumes of candidates. The data can be broken, cyberattacks may occur, or confidential information may be misused unless it is secured accordingly. This brings into question the issue of trust and adherence to the laws of data protection, including GDPR.

**5. Over-reliance on automation**

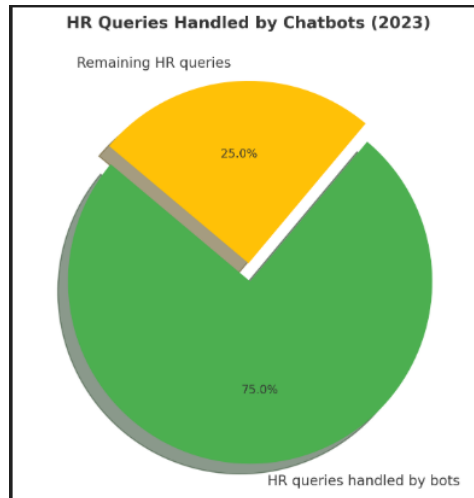
Over dependency on chatbots can lead to the organization overlooking the human aspect of HR. Although bots can make work faster, they cannot substitute real human communication that should create trust, loyalty, and engagement.

**6. Technical failures and maintenance**

Chatbots will need continuous improvement, AI training, and integration of the systems. Technical hiccups or time outs may interrupt the workflows, causing frustration to employees and applicants. Smaller organizations can even not afford to keep advanced chatbot systems maintained.

**7. Resistance to adoption**

The HR professionals and employees are also likely to hesitate to use chatbots because of the fear of being replaced or they do not trust AI and are not familiar with the technology. This opposition may delay the process of implementation and decrease the general efficiency of the tool.



**Fig.3: Pie chart showing HR queries handled by chatbots (2023) – 75% by chatbots and 25 % by HR staff.**

## **II. CONCLUSION**

The introduction of chatbots in the Human Resource Management is a landmark towards a digital first workplace. Easing the burden of recruitment, engagement, onboarding, and real-time HR support, as well as assistive HR chatbots have shown to be resilient in improving candidate and employee experience.

The examples of international corporations like **Unilever, IBM, TCS, Marriott, and Infosys** prove that chatbots are not an experiment anymore, but become a constituent of a new HR policy. Not only do they save time and drive down costs, but also, they establish open, consistent, and interactive engagement that builds brand value of an organization.

Nevertheless, chatbots have shortcomings that need to be noted. The shortcoming in emotional intelligence, data privacy, and excessive dependence on automation are examples that should serve as a reminder, that technology is not capable of entirely taking the human component out of HR. As an alternative, chatbot potential can be viewed as an addition to the work of human HR professionals, who do not have to spend time on repetitive tasks but rather can perform more responsible and empathetic tasks.

Considering the future, HR chatbots future looks bright. Chatbots will become smarter, more context-aware, and responsive to emotions with improved technology in Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), and Natural Language Processing (NLP). Future HR chatbots may:

- Detect employee sentiment and stress levels.
- Provide individual career advice and development.

- Combine with smart HR analytics to deliver proactive insight.
- Promote wellness programs through a healthy work-life balance.

To sum it up, chatbots are not merely efficiency tools, but strategic facilitators of employee satisfaction and organizational development. Firms that manage to strike the right level of automation and human interaction will have an upper hand in the future of work attracting, engaging, and retaining top talent.

### **III. REFERENCES**

1. Adamopoulou, E., & Moussiades, L. (2020). An overview of chatbot technology. *Artificial Intelligence Applications and Innovations*, 584, 373–383. - [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-49186-4\\_31](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-49186-4_31)
2. Alcaide, J., & Fombona, J. (2022). Chatbots in human resource management: Applications and implications. *International Journal of Human Resource Studies*, 12(1), 45–61.
3. Chattaraman, V., Kwon, W. S., Gilbert, J. E., & Ross, W. T. (2019). Should AI-based, conversational digital assistants employ social- or task-oriented interaction style? *Journal of Business Research*, 98, 368–374. - <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.01.041>
4. De Ciccio, R., Silva, S. C., & Alparone, F. R. (2020). Engaging employees with chatbots: Exploring experience outcomes. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 112, 106472. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2020.106472>
5. Dhingra, M., & Mudgal, A. (2019). Chatbots for recruitment: A new tool for HR management. *International Journal of Recent Technology and Engineering*, 8(3), 6542–6545.
6. Jain, M., Kumar, P., Kota, R., & Patel, S. N. (2018). Evaluating and informing the design of chatbots. *Proceedings of the 2018 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*, 1–12. - <https://doi.org/10.1145/3173574.3173991>
7. Kulkarni, P., & Che, Z. (2021). Artificial intelligence in HRM: Role of chatbots in recruitment and employee engagement. *International Journal of Human Capital and Information Technology Professionals*, 12(3), 55–69.
8. Lacity, M. C., & Willcocks, L. P. (2018). Robotic process automation and cognitive automation: The next phase. *MIS Quarterly Executive*, 17(1), 1–16.
9. McTear, M. (2020). Conversational AI: Dialogue systems, conversational agents, and chatbots. *Synthesis Lectures on Human Language Technologies*, 13(3), 1–251. <https://doi.org/10.2200/S01060ED1V01Y202010HL/T048>

10. Mehta, S., & Mehta, N. (2021). Chatbots in HR: Transforming employee experience through AI. *International Journal of Management*, 12(6), 112–120.
11. Nuruzzaman, M., & Hussain, O. K. (2018). A survey on chatbot implementation in customer service industry through deep neural networks. 2018 IEEE 15th International Conference on e-Business Engineering (ICEBE), 54–61. - <https://doi.org/10.1109/ICEBE.2018.00018>
12. Reddy, S., & Kumar, R. (2020). Enhancing recruitment with AI-powered chatbots. *Journal of Human Resource and Sustainability Development*, 8(3), 123–137.
13. Sheth, A. (2019). Transforming HR with AI and chatbots: Opportunities and challenges. *Journal of Information Systems and Technology Management*, 16, e201916008.
14. Srivastava, A., & Shree, A. (2019). Artificial intelligence in human resources management: A case study of AI-based recruitment. *International Journal of Management, Technology and Engineering*, 9(6), 2875–2882.
15. Zamora, J. (2017). Rise of the chatbots: Finding a place for artificial intelligence in HR. *International Journal of Human Resource Development*, 19(2), 34–42.