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Factors Shaping Candidates' Job Acceptance Intentions in Asynchronous Video Interviews

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General Introduction

The number of strategic technological innovations in HRM has burgeoned in recent years, challenging traditional HRM practices in various ways (Florkowski & Olivas-Luján, 2006).

This new technological context has seen the implementation of new tools which can automate human resource management processes, profoundly changing the way they are performed (Meijerink et al., 2023). One such practice is the job interview, one of the most widely used hiring tools which determines many hiring decisions (Huffcutt & Culbertson, 2011; Mirowska et al., 2020). The way job interviews are conducted has changed, with traditional face-to-face interviews increasingly replaced by Asynchronous Video Interviews (hereafter, AVIs). AVIs represent one of the newest developments in hiring practices, and consist of an on-demand and low cost alternative to traditional job interview modalities such as face-to-face interviews. This new technological solution has become increasingly popular in hiring practices (Lukacik et al., 2022). For instance, Hirevue, a commercially available AVI platform, has seen a strong increase in the number of AVIs completed: from 13,000 in 2012 to over 35 million by the end of 2022 (HireVue, 2022).

AVI requires applicants to log into an online hiring platform, read a set of predefined interview questions on the screen, and answer them by recording short videos using a camera (Roulin et al., 2022). Hence, AVI is an entirely online experience which lacks synchronous, back and forth communication, and an interviewer to interact with. Ultimately, applicants' recorded responses can be scored by a human at a later point in time, or automatically by artificial intelligence (hereafter, AI) evaluation agents (Lukacic et al., 2022). Specifically, AI can use a combination of visual and audio recognition techniques in tandem with machine learning to determine which job applicant most resemble the ideal applicant (Suen et al., 2019), and to match the right applicant with a specific position by assessing verbal and nonverbal cues based on social information processing (Walther, 2011). Moreover, AI may process video data to detect non-verbal behavior such as facial movements and gaze, as well as lighting and composition, to compute first impression assessments or personality

judgements (Liem et al., 2018). Overall, both asynchronous video interviews and AI evaluation agents are leading organizations to operational efficiencies, such as reducing travel costs and time-to-hire (e.g., making it possible to process a greater number of applicants), explaining the rapid increase in the adoption of these new technological solutions and the growing academic interest in their usage in hiring practices (Malik et al., 2020; Pan & Froese, 2021). Not surprisingly, important companies such as Google, Microsoft, IBM, and LinkedIn, among others, are already using AVIs and AI-evaluation agents to manage their hiring practices (e.g., van Esch & Black, 2019).

However, the main obstacle is applicants' acceptance: most applicants showed to be reluctant towards asynchronous video interviews and AI-evaluation agents (McIntyre, 2019; Proost et al., 2020). Such reluctancy – particularly from job applicants – could undermine the potential benefits of these new tools.

Thus, one of the most important challenges for organizations is understanding the psychological and contextual factors underlying job applicants' reluctancy, and what situations can be most appropriate for successfully incorporating AVIs and AI into their hiring practices.

Through three empirical papers, the present dissertation answers several calls for a better understanding of the effects of AVI and AI in hiring practices, and enriches knowledge on the psychological and contextual factors shaping job applicants' responses to AVIs and AI-evaluation agents.

The first paper includes three experimental studies involving a design that mirrors a real-world context: Participants had to log in into a hiring platform and complete an asynchronous video interview. Specifically, we created situations in which job applicants' assessments were administered by different evaluations agents (i.e., human decision-makers or AI-based tools). Study 1 shows that the job applicants perceived the AI evaluation agent (vs. a human) as less trustworthy, which in turn reduced their job acceptance intentions, an important hiring outcome which reflects whether organizations ultimately address their labor needs (Harold et al., 2016). Further, building on attachment theory, we showed that the effect of AI usage on trust and job acceptance intentions in

asynchronous video interviews is contingent upon job applicants' attachment style, an individual trait which reflects how people represent themselves and other people based on their formative experiences with important others (Study 2) (Bowlby, 2008; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2019). Finally, we tested one explanatory mechanism for how attachment style shapes trust, finding that perceptions of the AI agent's ability to parse unique skills are an antecedent of job applicants' low trust toward the AI (Study 3). Overall, this work extends our understanding of the individual differences moderating the way job applicants evaluate AI, reveals a psychological mechanism through which trust affects job acceptance intentions, and provides actionable insights for hiring organizations willing to integrate AI into their hiring practices.

The second paper features one field and three controlled experiments to investigate the psychological drivers shaping applicants' job offer acceptance with AVIs (vs. face-to-face job interviews). Hence, while in the first paper we manipulated the type of evaluation agent in job interview, in the second paper we manipulated the type of interview itself. Specifically, Study 1 examined in the field whether using an AVI (vs. face-to-face) job interview affects job acceptance intentions, and demonstrates that job applicants show lower job acceptance intentions toward AVIs (vs. face-to-face) job interviews. Study 2 investigates self-disclosure, defined as the verbal behavior through which individuals intentionally communicate private information about themselves (Huaman-Ramirez et al., 2022; pp. 464), as an explanatory mechanism for applicants' low job acceptance intentions towards AVIs. The results show that job applicants exhibit lower willingness to self-disclose with AVIs, which in turn reduced their job acceptance intentions. Further, using a serial mediation model, Study 3 tested one explanatory mechanism for how AVI affects self-disclosure, finding that perceived psychological comfort is an antecedent of job applicants' low self-disclosure. Finally, study 4 shows that attachment style can affect job applicants' psychological comfort, self-disclosure, and job acceptance intentions. Together, these studies enrich knowledge on the explanatory mechanisms through which AVI affects job acceptance intentions, and the

understanding of the individual differences moderating applicants' experience of AVI. By doing so, this work provides useful guidelines for hiring managers willing to integrate AVI into hiring practices.

The third paper relies on three controlled experiments to explore the role of contextual factors (i.e., job characteristics) in shaping applicants' job offer acceptance with AVIs (vs. face-to-face job interviews). Study 1 demonstrates that job applicants show lower job acceptance intentions toward AVIs (vs. face-to-face) job interviews when applying for soft skills-based jobs (i.e., non-technical and involving interpersonal abilities) versus hard skills-based jobs (i.e., requiring technical expertise). Study 2 shows that this effect stems from applicants' perceived congruence between the interview characteristics and those of jobs to which applicants are applying for. Finally, Study 3 extends these results by showing that the congruence between the soft skills-based job characteristics and the AVI characteristics decreases applicants' mental imagery, a cognitive simulation of the fit between the job characteristics and interview type (de Visser-Amundson et al., 2021; DeRosia & Elder, 2019), which in turn reduces their job acceptance intentions. Specifically, applicants found the association between the AVI features (i.e., asynchronicity) and soft skills-based job, which involves interpersonal skills, as less imagery-evocative, thereby reporting lower job acceptance intentions. Overall, this research illuminates how different contextual and psychological factors shape acceptance of AVI, and support hiring managers in evaluating "when" and "how" to integrate AVIs into their hiring practices.

Our findings make several contributions to prior research on job applicant responses to AI and AVI usage in hiring practices. At first, the three papers offer new theoretical insights into how job applicants' perceptions can affect their responses towards the usage of these new technologies in HR (Budhwar et al., 2022; Mirowska, 2020). Second, we contribute to the literature on the role of individual differences and contextual factors in hiring practices (McCarthy et al., 2017). Specifically, we demonstrate that attachment style, an important individual trait which affects people's responses in business settings (Ronen & Zuroff, 2017) and human-technology interaction (Oldmeadow et al., 2013), can impact job applicants' perceptions and job acceptance intentions towards AI and AVI in hiring practices. Moreover, we show that applicants job acceptance intentions toward AVIs is

contingent upon the characteristics of the job to which they are applying for. Third, the papers employed a design that involved asynchronous video interviews, an interview method which is increasingly utilized in practice, but rarely studied among scholars (Hiemstra et al., 2019; Roulin et al., 2022). By doing so, the papers contributed to the scant literature on people's and organizational responses to asynchronous video interviews (e.g., Roulin et al., 2023; Schilpzand et al., 2022). Finally, by examining the role of job applicants' perceptions, individual traits, and contextual factors (McCarthy et al., 2017), our research improves hiring managers' knowledge about the factors that influence job applicants' acceptance of AI and AVI, and thereby offers practical insights for hiring managers interested in adopting these new technological solutions.

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How Attachment Styles and Trust Jointly Shape Job Candidates AI Receptivity

Abstract

The efficiency of artificial intelligence makes it increasingly attractive to hiring managers looking to promote their firms' interests alongside those of job applicants. Nevertheless, job applicants' acceptance of AI is generally low. That said, there are individual differences that likely moderate candidates' AI receptivity. This work investigates how attachment styles and trust jointly shape job applicant responses to AI. Three controlled experiments in a real-world hiring context demonstrate that the job applicants perceived AI evaluation agent (vs. a human) as less trustworthy, which in turn reduced their job acceptance intentions (Study 1). This effect was stronger for job applicants who scored low on avoidant attachment style (Study 2). Using a serial mediation model, Study 3 tested one explanatory mechanism for how avoidant attachment style shapes trust, finding that perceptions of the AI agent's ability to parse unique skills are an antecedent of job applicants' low trust toward the AI. These findings deepen our understanding of the individual differences moderating the way job applicants evaluate AI, reveal a psychological mechanism through which trust affects job acceptance intentions, and provide actionable insights for integrating AI into hiring practices.

Keywords

job interview, artificial intelligence, attachment style, trust, uniqueness

1 | Introduction

A growing number of business organizations are integrating artificial intelligence (hereafter, AI) to improve HR-related decisions and automate HR management activities (Meijerink & Bondarouk, 2023). Microsoft, IBM, and Google are already using algorithms to analyze data and derive insightful knowledge related to HR management practices, such as predicting which employees are likely to leave the company, measuring job candidates' future performance, and filling recruitment functions

(e.g., reviewing application documents, screening applicants, and analyzing job interview data) (van Esch & Black, 2019; Meijerink & Bondarouk, 2023). AI-assisted human resource management is leading organizations to productivity gains, cost reduction, and operational efficiencies in a wide range of business sectors (Malik et al., 2023; Prikshat et al., 2023), explaining the rapid increase in AI adoption and the growing academic interest in AI usage in human resource management (Malik et al., 2020; Pan & Froese, 2021).

This new paradigm is also changing how organizations recruit and select people (Black & van Esch, 2020; van Esch et al., 2019), since AI can help hiring managers perform tasks such as analyzing job applicants' resume and assessing asynchronous video interview responses (Hunkenschroer et al., 2022). However, job applicants are still reluctant about AI in hiring practices: Nearly 9 in 10 Americans, for instance, feel uncomfortable with AI job interview apps being used to evaluate candidates (McIntyre, 2019). One possible reason for this reluctance may be the lack of trust in this new technological solution (Gilkson et al., 2020), which may lead to low job acceptance intentions. Indeed, previous literature suggests that perceived trust in the hiring agent is a key driver of candidates' evaluation of the selection process (Klotz et al., 2013). However, to the best of our knowledge, no previous research has studied the role that the perceived trust in the evaluation agent plays in applicants' job acceptance intentions when AI is used in job interviews. Furthermore, we predict that applicants might perceive the AI agent as less trustworthy compared to a human counterpart, namely due to perceiving the AI as less capable of considering an applicant's unique skills in the evaluation process.

Moreover, prior literature suggests that individual differences might play a significant role in shaping candidates' responses toward the evaluation agent (e.g., McCarthy et al., 2017). In the context of AI usage in job interviews, one such difference might be individuals' attachment style, defined as working models of how people behave in social interactions (Bowlby, 2008; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2019). Attachment style has been found to affect people's responses in a variety of social and business contexts (Ronen & Zuroff, 2017), including human-technology interactions (Oldmeadow et al., 2013;

Park et al., 2019). Drawing on attachment theory, we posit that attachment style can predict various relational outcomes, such as trust (Liu & Hogg, 2018; Mikulincer et al., 2005), that then shape applicants' attitudes toward the evaluation agent. Specifically, we look at attachment avoidance style (AAS hereafter), an individual trait that reflects the extent to which people trust other humans. We assume that this inherent trust in other humans may shape job applicants' responses to AI versus human evaluation agents in job interviews (e.g., asynchronous video interviews). In particular, we propose that people low in AAS (i.e., more trusting toward humans) will be less trusting of an AI agent, and thus less likely to accept the job offer.

To test our hypotheses, we conducted three experimental studies involving simulated employment interviews. We created situations in which candidates' assessments were administered by human decision-makers or AI-based tools. Specifically, we focused on asynchronous video interviews, an increasingly common practice where candidates record videos of themselves answering pre-determined interview questions (Lukacik et al., 2022; Mirowska & Mesnet, 2021).

Our research makes several contributions. First, we contribute to the literature on AI acceptance in job interviews (Meijerink & Bondarouk, 2023; Mirowska, 2020). While previous work has investigated some predictors of job acceptance intentions toward AI, such as familiarity with AI (Gonzalez et al., 2022) and opportunity to perform (Noble et al., 2020), trust has been overlooked. We fill this gap by studying the effect of trust on applicants' job acceptance intentions to AI (vs. human) evaluation agents. Moreover, we employed a design that mirrors a real-world context: Participants had to log in into a hiring platform and complete an asynchronous video interview. This interview method is increasingly utilized in practice, but rarely studied among scholars (Hiemstra et al., 2019; Roulin et al., 2022). Second, we contribute to the literature on the role of individual differences in hiring practices. While research has examined some relevant variables, such as extraversion (Hiemstra et al., 2019) and healthy lifestyle (Yu et al., 2023), less attention has been given to the role of individual attachment styles. To that end, we demonstrate that attachment style can impact job applicants' perceptions and job acceptance intentions. Third, we advance knowledge

on the psychological mechanisms shaping job applicants' trust in AI usage in job interviews. While previous research has studied factors such as procedural justice (Feldkamp et al., 2023), uniqueness (i.e., an agent's ability to parse a candidate's unique skills) has been overlooked. Finally, our research offers practical insights for hiring managers interested in AI evaluation agents. Specifically, our findings illuminate when and for whom AI could be an effective alternative to a human evaluation agent.

2 | Theoretical background and conceptual framework

2.1. The role of trust in the evaluation agent

In a recent interview, Unilever's chief of HR, Leena Nair, said that Unilever is saving hundreds of thousands of person-hours in candidate assessment by using AI to select job applicants (Marr, 2018). She specifically noted: "We look for people with a sense of purpose – systemic thinking, resilience, business acumen. Based on that profile, the video interviews are all programmed to look for cues in their behavior that will help us understand who will fit in at Unilever."

Unilever is not alone. Indeed, the use of AI-based tools to evaluate applicants' interview responses is a rising trend (Mirowska et al., 2021). AI evaluations rely on asynchronous video interviews, where applicants record videos of themselves answering pre-determined interview questions on camera (Roulin et al., 2022). AI agents then analyze applicants' verbal and nonverbal behaviors, such as facial movements and gaze (Leicht-Deobald et al., 2019). As AI becomes more prevalent in HR decisions, it is critical that managers understand the psychological underpinnings of applicants' responses to AI versus human evaluation agents. Specifically, a critical goal for hiring managers is to enhance applicants' job offer acceptance, defined as the degree to which job applicants intend to accept job opportunities offered by a specific company (Tsai et al., 2016). Yet, the hiring literature offers little evidence regarding the drivers of actual applicants' job acceptance intentions to AI usage in hiring practices (e.g., Mirowska et al., 2020).

Prior research suggests that trust, defined as an attitude concerning the goodwill and competence of another and confidence the one being trusted acts or has acted as expected (Valsesia et al., 2016), is a key factor in job applicants' responses to the evaluation agent and selection processes (Klotz et al., 2013). For example, Uggerselev et al. (2012) performed a meta-analysis on 232 studies and identified that recruiter trustworthiness is an important predictor of applicants' behavioral intentions towards an organization. Previous models on interpersonal trust (Mayer et al., 1995) and trust in AI (Lee & See, 2004) suggest that, independently of whether the evaluation is provided by a human or an AI, the main dimensions of trust processes are trustworthiness, reliability, and trust behavior (e.g., job acceptance). Trustworthiness reflects perceptions of the characteristics of a trustee (e.g., an evaluation agent). Trust and trustworthiness perceptions emerge from known or perceived characteristics of the evaluation agent, as well as her or his performance in a task (Lee & See, 2004). In a job interview, this means that the job applicant will evaluate trustworthiness in relation to the evaluation agent's abilities to properly assess their skills for the job. Prior work, however, has overlooked to examine whether applicants might trust AI evaluation agents more or less than human agents and what consequence this might have in terms of job acceptance intentions. While not having been to date addressed in the hiring context, the question of whether people trust AI more than humans has been addressed in different fields and contexts. For example, research in the medical context has demonstrated that patients' trust is lower when they interact with AI clinical applications rather than when they interact with physicians (Esmaeilzadeh et al., 2021) and that patients are less willing to follow a medical recommendation offered by an AI algorithm rather than by a human physician, due to lower perceived diagnosis trustworthiness (Gaczek et al., 2023). Similarly, research in the hospitality industry has shown that customers develop higher trust when interacting with a hotel's human staff rather than with robot staff (Chao et al., 2007). More generally, previous research has demonstrated that consumers tend to rely on and trust algorithms less than humans for performing subjective tasks, defined as "being open to interpretation and based on personal opinion or intuition"

(Castelo et al., 2019, p. 811), while trust in algorithms increases for objective tasks, that are those that involve "facts that are quantifiable and measurable" (Castelo et al., 2019, p. 811).

Building on the above evidence from other fields and on the evidence that recruiting employees can be seen as a subjective task, we predict that job applicants might perceive AI evaluation agents as less trustworthy than human evaluation agents. Formally:

H_1: Job applicants will perceive the AI (vs. human) evaluation agent as less trustworthy, which will lead to a decrease in job acceptance intentions.

2.2 Attachment style and trust toward AI evaluation agent

Prior research suggests that individual differences may shape trust in hiring practices (Klotz et al., 2017). For instance, job applicants' individual differences may predispose them to trust others and facilitate the formation of trust between themselves and organizational agents, thereby influencing selection processes and outcomes (Klotz et al., 2017; Searle & Billsberry, 2011). However, to the best of our knowledge, there is no prior research examining the role of applicants' individual differences in moderating their trust in the AI evaluation agent and subsequent job acceptance intentions.

One important individual trait in this regard is attachment style. Attachment theory assumes that people internalize their earliest interactions with their primary caregivers and the resulting emotions guide people's social behaviors and life expectations (Mikulincer et al., 2005). Individual differences in attachment styles have been shown to predict relational outcomes such as trust (Cassidy & Shaver, 2018; Gillath et al., 2021), individual behaviours such as employees' job performance in business settings (Scrima et al., 2015; Ronen & Zuroff, 2017), and people behavior in human-technology interactions (Oldmeadow et al., 2013; Park et al., 2019). Specifically, attachment theory has been extended to explore the relationship between individuals and non-human objects, following previous research suggesting that people mindlessly apply social norms to interactive technology (e.g., Nass & Moon, 2000). As such, the interaction with non-human targets like artificial intelligence

may reflect the major features of attachment bonds (e.g., trust perceptions). For instance, research has shown that individuals form attachments with non-human targets (e.g., smartphones, Konok et al., 2017), and that attachment styles determine consumers' perceived empathy towards artificial intelligence (Pozharliev et al., 2021). Hence, we ground our research on attachment theory (e.g., Bowlby, 2008) and propose that applicants' attachment styles may influence their responses and behaviors toward AI evaluation agents.

Central to attachment theory is the notion that people develop working models: mental representations of themselves and other people, based on their retrospective perceptions of interpersonal and emotional experiences with important others. Once developed, these models are generalized to new social situations (Bowlby, 1973; Chen, 2019). These models are characterized along two dimensions: attachment avoidance and attachment anxiety (Brennan et al., 1998).

Attachment avoidance (what we refer to as AAS) stems from a negative working model of other people, reflecting the extent to which people trust others' goodwill or try to maintain relational distance. As trust plays a key role in understanding human interactions with non-human entities (e.g., Hoff & Bashir, 2015), individual differences such as attachment avoidance can explain how people perceive AI in terms of trustworthiness (e.g., Hancock et al., 2011). Attachment anxiety originates from a negative working model of self, reflecting the degree to which people wish to achieve proximity to other people while fearing rejection and abandonment (Mikulincer, 1998). While anxiously attached individuals doubt about themself as they lack a sense of their own self-worth, individuals with avoidant attachment doubt about others, because they have developed a negative perception of others (Harms et al., 2016). As individuals with avoidant attachment have a negative view of others, as compared to anxiously attached individuals which instead have a negative mental model of self, the present work focuses on the attachment avoidance dimension, as it could influence job applicants' trust toward the evaluation agents and subsequent job acceptance intention.

Previous research on human relations has shown that high (vs. low) attachment avoidance is associated with less (vs. more) trust in other humans (Simmons et al., 2009). Thus, applicants'

attachment avoidance may shape their trust perceptions and behaviors in a selection process featuring an AI (vs. human) evaluation agent. Specifically, low-avoidance people are more willing to rely on others' support and help in social situations (Richards & Schat, 2011). Moreover, they tend to have a positive working model of other humans—and are, therefore, generally more trusting of them (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2019). Hence, we assume that this trust toward humans (vs. AI) will persist in other social contexts, such as human-organizational relationships. On the contrary, high-avoidance people tend to perceive others as unresponsive, punishing, and untrustworthy (Kirrane et al., 2019). Moreover, such individuals are self-focused and view themself as self-reliant, often seeking to maximize autonomy in social situations (e.g., Richards & Schat, 2011; Wang et al., 2018). Consequently, they may act indifferently in terms of trust to an AI (vs. human) evaluation agent (Feeney & Collins, 2001; Gillath et al., 2005).

Drawing on these insights, we argue that applicants scoring low on AAS will report lower perceived trust toward an AI (vs. human) evaluation agent, which will then negatively affect their job acceptance intentions. On the contrary, we expect that high-AAS applicants will not experience differential trust between AI (vs. human) agents due to their strong sense of independence and self-reliance tendencies. Formally:

H_2: A decrease in avoidant attachment style will lead to a decrease in perceived trust toward AI (vs. human) evaluation agents, which will in turn decrease job acceptance intentions.

2.3 The role of uniqueness

Prior research shows that AI's ability to assess a person's unique attributes is an important factor for successful human–AI interactions (e.g., Longoni et al., 2019). In the medical setting, for example, people perceived an AI healthcare provider as less capable of assessing their unique symptoms—and in turn showed more resistance to its recommendations—compared to those delivered by a human

(Longoni et al., 2019). In the asynchronous video interview selection process, applicants' perceptions of the evaluation agent's ability to assess their unique skills, such as interpersonal and communication skills, may affect their judgments of the agent and their trust towards it. Specifically, people perceive AI as capable of operating only in a standardized and repetitive manner, treating every case the same way (e.g., Haslam, 2006). Thereby, in a job interview selection process, applicants might view the AI evaluation agents as standardized and calibrated for an average applicant. For example, applicants might believe that an AI evaluation agent will not take into account, to the same extent that a hiring manager would, skills such as empathic listening that they regard as unique, and which could be particularly important to display in a job interview. Hence, we expect that applicants will view the AI (vs. human) evaluation agent as less capable of assessing their unique skills relative to other applicants. That inability to parse unique skills should lead to lower trust toward the evaluation agent, which will then impact job acceptance intention.

H_3: Job applicants will perceive the AI (vs. human) evaluation agent as less capable of assessing their unique skills, which will lead to a decrease in trust, which then will lead to a decrease in job acceptance intentions.

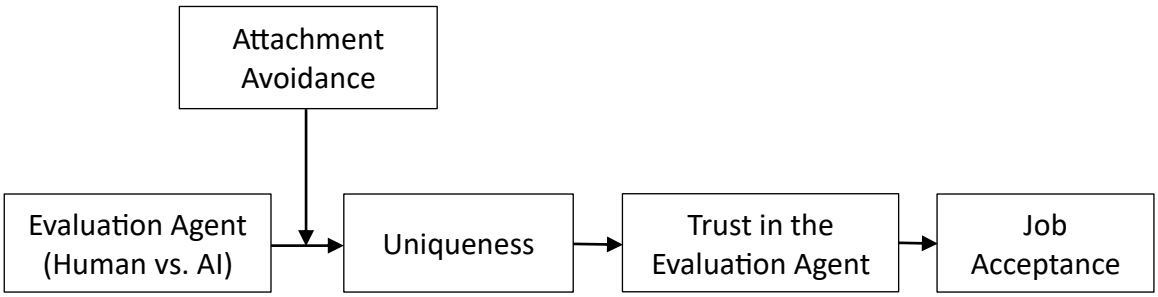
To extend our investigation, we also examined how applicants' individual differences (i.e., attachment avoidance) influences applicants' perceptions of the AI agent's ability to evaluate job applicants' unique skills. As previously discussed, individuals' attachment avoidance stems from a negative mental representation of other people (e.g., Emery et al., 2018). People low in attachment avoidance are more likely to view others as valuable and trustworthy (Mikulincer et al., 2005; Richards & Schat, 2011), and therefore capable of reliably evaluating their unique skills. Drawing on these insights, we argue that applicants who score low on attachment avoidance will see the human agent as more capable of assessing their unique skills (compared to the AI agent), which in turn will increase their job acceptance intentions. In contrast, people high in attachment avoidance are

characterized by a general mistrust of others (Wang et al., 2018), which might negatively affect their perceptions about other humans' ability to assess their unique interpersonal and communication skills. Therefore, we expect that individuals high in attachment avoidance should be less inclined to distinguish between a human and AI agent. Formally:

H_4: A decrease in avoidant attachment style will lead to a decrease in perceived uniqueness perceptions of AI versus human evaluation agents, which in turn will lead to decreased job acceptance intentions.

Figure 1 illustrates a schematic representation of all experimental variables and the connections between them.

Figure 1. Full conceptual model



3 | Study 1: Testing the mediating role of trust

3.1 | Methods

Participants and procedure

We recruited 114 USA residents via Prolific and pre-screened them to find actual job seekers. All respondents have given informed consent to participate in the research. We excluded 14 respondents who failed the attention check, leading to a final sample of 100 people (M_{age} = 42.25, SD = 12.76, 54% male, 73% had performed at least one job interview in the past). Participants were instructed to play the role of a job seeker applying for a *junior project manager* position at a company they would like to work for. They were invited to read a job description detailing the skills required for the job (e.g., interpersonal and communication skills) (see Web Appendix B for the interview questions), and told that the current selection stage would involve completing a real asynchronous video interview using a specialized hiring platform (*MyInterview*). MyInterview is a real video interviewing platform designed to help companies select job applicants. MyInterview hiring platform has seen a dramatic increase in the number of asynchronous video interviews conducted: from 100,000 in 2019 to 1 million in 2020 to over 5 million by the end of 2022. Large employers such as Facebook and Six Flags, among others, are already using the app to manage their selection processes (MyInterview, 2022).

Before performing the interview, participants were randomly assigned to one of two experimental conditions: in the first, they were told that a human hiring manager would analyze and score their interview responses; in the second, they were told the company's AI algorithms would handle that process (see Web Appendix A for experimental stimuli). Afterward, they logged into the hiring platform and answered four interview questions, which were the same across groups. Most questions were behaviorally oriented and tied to managerial skills typically sought after by organizations (e.g., see Torres & Gregory, 2018) (see Web Appendix B for the interview questions). For example, question number four, "*Give me an example of when you worked well with a team on a project or initiative. What was your role and how did you contribute to the teamwork?"* corresponds to the competencies of "communication" and "interpersonal skills" in Abraham *et al*. (2001). The questions were presented one at a time, each on a new screen. Participants had 2 minutes to answer each question, at which point the software automatically redirected them to the next question. Next,

we collected data on the variables of interest. We measured participants' trust in the evaluation agent with three items measured on a 7-point Likert scale (e.g., "*The evaluation agent of my interview will be trustworthy*"; adapted from Shin et al., 2020; 1 = "Strongly disagree", 7 = "Strongly agree"; α = .96). We assessed job acceptance intentions using a single item measured on a 7-point Likert scale ("*I would accept the job if it is offered*"; adapted from McLarty & Whitman, 2016; 1 = "Strongly disagree", 7 = "Strongly agree"). Next, Participants completed the attention check by answering the question: "*According to what you read earlier, how will your interview answers be scored and analyzed*? *Please check all that apply."* (1 = using artificial intelligence algorithms; 2 = by a member of the hiring team, 3 = none of the above). Finally, we controlled for participants' previous job interview experience using a single-item measure (i.e., *how many employment interviews have you participated in?*"; Langer et al., 2017; 1 = "I never participated in an employment interview"; 2 = "from one to three"; 3 = "more than three"), as well as their age and gender (see Web Appendix C for specific questions and scales). On average, participants took 15 minutes to complete the study.

3.2 | Results

Trust in the evaluation agent. Compared to a human evaluation agent, an AI evaluation agent decreased trust (M_{human} = 5.62, SD_{human}= 1.06 vs. M_{AI} = 4.00, SD_{AI}= 1.47, F (1, 98) = 40.20, p < 0.001).

Mediation. We employed a mediation model implemented in the PROCESS macro for SPSS (Model 4; Hayes 2017), with the evaluation agent (hiring manager = 0; AI = 1) as the independent variable, perceived trust in the evaluation agent as the mediator, and job acceptance intentions as the dependent variable. The results show that the use of an AI (vs. human) evaluation agent decreased the perceived trust ($b = -1.62$, t = −6.34, p < 0.001), which then affected job acceptance intentions (b = 0.59, t = 5.33, p < 0.001) (See figure 2). In other words, participants' job acceptance intentions decreased in tandem with their perceived trust in the evaluation agent. Specifically, the indirect

negative effect of an AI evaluation agent on job acceptance intentions—through perceived trust in the evaluation agent—was statistically significant (b = –.96, [SE] = 0.22; 95 % [CI] = [–1.43–0.55]). As for covariates, we found no statistically significant effects of gender, age, and previous interview experience on trust and job acceptance.

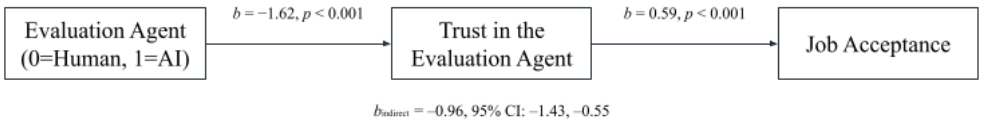


Figure 2.

4 | Study 2: Testing the moderation effect of attachment avoidance

4.1 | Methods

Participants and procedure

We recruited 130 USA residents via Prolific and pre-screened them to find actual job seekers. All respondents have given informed consent to participate in the research. We excluded 13 respondents who failed the attention check, leading to a final sample of 117 people (M_{age} = 38.19, SD = 13.32, 56.4% male, 59% had performed at least one job interview in the past). Study 2 used the same procedure and material from Study 1.

The measures for trust in the evaluation agent (α =.94), job acceptance intentions, and the attention check were the same as in Study 1. We measured AAS using the six-item avoidance subscale from the global version of the Relationship Structures (ECR-RS) Questionnaire (e.g., "*I find it easy to depend on others*"; Fraley et al., 2006; α = .87). Participants were asked to think about their close

relationships (e.g., family, friends, and romantic partners, without thinking about one in specific), and rate the degree to which each item described their feelings and behaviors in these relationships using a 7-point Likert scale (1 = "Strongly disagree", 7 = "Strongly agree") (see Web Appendix C for specific questions and scales). On average, participants took 16 minutes to complete the study.

4.2 | Results

Trust in the evaluation agent. Compared to the human evaluation agent, the AI evaluation agent decreased trust (M_{human} = 4.58, SD_{human}= 1.39 vs. M_{AI} = 3.98, SD_{AI}= 1.51, F (1, 115) = 4.90, p = 0.02).

Moderated mediation. We employed a moderated mediation analysis (PROCESS model 7; Hayes, 2017) to test the moderating role of attachment avoidance on the influence of the evaluation agent (human = –0.5; AI = 0.5) on job acceptance intentions. To allow for a clearer interpretation of the main effects, we recoded the type of agent as –0.5 vs 0.5 and mean-centered the AAS measure.

The results show that the evaluation agent and attachment avoidance had a significant interaction effect on perceived trust in the evaluation agent (b = 0.43, t = 2.11, p = 0.03). As illustrated in Figure 3, the respondents scoring low on AAS reported lower trust when evaluated by an AI (compared to a human) evaluation agent, but there were no significant group differences for high-AAS participants. We corroborated those results with the Johnson-Neyman analysis for significant regions, where the cut-off value for AAS equaled –0.09. Moreover, the analysis showed a significant moderated mediation on job acceptance intentions (b =.2070, 95% CI = .0309, .4450). The effect was driven by perceived trust in the evaluation agent (b = –0.28, 95% CI = –.6026, –.0401). The use of an AI evaluation agent decreased applicants' trust in the agent (b = –.46, SE = 0.25, t = –1.82, p = .009), which then decreased job acceptance intentions (b = 0.47, SE = 0.09, t = 4.87, p < 0.001) (See Figure 4). Specifically, people with AAS scores above –0.25 perceive the human and AI evaluation agents as equally trustworthy, while those below showed that the indirect effect is more negative as

AAS lowers (b=−0.27; LCI =−0.5815; UCI =−0.0391 for 50th percentile of AAS scores; b=−0.47; LCI =−0.9066; UCI =−0.1535 for 16th percentile of AAS scores), with a decrease of job acceptance intentions for the AI evaluation agent

As for covariates, we found no statistically significant effects of gender, age, and previous interview experience on trust and job acceptance.

Study 2 demonstrates that applicants scoring low on attachment avoidance perceived AI (compared to human) evaluation agent as less trustworthy, which in turn reduces their willingness to accept the job offer.

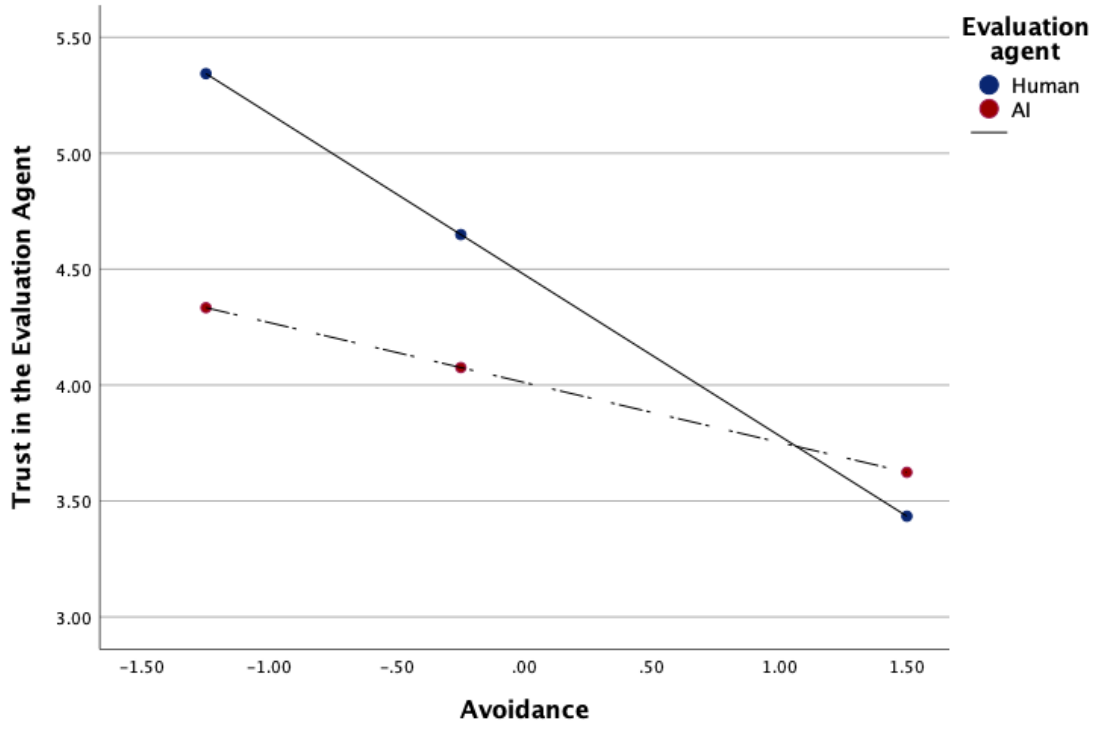


Figure 3. The Interactive Effect of Type of Evaluation Agents and Attachment Avoidance on Participant Perceived Trust in the Evaluation Agent.

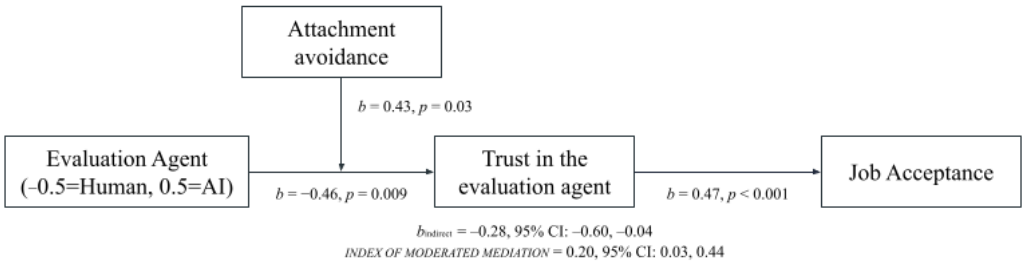


Figure 4.

5 | Study 3: Testing the mediating role of uniqueness

5.1 | Methods

Participants and procedure

We recruited 120 USA residents via Prolific and pre-screened them to find actual job seekers. All respondents have given informed consent to participate in the research. We excluded 12 respondents who failed the attention check, leaving a final sample of 108 people (M_{age} = 40,34, SD = 14.20, 52.8% female, 62.1% had performed at least one job interview in the past). Study 3 used the same procedure and material from Studies 1 and 2.

The measures for trust in the evaluation agent (α = 0.94), job acceptance intentions, attachment avoidance (α = 0.87), and the attention check were the same as the previous studies. We assessed uniqueness using 3 items measured on a 7-point Likert scale (e.g., "*the [hiring manager/artificial intelligence algorithms] would consider my unique skills*"; 1 = "Strongly disagree", 7 = "Strongly agree"; adapted from Longoni et al., 2019; α = .93). Next, we collected data on job applicants' gender, age, previous interview experience (see Web Appendix C for specific questions and scales). On average, respondents took 16 minutes to complete the study.

5.2 | Results

Uniqueness. Compared to the human evaluation agent, the AI evaluation agent decreased uniqueness evaluations (M_{human} = 4.60, SD_{human}= 1.15 vs. M_{AI} = 3.54, SD_{AI}= 1.64, F (1, 106) = 14.56, p < .001).

Trust in the evaluation agent. Compared to the human evaluation agent, the AI evaluation agent decreased trust (M_{human} = 5.06, SD_{human}= 1.39 vs. M_{AI} = 3.61, SD_{AI}= 1.65, F (1, 106) = 23.72, p < .001).

Serial moderated mediation We employed a serial moderated mediation analysis (PROCESS model 84; Hayes, 2017) to test the moderating role of attachment avoidance on the influence of the evaluation agent (human = –0.5; AI = 0.5) on job acceptance intentions. To allow for a clearer interpretation of the main effects, we recoded the type of agent as –0.5 vs 0.5 and mean-centered the AAS measure. The results show that the evaluation agent and attachment avoidance had a significant interaction effect on uniqueness evaluations (b = 0.45, t = 2.10, p = 0.03). As illustrated in Figure 5, subjects scoring low on attachment avoidance reported lower uniqueness when evaluated by an AI (compared to a human) evaluation agent, while we observed no significant difference for participants with a high AAS score. Again, this suggests that the members of the latter group did not significantly differ in their perception about the evaluation agents' ability to capture applicants' unique skills in the job interview selection process. We corroborated those results with the Johnson-Neyman analysis for significant regions, where the cut-off value for AAS equaled 0.88 for the conditional effect on uniqueness. Moreover, the analysis showed a significant serial moderated mediation on job acceptance intentions (b =.13, 95% CI = .0161, .3018). The effect was sequentially driven by uniqueness and trust in the evaluation agent (b = -0.32, 95% CI = -.6499, -.1097). The use of an AI evaluation agent reduced the perceived uniqueness (b = –1.06, SE = 0.27, t = –3.86, p = .002), which decreased applicants' trust in the evaluation agent (b = 0.63, SE = 0.08, t = 7.58, p < .001), which

then decreased job acceptance intentions (b = 0.46, SE = 0.11, t = 4.24, p < .001) (See Figure 6). Specifically, people with AAS scores above –.09 perceive the human and AI evaluation agents' as equally capable of considering applicants' unique skills in the interview, while those below showed that the indirect effect is more negative as AAS lowers (b=−0.32; LCI =−0.6363; UCI =−0.1119 for 50th percentile of AAS scores; b=−0.48; LCI =−0.9184; UCI =−0.1719 for 16th percentile of AAS scores), with a decrease of job acceptance intentions for the AI evaluation agent. As for covariates, we found no statistically significant effects of gender, age, and previous interview experience on uniqueness, trust and job acceptance, except for a significant effect of previous interview experience on trust (b= − 0.3565; t = − 2.5556; p = 0.01). It could be that applicants had negative experiences in previous job interviews (e.g., not being selected, unfair evaluation), which influenced their perceived trust in the actual selection process.

Study 3 further illuminates the effects of AI usage and their underlying mechanism. Consistent with our theorizing, the use of an AI evaluation agent reduced applicants' perceptions of the agent's ability to evaluate their unique skills, thereby decreasing their trust in the evaluation agent, and job acceptance intentions. Moreover, this decrease was higher for people scoring low on attachment avoidance, who perceived the AI agent as less able to discern unique skills and thereby less trustworthy.

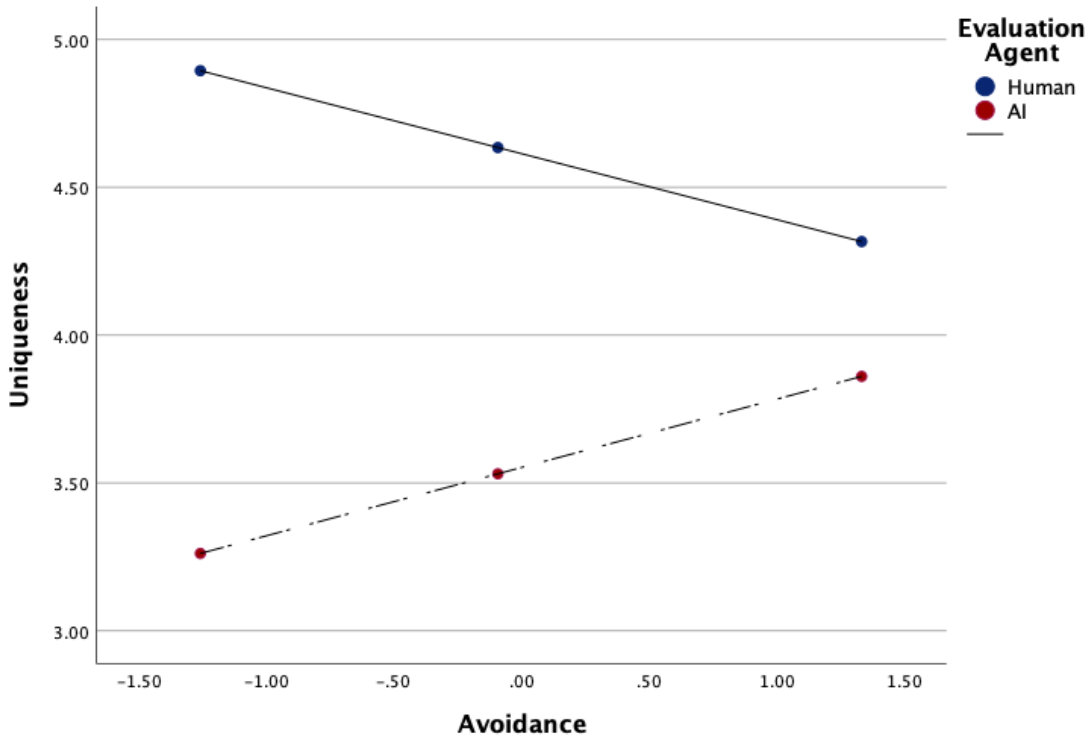


Figure 5. The Interactive Effect of Evaluation Agent Type and Attachment Avoidance on Uniqueness.

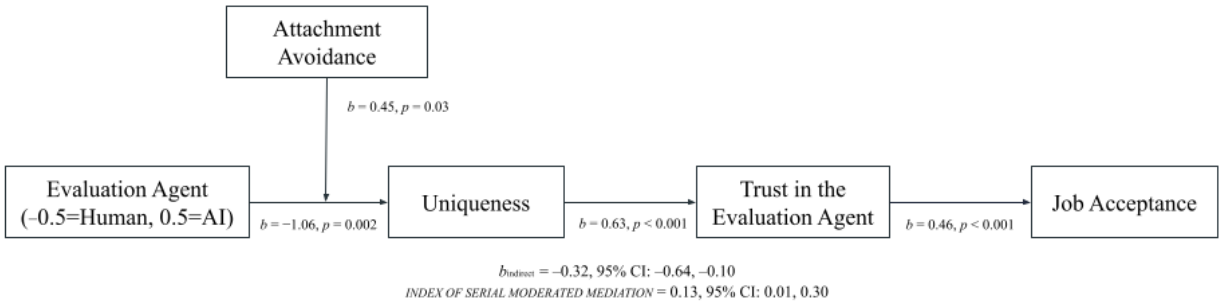


Figure 6.

6 | General discussion

Organizations are increasingly using AI evaluation agents to automate job interviews. One key challenge in this regard is helping managers increase job applicants' acceptance of this new technological solution. To this end, we sought to shed light on the explanatory mechanisms of job applicants' responses to and acceptance of AI. Through three experimental studies based on simulated

asynchronous video interviews, we illustrate when and how the use of an AI (vs. human) evaluation agent decreases applicants' job acceptance intentions, as well as reveal the process underlying these effects.

Study 1 found that the use of an AI evaluation agent reduces applicants' job acceptance intentions by decreasing their trust in the evaluation agent. Study 2 corroborated that finding and further uncovered the role of job applicants' attachment avoidance in moderating these effects. Specifically, low levels of attachment avoidance decreased job applicants' trust in the AI evaluation agent, which decreased their job acceptance intentions. Meanwhile, job applicants scoring high on attachment avoidance showed no difference in their levels of trust and job acceptance intentions between the two evaluation agents. Lastly, Study 3 extended our results by identifying an agent's ability to evaluate unique skills as a key antecedent of job applicants' low trust toward AI evaluation agents.

7 | Theoretical implications

Our findings make several contributions to prior research on job applicant responses to evaluation agents (Black & van Esch, 2021; Meijerink & Bondarouk, 2023). Studies looking at optimizing AI-based hiring practices have predominantly focused on the role of different organizational procedures and actions, rather than on the role that job candidate's perceptions and beliefs about the AI evaluation process play in affecting important hiring outcomes such as job acceptance intentions (Harold et al., 2016). We filled this gap by examining the effect of trust in the evaluation agent and its underlying process on job applicants' job acceptance intentions to AI (vs. human) evaluation agents. Our results indicate that AI evaluation agents reduced applicants' job acceptance intentions by sequentially decreasing their perceived uniqueness and trust towards the agents.

Second, drawing from attachment theory (Mikulincer et al., 2005), we demonstrated that the negative effect of AI usage in asynchronous video interviews was contingent upon job applicants' attachment avoidance levels. In doing so, our research also contributes to the literature on the role of individual differences in shaping job applicants' responses to hiring practices (Hiemstra et al., 2019; McCarthy et al., 2017). Specifically, job applicants who scored low on attachment avoidance placed less trust in the AI evaluation agent and were thereby less likely to accept a potential job offer. A potential explanation for these effects may be that low-AAS individuals hold a more a positive mental model of other humans due to their formative experiences (Simmons et al., 2009; Thomas et al., 2013), and are thus more likely to value a human's judgment over a machine's.

Third, we enriched knowledge on the drivers of trust (Glikson & Woolley, 2020). Specifically, our results show that job applicants perceived the AI (vs. human) evaluation agent as less capable of assessing their unique skills (e.g., interpersonal and communication skills) in the job interview, which in turn affected their trust in the evaluation agent. This perception may stem from people's awareness that AI usually operates in a standardized manner based on pre-coded categories (Haslam, 2006) and may evaluate every applicant in the same way. Moreover, we extended research on factors affecting job applicant responses to AI (Mirowska & Mesnet, 2021) by demonstrating that attachment avoidance influences applicants' perception of an AI agent to parse unique skills. Low-AAS applicants considered the AI (vs. human) evaluation agent as less naturally predisposed to recognize the unique skills showed in the interview. As said earlier, such individuals' positive mental representations of other people (i.e., as valuable and helpful) may fuel this perception (Richards & Schat, 2011).

Finally, we contributed to the scant literature on asynchronous video interviews (Roulin et al., 2022; Schilpzand et al., 2022): a novel method of applicant selection that has rapidly become an established alternative to time- and resource-intensive selection tools, such as traditional face-to-face interviews (Fific & Gigerenzer 2014, Lukacik et al., 2022). While a large part of applicant reaction research uses descriptive designs (Hausknecht et al., 2004; Hiemstra et al., 2019), we sought higher

external validity by orienting our research design around an interview method that is increasingly commonplace, using an external hiring platform that many top firms currently employ.

8 | Managerial implications

AI recruiting is growing in popularity (Mirowska et al., 2021) and its related products are expected to produce almost $840 million in revenue by 2028 (MarketWatch, 2023). The hope is that these AI evaluation agents will heighten the efficiency of hiring while improving job applicants' experience and behavioral intentions. Thus, many organizations are closely evaluating "when" and "how" to implement AI agents into their hiring practices. In that regard, our research seeks to improve hiring managers' knowledge about the factors that modulate job applicants' acceptance of AI. Based on our results, we offer actionable implications for segmenting applicants, tailoring selection processes toward specific segments, designing a job-related communication strategy for the selected segments, and implementing AI evaluation agents into hiring practices.

First, our results suggest that candidates' attachment avoidance style may help predict how they respond to AI evaluation agents in hiring practices. Hence, hiring managers might consider attachment avoidance as a segmentation criterion when targeting job applicants and managing the organization's image on the job market. For instance, hiring managers can look at pre-existing segments that have applied for specific jobs, survey people from those segments to derive attachment avoidance scores, and identify how these segments vary in terms of attachment avoidance (Shuler et al., 2020). Organizations can then use that information to produce more tailored communication. Alternatively, companies could require job applicants to complete self-reported measures on attachment avoidance, similar to how firms currently assess Big Five personality traits (Holtrop et al., 2022).

Second, and relatedly, companies that intend to use AI in hiring practices should initially focus on applicants high on attachment avoidance. These applicants might respond more favorably to AI

replacing human evaluation agents. Specifically, our results suggest that due to their negative mental models of others, high-AAS individuals might hold similar trust levels in human and AI agents. When targeting such applicants, hiring managers could tailor their communication messages around the functional benefits of being evaluated by an AI agent, such as minimizing recruiter biases and stereotypes (Nandkeolyar et al., 2022), or all applicants being screened against the same criteria (Leicht-Deobald et al., 2019). On the contrary, low-AAS candidates might find an AI agent to be less trustworthy due to holding other people in higher regard. Therefore, organizations should avoid forcing AI evaluation agents on such applicants, as that approach risks undermining the organization's attractiveness. Instead, those candidates might be allowed to select their preferred evaluation agent. Granted, that approach may not be sustainable in the long-term given that part of a firm's purpose in using an AI is cutting recruitment costs.

9 | Limitations and further research

Our work features several limitations that can inspire future research. First, to keep the information related to the two evaluation agents comparable, we leaned toward a basic description of the AI agent. However, many companies specify other AI-related features. Hence, future work could investigate the impact of different AI characteristics: For instance, potential applicants might be turned off by an AI's emotional recognition due to seeing that as a human-exclusive ability (Gray et al., 2007).

Second, our research explored the mechanisms underlying applicants' responses to AI in the job interview process, as the job interview is the most widely used selection process and one of the best predictors of job performance (Martín-Raugh et al., 2022). We suggest that future research investigate more of these mechanisms in other stages of the selection process. One such process might be CV screening: For example, an AI evaluation agent might be perceived more positively (e.g., in

terms of trust) for tasks that are repetitive in nature (e.g., Huang & Rust, 2020), such as screening job applicants' experiences and qualifications included in their CV.

Third, we focused on uniqueness perceptions and perceived trust as our main explanatory mechanisms of job applicants' responses to AI. However, future research might want to explore the role of other potentially relevant variables that may shape job applicants' reactions to AI, such as perceived competence (Fiske et al., 2002), empathy (Pozharliev et al., 2021), and warmth (e.g., Gershon et al., 2022).

Finally, our studies converged in showing that attachment avoidance affects job applicants' responses to AI. However, future work may want to investigate the role of other individual factors, such as self-efficacy (Machin et al., 2019). It is possible that job applicants high in self-efficacy may show lower job acceptance intentions in AI-based (vs. human-based) selection processes due to seeing the AI as denying them the opportunity to perform for others and manage their impressions.

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Web Appendix A: Experimental Stimuli

EVALUATION AGENT:

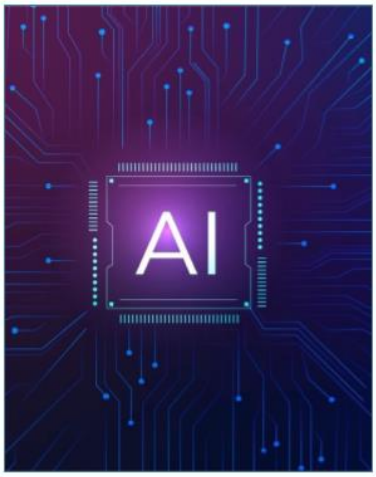
HIRING MANAGER

Your video interview will be **scored and analyzed solely by our company's hiring manager**. The hiring manager has over 10 years of experience with hiring job candidates who applied for this type of role.

EVALUATION AGENT:

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

Your video interview will be **scored and analyzed solely by our company's artificial intelligence (AI) algorithms**. The AI was trained using over 10 years' worth of data from job candidates who applied for this type of role.



Junior Project Manager

EXAMPLE OF ACTIVITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Assisting more experienced managers in organizing, planning and implementing strategy;
- Evaluating each project's effectiveness by consulting with clients, customers, and staff;
- Monitoring the work of employees under your supervision, such that projects are completed on time.

SKILLS REQUIRED

Leadership and decision-making abilities;
Strong Interpersonal and Communication skills;
Excellent orientation to team work;
Problem-solving attitude;
Ability to identify innovative solutions and implement them.

Requirements: Degree in a pertinent discipline; Fluent written & spoken English

Web Appendix B: Asynchronous Video Interview Questions

Questions	Skills
1. What are your strengths and weaknesses? What are you doing to improve your weaknesses?	Introductory question
2. Give me a specific example of a time when you used good judgment and logic in solving a problem	Corresponds to the competency of "problem solver" in Abraham et al. (2011)
3. Tell me about a time when you were creative	Corresponds to the skill of "innovative behavior" in Abraham et al. (2011)
4. Give me an example of when you worked well with a team on a project or initiative. What was your role and how did you contribute to the teamwork?	Corresponds to "communication" and "interpersonal" skills in Abraham et al. (2001)

Web Appendix C: Measurement scales

Scales

Construct/variable	Source	Scale
1. Trust (adapted)	Shin, D.D., Zhong, B., & Biocca, F. (2020). Beyond user experience: What constitutes algorithmic experiences? *International Journal of Information Management*, 52, 1020.	To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding the evaluation agent? (1 = "strongly disagree", 7 = "strongly agree") Q1: 1. I trust the evaluation of my interview that will be made Q2: The evaluation agent of my interview will be trustworthy. Q3: I believe that the evaluation of my interview will be reliable
2. Uniqueness (adapted)	Longoni, Chiara, Andrea Bonezzi, and Carey Morewedge (2019), Resistance to Medical Artificial Intelligence, *Journal of Consumer Research*, 46 (4), 629–50.	To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements below? (1 = "strongly disagree", 7 = "strongly agree") The [hiring manager/artificial intelligence algorithms]… Q1: Would recognize the uniqueness of my interview Q2: Would consider my unique skills Q3: Would tailor the evaluation to my unique case
3. Job acceptance intentions (adapted)	McLarty, B.D., Whitman, D.S., 2016. A dispositional approach to applicant reactions: examining core self-evaluations, behavioral intentions, and fairness perceptions. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 31 (1), 141–153.	*Q1:I would accept the job if it is offered*
4. Attachment avoidance	Fraley, R. C., Niedenthal, P. M., Marks, M. J., Brumbaugh, C. C., & Vicary, A. (2006). Adult attachment and the perception of emotional expressions: Probing the	Please read each of the following statements and rate the extent to which you believe each statement best describes your feelings about close relationships in general (1 = "strongly

	hyperactivating strategies underlying anxious attachment. *Journal of Personality*, 74, 1163-1190.	disagree", 7 = "strongly agree") Q1: It helps to turn to people in times of need. Q2: I usually discuss my problems and concerns with others. Q3: I talk things over with people. Q4: I find it easy to depend on others. Q5: I don't feel comfortable opening up to others. Q6: I prefer not to show others how I feel deep down.

Factors shaping candidates' Job Acceptance Intentions in Asynchronous Video Interviews

Abstract

The efficiency of asynchronous video interviews (AVIs)—an on-demand alternative to traditional job interviews—makes them increasingly attractive to hiring managers who are looking to satisfy the interests of both their organization and job applicants. However, little is known about the psychological drivers shaping applicants' job offer acceptance with AVIs. Through one field and three controlled experiments, this research demonstrates that job applicants show lower job acceptance intentions toward AVI (vs. face-to-face) job interviews (Study 1). Moreover, job applicants exhibit lower willingness to self-disclose with AVI, which in turn reduced their job acceptance intentions (Study 2). Using a serial mediation model, Study 3 tested one explanatory mechanism for how AVI affects self-disclosure, finding that perceived psychological comfort is an antecedent of job applicants' low self-disclosure. Finally, these effects were stronger for job applicants with lower scores on avoidant attachment style (Study 4). Together, the studies reveal the explanatory mechanisms through which AVI affects job acceptance intentions, deepen our understanding of the individual differences moderating applicants' experience of AVI, and provide actionable insights for integrating AVI into hiring practices.

Keywords

asynchronous video interview, self-disclosure, attachment style, job acceptance, psychological comfort

1 | Introduction

Amidst the evolution of technology and human resource management practices, the job interview has undergone an important transformation (Mirowska & Mesnet, 2021; Stone et al., 2015): from entirely physical to occasionally digital. Indeed, a growing number of organizations have integrated asynchronous video interviews (hereafter, AVIs)—an on-demand alternative to traditional face-to-face interviews—into their hiring practices (Lukacik et al., 2022; Torres & Gregory, 2018).

When using AVIs, hiring organizations send the applicants a link that connects them to an external hiring platform, where they record short video responses to predetermined interview questions on camera (Roulin, Lukacik et al., 2022). Hence, the AVI is an entirely online experience in which there is no synchronous, back-and-forth communication with an interviewer (Lukacik et al., 2022). Given its features, AVI represents a low-cost alternative for hiring job applicants and makes the interview process easier to manage. Thus, organizations can fast-screen specific candidates in order to save time, reduce travel costs, and improve the overall efficiency of the hiring process (e.g., Guchait et al., 2014). Large employers such as Goldman Sachs and Unilever, among others, are already using AVIs to manage their selection processes (Goldman Sachs, 2018; Unilever, 2023). However, job applicants are still ambivalent about the use of AVIs in hiring practices: Only 9% of job seekers, for instance, expressed a preference for AVIs compared to more traditional interview methods such as face-to-face interviews (Proost et al., 2020).

One possible reason for job seekers' aversion toward AVIs could be self-disclosure, defined as the "verbal behavior through which individuals truthfully, sincerely and intentionally communicate novel, ordinarily private information about themselves to one or more others" (Fisher, 1984, p. 288; Huaman-Ramirez et al., 2022). Indeed, the previous literature on hiring practices suggests that job applicants' self-disclosure facilitates more accurate assessments among both the hired and the hiring (Dipboye et al., 2012), increasing the odds of organizations obtaining highly qualified candidates (Moore et al., 2017). However, to the best of our knowledge, no previous research has studied the role that applicants' self-disclosure plays in their perceptions of and intentions toward a company that

uses AVIs in the selection process. Furthermore, previous work has shown that disclosure decisions may be driven by situational factors that manifest in human-technology interactions, such as psychological comfort (Spake et al., 2003). For instance, people who are more comfortable interacting with a technology are often more willing to self-disclose through it (Melumad & Meyer, 2020). We predict that applicants might show different degrees of self-disclosure when performing an AVI compared to a face-to-face interview, and that these differences might by driven by their psychological comfort.

Furthermore, prior literature suggests that personality traits might play a significant role in shaping applicants' responses to selection procedures (e.g., McCarthy et al., 2017; Ryan & Ployhart, 2000). One such trait is individuals' attachment style, which refers to the working models of behavior that people utilize in social interactions (Bowlby, 2008; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2019). Attachment style has been shown to influence people's responses in various social and business contexts (Ronen & Zuroff, 2017; Yip et al., 2017), including human-technology interactions (Sung et al., 2020). Drawing on attachment theory, we argue that attachment style can predict various experiences, such as psychological comfort (Fraley, 2019; Stackert, & Bursik, 2003), that then shape applicants' perceptions of the job interview setting and their acceptance intentions. Specifically, we look at attachment avoidance style: an individual trait that reflects the extent to which people feel comfortable in interpersonal relationships (Abeyta et al., 2019; Stanton et al., 2016) and human-technology interactions **(**Oldmeadow et al., 2013). We assume that this inherent comfort in social settings may shape job applicants' responses to AVIs versus face-to-face job interviews in hiring settings.

Across one field and three controlled experiments, we uncover empirical evidence to support this argument. From those findings, our research makes several contributions: First, while previous studies examined whether using an AVI (vs. face-to-face) job interview affects outcomes such as perceived fairness (Basch et al., 2020), they overlooked the impact of AVI on job acceptance intention. Job acceptance intention is an important hiring outcome, as it reflects whether organizations

ultimately address their labor needs (Harold et al., 2016). We filled this gap by performing a field study comparing job applicants' acceptance intentions toward AVIs (vs. face-to-face interviews).

Second, we contribute to the literature on technology acceptance in hiring practices (Hickman et al., 2022; Lukacik et al., 2022). Previous research has examined some predictors of applicants' responses toward technology in hiring—such as perceived fairness (Langer et al., 2017) or the expected opportunity to demonstrate potential (Proost et al., 2020)—but largely overlooked self-disclosure: a key factor in people's responses in business settings (Kim et al., 2022). We fill this gap by studying the effect of self-disclosure (and its underlying process) on applicants' job acceptance intentions toward AVI (vs. face-to-face interviews). Moreover, while previous research has shown that psychological comfort importantly affects consumers' purchase behavior in service settings (Otterbring et al., 2021), the field lacks knowledge on how this factor affects applicants' job acceptance intentions in response to AVIs. In this way, we advance knowledge on the drivers of job acceptance intentions in hiring practices.

Third, we contribute to the literature on the role of individual differences in job interviews. While research has examined some personality traits, such as extraversion (Hiemstra et al., 2019) and conscientiousness (Brenner et al., 2016), less attention has been given to the role of individual attachment styles. To that end, we show that attachment style can affect job applicants' psychological comfort, self-disclosure, and job acceptance intentions.

Finally, our research offers practical insights for hiring managers interested in using AVIs. Specifically, our findings illuminate when and for whom AVI could be an effective alternative to a face-to-face job interview.

2 | Theoretical background and conceptual framework

2.1 The role of self-disclosure

A critical goal for hiring managers is to enhance applicants' likelihood of accepting a job offer: defined as the degree to which job applicants intend to accept job opportunities offered by a specific company (Tsai et al., 2016), so that a company can successfully hire the employees it needs (Harold et al., 2016). Previous research suggests that different interview methods may influence applicants' job acceptance intentions (Hausknecht et al., 2004)—a point corroborated by some empirical work (e.g., Chapman et al., 2003). However, we are not aware of any research that has compared applicants' job acceptance intentions toward AVIs versus face-to-face interviews.

In short, the field needs to uncover the factors that shape applicants' intentions to accept a job offer based on the interview format, but there is little evidence in relation to AVIs. Research on hiring practices has identified applicants' self-disclosure as a route to success on the job market for both applicants and hiring organizations (Moore et al., 2017). For example, the information shared by applicants during a job interview allows interviewers to make more accurate evaluations (Dipboye et al., 2012), thereby amplifying the chances that high-quality applicants will convert a positive evaluation into a job offer (Moore et al., 2017). In addition, applicants who present themselves accurately are more likely to be committed to their organizations (Cable & Kay, 2012).

Moreover, self-disclosure appears to be a key factor in people's organizational behavior (Follmer et al., 2017) and workplace relationships (Phillips et al., 2009). For instance, past studies have shown how disclosing personal information—such as stigmatized identities—can impact employees' experiences at work, leading to positive job-related outcomes (e.g., job satisfaction) for the disclosing individuals (Follmer et al., 2019). Furthermore, self-disclosure has been found to help strengthen social bonds between providers and customers in the retail environment, contribute to purchase-related goals such as customer satisfaction (Söderlund, 2020) and enhance consumers' willingness to promote a product (Wang et al., 2022).

Despite the apparent importance of self-disclosure, prior work has not examined whether the use of AVIs in hiring practices affects applicants' degrees of self-disclosure and subsequent job acceptance intentions. That said, self-disclosure may play a central role in human-technology

interactions (Moon, 2000). For instance, research has produced mixed findings when examining how agent type (e.g., human vs. machine) influences self-disclosure (Kim et al., 2022). Some studies have demonstrated that people were more willing to self-disclose when interacting with a machine (compared to a human) (e.g., Pickard et al., 2016); others found no differences in the extent of disclosure (Ho et al., 2018). However, AVIs are a unique context: The lack of real-time communication between applicants and hiring managers may lead the former to lower degrees of self-disclosure compared to more traditional selection processes (i.e., face-to-face interviews). Specifically, AVIs introduce new relational challenges—including a strongly decreased interactivity (i.e., the ability for verbal and non-verbal exchange) and reduced social bandwidth (i.e., the ability to share and absorb relevant information) (Lukacik et al., 2022)—that may make applicants feel more uneasy and impair their willingness to self-disclose. Following this line of reasoning, we assume that AVIs will lead to lower self-disclosure, which will then affect job applicants' acceptance intentions.

Recent studies indicate that self-disclosure may affect important behavioral outcomes related to the human-organization relationship, such as individuals' positive word-of-mouth behaviors (Sicilia et al., 2016). Moreover, researchers suggest that disclosure can enhance the discloser's liking of the recipient and influence his or her subsequent behavior (Wang et al., 2022). In response, we assume that applicants' job acceptance intentions with the AVI (vs. face-to-face interview) could be mediated by the level of self-disclosure. Drawing from these insights, we propose that self-disclosure will mediate the relationship between the type of interview (AVI vs. face-to-face) and applicants' responses (i.e., job acceptance intentions).

H_1: Job applicants will be less willing to self-disclose in the AVI (vs. face-to-face interview), which will lead to a decrease in job acceptance intentions.

2.2 The role of psychological comfort

Extant empirical evidence shows that psychological comfort—defined as a person's evaluation of her own (internal-oriented) feeling of being 'at ease' in a service encounter (Pitardi et al., 2023; Spake et al., 2003, p. 321)—is an important factor in business relationships (Ainsworth & Foster, 2017). This factor can lead to beneficial outcomes, such as promoting customers' willingness to self-disclose (Spake et al., 2003). For example, Melumad and Meyer (2020) showed that consumers tend to be more self-disclosing when generating social media content on their smartphone compared to when they use a personal computer, due to the former being associated with higher feelings of comfort (i.e., because of features such as portability and greater personalization). In the retailing environment, meanwhile, consumers have reported that comfort plays a significant role in the relationship between them and their favorite providers (e.g., by reducing perceived risks associated with the provider), as well as increases their willingness to self-disclose (Spake et al., 2003).

On the basis of these findings, we propose that comfort may play an important role in shaping job applicants' responses in organizational settings such as AVIs. In an AVI selection process, the lack of synchronous or real-time communication reduces social interactivity (i.e., the possibility of sharing verbal and non-verbal cues), which may decrease applicants' comfort with the interview (Lukacik et al., 2022). Hence, we expect that applicants will experience lower comfort in the AVI (vs. face-to-face interview), which should lead to a lower willingness to self-disclose in the interview, which will then impact job acceptance intentions.

H_2: Job applicants will experience lower psychological comfort in the AVI (vs. face-to-face interview), which will lead to a decrease in self-disclosure, which then will lead to decreased job acceptance intentions.

2.3 Attachment style and applicants' comfort in AVIs

Prior research suggests that personality traits may shape job applicants' perceptions and behavior in hiring practices (McCarthy et al., 2017; Ryan & Ployhart, 2000). In the job interview selection context, job applicants' personality traits may predispose them to feel less comfortable toward specific interview formats (e.g., AVIs), thereby influencing selection outcomes (Lukacik et al., 2022). However, to the best of our knowledge, there is no prior research examining the role of applicants' personality traits in moderating their experienced comfort when completing an AVI and subsequent job acceptance intentions.

One important individual trait in this regard is attachment style. Attachment theory assumes that individuals internalize their early-life interactions with their primary caregivers; the resulting emotions drive cognitions, affective experience, and social behaviors throughout the lifespan (Collins et al., 2004; Mikulincer et al., 2003). Attachment theory has been shown to predict organizational variables (e.g., job promotion) in business settings (Ronen & Zuroff, 2017; Yip et al., 2018), as well as human-technology interactions (Park et al., 2019). In short, attachment styles may predict people's responses and behavioral intentions (Scrima et al., 2015). Hence, we ground our research on attachment theory (e.g., Bowlby, 2008) and propose that applicants' attachment styles may influence their self-disclosure and job acceptance intentions toward AVIs.

Central to attachment theory is the notion that people develop internal working models: mental representations of themselves and other people, based on their formative interpersonal experiences with significant others. Once developed, these models tend to remain stable over time and are generalized to new social situations (Feeney et al., 2008; Geller & Bamberger, 2009). These models are characterized along two dimensions: attachment avoidance and attachment anxiety (Brennan et al., 1998). Attachment anxiety originates from a negative working model of *self*, reflecting the extent to which individuals worry that significant others might not be available in times of need, leading to a fear of rejection and abandonment (Brandão et al., 2023; Campbell & Marshall, 2011). Anxiously attached individuals have an ambivalent approach toward relationships: They crave emotional intimacy, but worry that others will reject them because they lack a sense of their own self-worth.

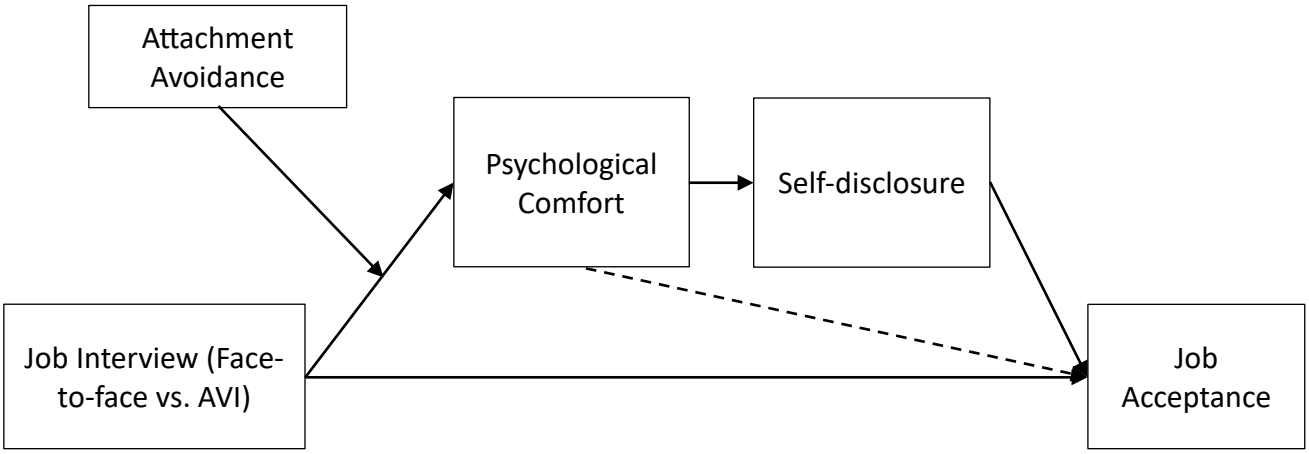
Individuals with avoidant attachment, by comparison, distrust others' intentions and thus emphasize interpersonal distance over interdependence (Folwarczny & Otterbring, 2021; Fraley et al., 1998). Attachment avoidance (what we refer to as AAS) stems from a negative working model of *others*: They tend to distrust others' goodwill, have an excessive need for self-reliance, and are uncomfortable with closeness and intimacy (Chopik et al., 2014; Mende & Bolton, 2011).

Here, we treat the AAS dimension as a moderator of job applicants' self-disclosure and the subsequent job acceptance intentions in a selection process featuring an AVI (vs. face-to-face interview). Low-avoidance people have a positive working model of other humans—and are therefore more generally comfortable getting close to or depending on them (Zhang, 2009). Hence, we assume that this comfort toward humans (vs. AVI) will persist in other social contexts, such as human-organizational relationships, and may affect job applicants' self-disclosure. Specifically, we argue that applicants scoring low on AAS will report lower perceived psychological comfort in an AVI (vs. face-to-face interview), which will then negatively affect their self-disclosure. On the contrary, high-avoidance people tend to perceive others as unresponsive, punishing, and untrustworthy (Kirrane et al., 2019). Moreover, such individuals are self-focused and often seek to maximize autonomy in interpersonal settings (e.g., Wang et al., 2018; Wu et al., 2022), which might negatively affect their experienced comfort when interacting with other humans. Consequently, we expect that high-AAS applicants will not experience differential psychological comfort between AVI (vs. face-to-face interviews) due to their strong sense of independence and preference for self-reliance.

H_3: A decrease in avoidant attachment style will lead to a decrease in psychological comfort in the AVI (vs. face-to-face interviews), which in turn will lead to decreased self-disclosure, which will then decrease job acceptance intentions.

Figure 1 illustrates a schematic representation of all experimental variables and the connections between them.

Figure 1. Full conceptual model



3 | Study 1: AVI and job acceptance in the field

3.1 | Methods

Participants and procedure

We recruited 138 EU participants via a university platform. We excluded four respondents who missed scheduled appointments, leading to a final sample of 134 people (M_{age} = 21.46, SD = 0.97, 50.7% female, 100% had performed at least one job interview in the past). The university website featured a webpage that contained a job post for an academic assistant. Interested candidates submitted their resumes to the recruiters and were then randomly assigned to one of two experimental conditions. Half of the job candidates were invited to participate in a face-to-face interview in an academic office; the other half were asked to perform an asynchronous video interview. In the latter case, they had to log in to the online AVI platform (MyInterview) and answer pre-determined interview questions using a webcam. Each participant in each experimental group answered the same questions in the exact same order.

Next, we collected data on the variables of interest. We measured respondents' job acceptance intentions using a single item measured on a 7-point Likert scale ("*I would accept the job if it is offered*"; adapted from McLarty & Whitman, 2016; 1 = "Strongly disagree", 7 = "Strongly agree"). Finally, we controlled for participants' previous job interview experience using a single-item measure (i.e., "*how many employment interviews have you participated in?*"; Langer et al., 2017; 1 = "I never participated in an employment interview"; 2 = "from one to three"; 3 = "more than three"), as well as their age and gender.

3.2 | Results

Job acceptance intentions. Compared to a face-to-face interview, the asynchronous video interview decreased job acceptance intentions (M_{ftf} = 4.84, SD_{ftf}= 1.50 vs. M_{AVI} = 3.84, SD_{AVI}= 1.75, F (1, 132) = 12.29, $p < 0.001$).

The results of Study 1 demonstrate that using an asynchronous video interview selection process reduced applicants' job acceptance intention.

4 | Study 2: Testing the mediating role of self-disclosure

4.1 | Methods

Participants and procedure

We recruited 203 EU residents via Prolific and pre-screened them to find actual job seekers. We excluded one respondent who failed the attention check, leading to a final sample of 202 people (M_{age} = 42.12, SD = 14.52, 59.9% female, 90.6% had performed at least one job interview in the past). Participants were instructed to play the role of a job seeker applying for a position that would fit their

degree well at a company they would like to work for. They were told that after passing the first screening stage, they would be invited to participate in an employment interview.

Participants were then randomly assigned to one of two experimental conditions: In the first, they imagined performing a face-to-face interview at the company's facility; in the second, they imagined performing an asynchronous video interview via an online hiring platform (see Web Appendix A).

Next, we collected data on the variables of interest. The measure for job acceptance intentions was the same as in Study 1. Participants completed the attention check by answering the question: "*what job interview did you go through*? *Please check all that apply*" (1 = face-to-face interview; 2 = asynchronous video interview, 3 = none of the above). We assessed participants' self-disclosure with three items measured on a 7-point Likert scale (e.g., "*I would be willing to share personal information during the interview*"; adapted from Rodríguez-Priego et al., 2023; 1 = "Strongly disagree", 7 = "Strongly agree"; α = .98). Finally, we controlled for participants' previous job interview experience, as well as their age and gender (see Web Appendix B for specific questions and scales).

4.2 | Results

Self-disclosure. Compared to a face-to-face interview, the asynchronous video interview decreased self-disclosure (M_{ftf} = 5.49, SD_{ftf}= 1.31 vs. M_{AVI} = 3.83, SD_{AVI}= 1.87, F (1, 200) = 53.06, p < 0.001).

Job acceptance intentions. Compared to a face-to-face interview, the asynchronous video interview decreased job acceptance intentions (M_{ftf} = 5.44, SD_{ftf}= 1.06 vs. M_{AVI} = 3.93, SD_{AVI}= 1.57, F (1, 200) = 63.30, p < 0.001).

Mediation. We employed a mediation model implemented in the PROCESS macro for SPSS (Model 4; Hayes 2017), with the interview type (face-to-face = 0; asynchronous = 1) as the independent variable, self-disclosure as the mediator, and job acceptance intentions as the dependent

variable.

The results show that the use of an asynchronous video (vs. face-to-face) interview selection process decreased self-disclosure ($b = -1.63$, $t = -7.10$, $p < 0.001$), which then affected job acceptance intentions ($b = 0.49$, $t = 10.29$, $p < 0.001$). In other words, participants' job acceptance intentions decreased in tandem with their willingness to self-disclose. Specifically, the indirect negative effect of using an asynchronous video interview on job acceptance intentions—through self-disclosure—was statistically significant (b = -.80, [SE] = 0.15; 95 % [CI] = [–1.13–0.50]) (See Figure 2). As for covariates, we found no statistically significant effects of gender, age, and previous interview experience on self-disclosure and job acceptance. Ultimately, the results of Study 2 illustrate that using an asynchronous video interview selection process reduced job acceptance intentions by decreasing applicants' self-disclosure.

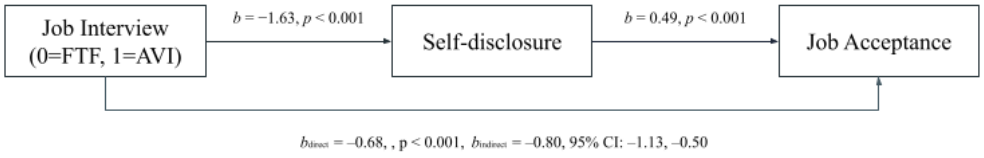


Figure 2.

5 | Study 3: Testing the mediating role of psychological comfort

5.1 | Methods

Participants and procedure

We recruited 204 EU residents via Prolific and pre-screened them to find actual job seekers. We excluded two respondents who failed the attention check, leading to a final sample of 202 people

(M_{age} = 41.30, SD = 13.04, 55.4% male, 88.2% had performed at least one job interview in the past). Study 3 used the same procedure and material from Study 2. First, participants were asked to imagine that they had just applied for a job with a company for a position that would fit their degree well and passed the first screening. Then, as part of the organization selection process, they were invited to participate in an employment interview. Participants were randomly assigned to one of two experimental conditions and received different instructions: Half of the sample were told that they performed a face-to-face interview with a hiring manager at the company's facility; the other half were told that they performed an asynchronous video interview using an online hiring platform (see Web Appendix A). Finally, they completed a survey questionnaire.

The measures for self-disclosure (α =.97), job acceptance intentions, and the attention check were the same as in Study 2. We measured psychological comfort with eight items measured on a 10-point semantic differential scale (e.g., "*The job interview makes me feel uncomfortable-comfortable*"; adapted from Spake et al., 2003; α = .95). Next, we collected data on job applicants' gender, age, and previous interview experience (see Web Appendix B for specific questions and scales).

5.2 | Results

Psychological comfort. Compared to a face-to-face interview, the asynchronous video interview decreased psychological comfort (M_{ftf} = 6.21, SD_{ftf}= 1.74 vs. M_{AVI} = 4.47, SD_{AVI}= 2.08, F (1, 199) = 41.29, p < 0.001).

Self-disclosure. Compared to a face-to-face interview, the asynchronous video interview decreased self-disclosure (M_{ftf} = 5.53, SD_{ftf}= 1.19 vs. M_{AVI} = 3.68, SD_{AVI}= 1.63, F (1, 199) = 84.12, p < 0.001).

Job acceptance intentions. Compared to a face-to-face interview, the asynchronous video interview decreased job acceptance intentions (M_{ftf} = 5.45, SD_{ftf}= 1.01 vs. M_{AVI} = 3.71, SD_{AVI}= 1.52, F (1, 199) = 91.69, p < 0.001).

Mediation. We employed a serial mediation model implemented in the PROCESS macro for SPSS (Model 6; Hayes 2017), with the interview type (face-to-face = 0; asynchronous = 1) as the independent variable, psychological comfort and self-disclosure as the mediators, and job acceptance intentions as the dependent variable.

The results show that the use of an asynchronous video (vs. face-to-face) interview decreased the perceived psychological comfort (b = −1.73, t = −6.35, p < 0.001), which then affected self-disclosure (b = 0.34, t = 7.21, p < 0.001). In other words, participants' self-disclosure decreased in tandem with their psychological comfort. Furthermore, self-disclosure affected participants' job acceptance intentions (b = 0.29, t = 4.81, p < 0.001). Specifically, the indirect negative effect of an AVI on job acceptance intentions—through perceived psychological comfort and self-disclosure—was statistically significant (b = −.17, [SE] = 0.05; 95 % [CI] = [−0.29–0.08]) (See Figure 3). As for covariates, we found no statistically significant effects of gender, age, and previous interview experience on psychological comfort, self-disclosure, and job acceptance.

Ultimately, the results of Study 3 illustrate that using an asynchronous video interview selection process reduced job acceptance intentions by sequentially decreasing applicants' psychological comfort and willingness to self-disclose.

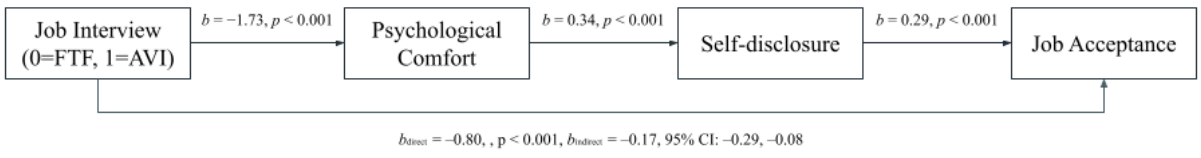


Figure 3

6 | Study 4: Testing the moderating role of attachment avoidance

6.1 | Methods

Participants and procedure

We recruited 204 EU residents via Prolific and pre-screened them to find actual job seekers. We excluded one respondent who failed the attention check, leading to a final sample of 203 people (M_{age} = 39.13, SD = 13.87, 54.2% female, 83.7% had performed at least one job interview in the past). Study 4 used the same procedure and material from Studies 2 and 3. Participants were instructed to imagine applying for a job position at a company they would like to work for, and that the current selection stage would involve completing an employment interview. They were then randomly assigned to one of the two experimental conditions, where the instructions stated that they performed either (a) a face-to-face or (b) an asynchronous video interview. Next, participants completed a final questionnaire. The measures for the attention check, psychological comfort (α = 0.96), self-disclosure (α = 0.97), job acceptance intentions, and the attention check were the same as the previous study. We measured AAS using the six-item avoidance subscale from the global version of the Relationship Structures (ECR-RS) Questionnaire (e.g., "*I don't feel comfortable opening up to others*"; Fraley et al., 2006; α = .84). Participants were asked to think about their close relationships (e.g., family, friends, and romantic partners, without focusing about one in particular) and evaluate the degree to which each item described their emotions, cognitions and behaviors in these relationships using a 7-point Likert scale (1 = "Strongly disagree", 7 = "Strongly agree"). Next, we collected data on job applicants' gender, age, and previous interview experience (see Web Appendix B for specific questions and scales).

6.2 | Results

Psychological comfort. Compared to the face-to-face interview, the asynchronous video interview decreased psychological comfort (M_{ftf} = 6.11, SD_{ftf} = 1.69 vs. M_{AVI} = 4.66, SD_{AVI} = 2.11, F (1, 201) = 28.84, p < 0.001).

Self-disclosure. Compared to the face-to-face interview, the asynchronous video interview decreased self-disclosure (M_{ftf} = 5.35, SD_{ftf}= 1.18 vs. M_{AVI} = 3.46, SD_{AVI} = 1.65, F (1, 201) = 87.16, p < 0.001).

Job acceptance intentions. Compared to the face-to-face interview, the asynchronous video interview decreased job acceptance intentions (M_{ftf} = 5.32, SD_{ftf}= 0.99 vs. M_{AVI} = 3.93, SD_{AVI}= 1.60, F (1, 201) = 54.33, p < 0.001).

Serial moderated mediation We employed a serial moderated mediation analysis (PROCESS model 84; Hayes, 2017) to test the moderating role of attachment avoidance on the influence of the interview type (face-to-face = –0.5; asynchronous = 0.5) on job acceptance intentions. To allow for a clearer interpretation of the main effects, we recoded the type of interview as –0.5 vs 0.5, and mean-centered the AAS measure. The results show that the interview type and attachment avoidance had a significant interaction effect on psychological comfort (b = 0.63, t = 2.81, p = 0.005). As illustrated in Figure 4, subjects scoring low on attachment avoidance reported lower psychological comfort when completing an asynchronous (compared to a face-to-face) interview, while we observed no significant difference for participants with a high AAS score. This suggests that the members of the latter group did not significantly differ in the psychological comfort experienced in the two types of job interviews. We corroborated those results with the Johnson-Neyman analysis for significant regions, where the cut-off value for AAS equaled 1.15 for the conditional effect on psychological comfort. Moreover, the analysis showed a significant serial moderated mediation on job acceptance intentions (b =.08, 95% CI = .0153, .1993). The effect was sequentially driven by psychological

comfort and self-disclosure (b = -0.20, 95% CI = -.3484, -.1010). The use of an asynchronous video interview reduced psychological comfort (b = –1.48, SE = 0.26, t = –5.50, p < .001), which decreased applicants' self-disclosure (b = 0.30, SE = 0.05, t = 6.00, p < .001), which then finally decreased job acceptance intentions (b = 0.45, SE = 0.05, t = 7.87, p < .001) (See Figure 5). Specifically, people with AAS scores above 1.13 perceived experienced similar levels of psychological comfort when performing the two interview types; for those below, the indirect effect became more negative as AAS lowered (b=−0.20; LCI =−0.3491; UCI =−0.1023 for 50th percentile of AAS scores; b=−.30; LCI =−0.5439; UCI =−0.1399 for 16th percentile of AAS scores), with a decrease of job acceptance intentions for the asynchronous video interview. As for covariates, we found no statistically significant effects of gender, age, and previous interview experience on psychological comfort, self-disclosure and job acceptance, except for a significant effect of gender (males vs. females) on job acceptance intentions (b = 0.1513; t = 2.7393; p = 0.006). For completeness we tested for possible moderation of anxious attachment style. We found non-significant interaction between interview type and anxious attachment style on psychological comfort (p =.56), self-disclosure (p =.71), and job acceptance intentions (p =.31).

Study 4 further illuminates the effects of using asynchronous video interviews and their underlying mechanism. Consistent with our theorizing, the use of an AVI reduced applicants' psychological comfort, thereby decreasing their willingness to self-disclose, and job acceptance intentions. Moreover, this decrease was higher for people scoring low on attachment avoidance, who experienced lower psychological comfort in the asynchronous video interview and were thereby less willing to self-disclose.

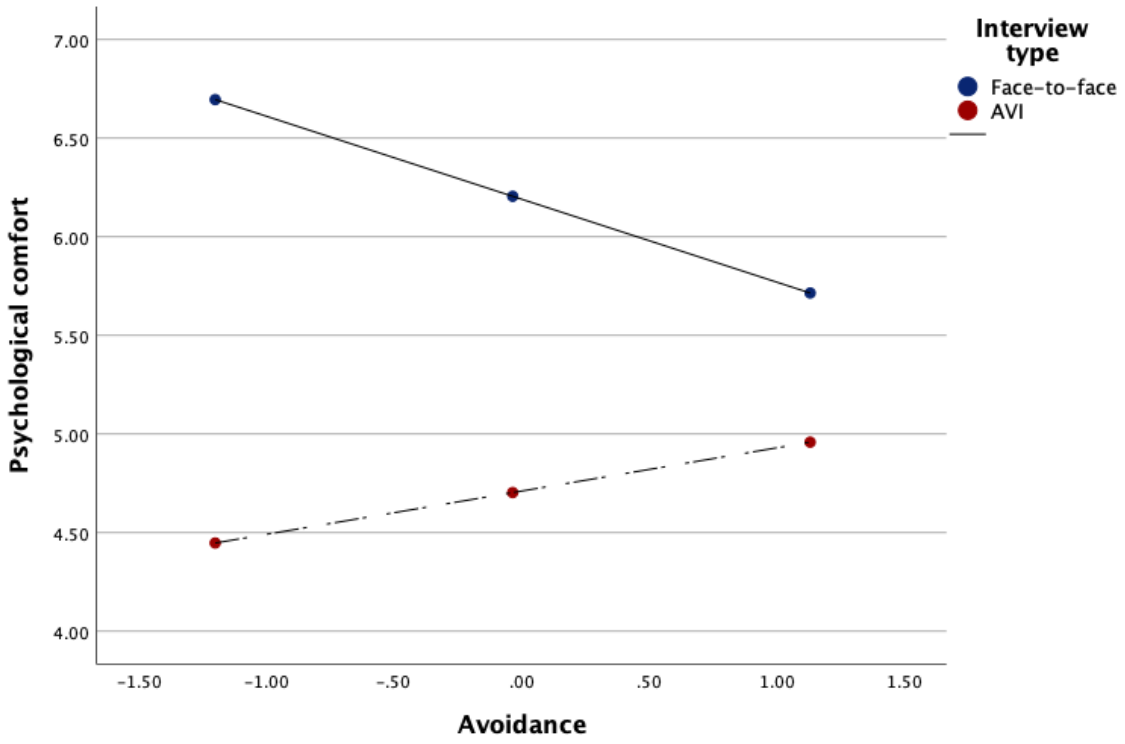


Figure 4. The Interactive Effect of Type of Job Interview and Attachment Avoidance on Participant Job Acceptance Intention.

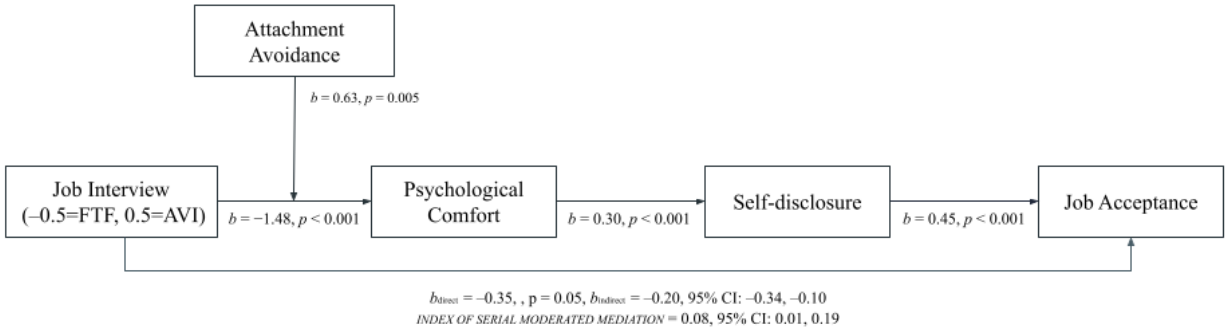


Figure 5.

7 | General discussion

Organizations are increasingly using AVIs to make their hiring process more efficient, but job applicants are not necessarily comfortable yet with this new approach. To this end, we investigated applicants' job acceptance intentions toward AVIs in order to shed light on the underlying psychological mechanisms. Through one field and three controlled experiments, we examined

applicants' job acceptance intentions toward AVIs as compared with face-to-face interviews, illustrating when and how the former decreases said intentions, as well as revealing the process driving these effects.

Study 1 found that job applicants performing an AVI (vs. face-to-face interview) reported lower job acceptance intentions. Study 2 extended our results by showing that the use of an AVI reduces applicants' job acceptance intentions by decreasing their willingness to self-disclose in this new hiring setting. Study 3 went further by identifying psychological comfort as a key antecedent of job applicants' low willingness to self-disclose and job acceptance intentions in the AVI. Study 4 corroborated these findings and further uncovered the role of job applicants' attachment avoidance in moderating these effects. Specifically, low levels of attachment avoidance decreased job applicants' psychological comfort and self-disclosure in the AVI, which decreased their job acceptance intentions. Meanwhile, job applicants scoring high on attachment avoidance showed no difference in their levels of psychological comfort, self-disclosure, and job acceptance intentions between the two types of job interview.

8 | Theoretical implications

Our findings make several contributions to research on job applicant responses to job interviews (Roulin, Lukacik et al., 2022). Previous studies comparing job applicants' responses to AVIs (vs. face-to-face interviews) overlooked the impact of these interview modalities on job acceptance intentions. Moreover, research looking at optimizing AVI implementations has mainly compared them with other interview formats, rather than on the role that job candidates' perceptions and beliefs about AVIs plays in important hiring outcomes, such as job acceptance intentions (Harold et al., 2016). We filled this gap by investigating applicants' job acceptance intentions toward AVIs (vs face-to-face) job interviews. Thus, our first contribution is finding that AVIs reduce applicants' job

acceptance intentions by sequentially decreasing their perceived psychological comfort and willingness to self-disclose.

Second, drawing from attachment theory (Mikulincer et al., 2003), we showed that the negative effect of AVI usage in selection processes was contingent upon job applicants' attachment avoidance levels. In doing so, our research also adds to the literature on the role of individual differences in shaping job applicants' responses to hiring practices (Han & Ling, 2016; McCarthy et al., 2017). In particular, job applicants who scored low on attachment avoidance experienced less psychological comfort in the AVI and were thereby less likely to self-disclose and accept a potential job offer. A potential explanation for these effects may be that low-AAS people hold a more positive mental model of other humans (i.e., as valuable and helpful) due to their retrospective perceptions of interpersonal and emotional experiences with significant others (Simmons et al., 2009). Thus, they are more likely to be comfortable getting close to or interacting with other humans. On the contrary, job applicants who scored high on attachment avoidance perceived similar levels of psychological comfort in the two types of job interviews, and thereby did not differ in their willingness to self-disclose and accept a potential job offer. As said earlier, high-AAS individuals' negative mental representations of other people (i.e., as punishing and unresponsive) may lead them to be uncomfortable with closeness and to maximize self-reliance in interpersonal settings such as job interviews.

Third, we enriched knowledge on the drivers of job acceptance intentions in AVIs (Lukacik et al., 2022). Specifically, our results show that job applicants experienced less psychological comfort in the AVI (vs. face-to-face interview), which in turn affected their willingness to self-disclose. This low psychological comfort may stem from an AVI's core features (e.g., asynchronous communication), which present new relational challenges for job applicants (Lukacik et al., 2022).

9 | Managerial implications

AVIs have become increasingly popular in hiring practices (Lukacik et al., 2022). For instance, Hirevue, a commercially available AVI platform, has seen a dramatic increase in the number of AVIs conducted: from 13,000 in 2012 to over 35 million by the end of 2022 (HireVue, 2022). The hope is that this novel interview format will strengthen the efficiency of hiring while improving job applicants' experience and behavioral intentions. Thus, many organizations are closely evaluating "when" and "how" to implement AVIs into their hiring practices. In that regard, our research attempts to improve hiring managers' knowledge about the factors that shape job applicants' acceptance of AVIs. Based on our results, we offer actionable implications for tailoring interview methods and communication strategies toward specific segments.

First, our results suggest that applicants' attachment avoidance style may predict how they respond to AVIs in hiring practices. Thus, hiring managers might consider attachment avoidance as a segmentation criterion when targeting job applicants and managing the company's image on the job market. For example, hiring managers can examine pre-existing segments that have applied for specific job positions, survey people from those segments to derive attachment avoidance scores, and identify how these segments differ in terms of attachment avoidance (Schüler et al., 2020). Organizations can subsequently use that information to develop more customized communication. Alternatively, organizations could require job candidates to complete self-reported measures on attachment avoidance, similarly to how organizations currently evaluate Big Five personality traits (Holtrop et al., 2022).

Second, organizations that intend to use AVIs in hiring practices should initially focus on applicants who score high on attachment avoidance. These applicants might respond more favorably to AVIs replacing more traditional interview methods (e.g., face-to-face interviews). Because of their negative working models of other people, high-AAS individuals seem to experience similar psychological comfort levels in both traditional and AVI interview formats. When targeting this type of applicant, hiring managers could customize their communication messages around the practical benefits of performing an AVI, such as no information loss (Lukacik et al., 2022), or all applicants

being assessed based on the same interview questions (e.g., Torres & Gregory, 2018). On the contrary, low-AAS candidates might experience less psychological comfort in an AVI due to holding a more positive mental representation of other humans. Hence, organizations should avoid forcing AVIs on such applicants, as that approach risks undermining the employer's attractiveness. Instead, those applicants might be allowed to choose their preferred interview method. Granted, that strategy may not be sustainable in the long-term if the organization's intent in using AVIs is to cut hiring costs.

10 | Limitations and further research

This work features several limitations that can facilitate a range of potential directions for future research. First, to keep the information related to the two interview methods comparable, we leaned toward a basic description of the interview process. However, companies may specify other interview-related features that future work could emphasize. For instance, potential applicants might be attracted to the AVI's optional feature of recording their answers more than once before submitting them on the hiring platform (Roulin, Wong et al., 2022).

Additionally, future research could aim to identify the boundary conditions when using AVIs for a selection process. For instance, previous research has argued that job applicants' expectations and responses may differ based on organizational factors, such as the type of job they are applying for (e.g., executive position vs. entry level) and the company's technical reputation (Mirowska & Mesnet, 2021).

Finally, our studies converged in showing that attachment avoidance affects job applicants' responses to AVIs. However, future work may want to investigate the role of other individual factors, such as self-efficacy (Yoon et al., 2022). It is possible that job applicants high in self-efficacy may show lower job acceptance intentions in an AVI (vs. face-to-face interview) due to

seeing an organization using AVIs as signaling a low level of value placed on them as compared with an organization taking the time and effort to conduct face-to-face interviews.

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Web Appendix A: Experimental stimuli

SELECTION PROCESS: FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEW

Imagine that you had recently applied for a desirable job with an organization. After a positive evaluation of your curriculum, as part of the organization selection process you have gone through the following selection interview procedure.

Imagine performing a **face-to-face interview** with a hiring manager at the company's facility. The hiring manager asked you questions about your work knowledge and job experience in his/her office. The personal face-to-face interview lasted about 20 minutes.

SELECTION PROCESS: ASYNCHRONOUS VIDEO INTERVIEW

Imagine that you had recently applied for a desirable job with an organization. After a positive evaluation of your curriculum, as part of the organization selection process you have gone through the following selection interview procedure.

Imagine performing an **asynchronous video interview** on an online hiring platform (without the participation of company employees).
Questions about your work knowledge and job experience appeared on your computer screen, and you recorded video-responses on camera. The asynchronous video interview lasted about 20 minutes.

Web Appendix B: Measurement scales

Scales

Construct/variable	Source	Scale
1. Self-disclosure (adapted)	Rodríguez-Priego, N., Porcu, L., Prados Peña, M.B., & Crespo Almendros, E. (2023). Perceived customer care and privacy protection behavior: The mediating role of trust in self-disclosure. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 72, 103284 - 103284.	To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (1 = "strongly disagree", 7 = "strongly agree") Q1: I am willing to provide personal information in the interview Q2: I am likely to share my personal information when performing the interview. Q3: I would reveal my personal information when performing the interview
2. Psychological comfort (adapted)	Spake, D. F., Beatty, S. E., Brockman, B. K., & Crutchfield, T. N. (2003). Consumer Comfort in Service Relationships: Measurement and Importance. *Journal of Service Research*, 5(4), 316–332.	To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements below? (1 = "strongly disagree", 7 = "strongly agree") The job interview makes me feel… Q1: Uncomfortable-comfortable Q2: Very uneasy–very much at ease Q3: Very tense–very relaxed Q4: Insecure-secure Q5: Worried–worry free Q6: Distressed-calm Q7: Turbulent-serene Q8: Troublesome–peace of mind
3. Job acceptance intentions (adapted)	McLarty, B.D., Whitman, D.S., 2016. A dispositional approach to applicant reactions: examining core self-evaluations, behavioral intentions, and fairness perceptions. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 31 (1), 141–153.	*Q1:I would accept the job if it is offered*
4. Attachment avoidance	Fraley, R. C., Niedenthal, P. M., Marks, M. J., Brumbaugh, C. C., & Vicary, A. (2006). Adult attachment and the	Please read each of the following statements and rate the extent to which you believe each statement best describes your feelings

	perception of emotional expressions: Probing the hyperactivating strategies underlying anxious attachment. *Journal of Personality*, 74, 1163-1190.	about close relationships in general (1 = “strongly disagree”, 7 = “strongly agree”) Q1: It helps to turn to people in times of need. Q2: I usually discuss my problems and concerns with others. Q3: I talk things over with people. Q4: I find it easy to depend on others. Q5: I don't feel comfortable opening up to others. Q6: I prefer not to show others how I feel deep down.

How Job Characteristics Shape Candidates' Responses and Intentions in Asynchronous Video Interviews

Abstract

The efficiency of asynchronous video interviews (AVIs)—an on-demand alternative to traditional job interviews—makes it increasingly attractive to hiring managers who are seeking to satisfy the interests of both their organization and job applicants. However, little is known about the way job characteristics shape applicants' responses to AVI. Through three controlled experiments, this research demonstrates that job applicants show lower job acceptance intentions toward AVI (vs. face-to-face) job interviews when applying for soft skills-based jobs (i.e., non-technical and involving interpersonal abilities) versus hard skills-based jobs (i.e., requiring technical expertise) (Study 1). This effect stems from applicants' perceived congruence between the job type and the interview type (Study 2). Using a serial mediation model, Study 3 demonstrates that the low perceived congruence between the job characteristics and the interview characteristics decreases applicants' mental imagery (i.e., cognitive simulation of the fit between the job characteristics and interview type), thereby decreasing applicants' job acceptance intentions. These findings illuminate how different contextual and psychological factors shape acceptance of AVI and provide actionable insights for integrating AVI into hiring practices.

Keywords

asynchronous video interview, mental imagery, perceived congruence, job acceptance, job type

1 | Introduction

As technology and human resource practices have evolved over the last years, the job interview has undergone an important transformation (Mirowska & Mesnet, 2021): asynchronous video interviews (hereafter, AVIs)—an on-demand alternative to traditional face-to-face interviews— are increasingly becoming a common part of the hiring process (Lukacik et al., 2022). In AVIs, job applicants are instructed to log-in into an online platform and video-record their answers to a predefined set of interview questions, which are later assessed by the hiring organization. Therefore, the AVI is a completely online experience which lacks real-time, back-and-forth communication with an interviewer (Lukacik et al., 2022). Given its characteristics, AVI showcased many practical benefits for organizations, such as allowing faster screening of specific applicants, cost savings, reduced time to hire, and overall, a more efficient hiring process (Guchait et al., 2014; Roulin et al., 2023). While large employers such as Microsoft and Dow Jones are already using AVIs to manage their selection processes, AVI providers such as HireVue are witnessing a significant growth in the number of AVIs conducted, from a few thousand in 2012, to more than 30 million by the end of 2022 (Hirevue, 2022).

Despite the many benefits of AVIs for organizations the main challenge that this technology is facing is the applicant's acceptance: Nearly 1 in 10 of job applicants, for example, expressed a preference for AVIs compared to more traditional interview practices such as face-to-face interviews (Proost et al., 2020). In response, recent research called for empirical investigation on the factors underlying applicants' resistance to AVIs (Roulin et al., 2023).

Indeed, previous work suggests that contextual factors such as the organizational technical reputation play a significant role in shaping applicants' responses to selection processes (McCarthy et al., 2017; Mirowska & Mesnet, 2021). However, to the best of our knowledge, no previous research has studied the way contextual factors such as job characteristics shape job applicants' responses toward company that uses AVIs in the selection process. Hence, we answer the call and study the previously unexplored question of when and how the job type (soft skills-based vs. hard skills-based) affects applicants' perceptions and behavioral intentions toward a company that uses AVIs (vs. face-

to-face) interviews in the selection process. Specifically, we predict that applicants' job acceptance for AVIs compared with face-to-face interviews will be higher in the case of a job requiring hard skills (i.e., technical expertise, Schultheiss & Backes-Gellner, 2023) compared to one requiring soft skills (i.e., non-technical and involving interpersonal abilities, Hurrell, 2016). Moreover, we expect that the effect will be driven by the perceived congruency (i.e., the perception of similarity between two elements based on functional attributes or a natural connection) between the job type and the interview type (Simmons & Becker-Olsen, 2006). Further, we believe that the congruency between the job characteristics and the interview type will enhance applicants' mental imagery, a cognitive process of representing cause-and-effect simulations in working memory (de Visser-Amundson et al., 2021; DeRosia & Elder, 2019). Specifically, we expect that applicants might find it more difficult to associate the AVI features (i.e., asynchronicity) with a soft skills-based job, which involves interpersonal skills, and hence show decreased mental imagery. Across three controlled experiments, we uncover empirical evidence to support these arguments.

Our research makes several contributions to the literature on technology acceptance in hiring practices (Hickman et al., 2022; Lukacik et al., 2022). First, previous research has examined the role of some individual-level predictors of applicants' responses toward technology in hiring practices—such as personality traits (Brenner et al., 2016; Hiemstra et al., 2019), but largely overlooked the role of contextual factors, such as those referred to the required job characteristics (McCarthy et al., 2017). We fill this gap by studying applicants' job acceptance intentions toward AVI (vs. face-to-face interviews) under different job characteristics: specifically, soft skills- vs. hard skills- based jobs.

Second, while previous works examined whether using an AVI (vs. face-to-face) job interview affects outcomes such as perceived social presence (Basch et al., 2020) and fairness (Kleinlogel et al., 2023), they overlooked the impact of AVI on job acceptance intention: an important hiring outcome which reflects whether organizations ultimately address their labor needs (Harold et al., 2016). We fill this gap by comparing job applicants' acceptance intentions toward AVIs (vs. face-to-face interviews).

Third, while previous research has investigated some predictors of job acceptance intentions, such as opportunity to perform (Noble et al., 2020) and organization's religious values (Neubert & Wood, 2018), mental imagery has been overlooked. We fill this gap by studying the effect of mental imagery on applicants' job acceptance intentions toward AVI (vs. face-to-face interviews).

Finally, our research offers practical insights for hiring managers interested in using AVIs. Specifically, our findings illustrate in which cases AVI could be an effective alternative to a face-to-face job interview.

2 | Theoretical Background and conceptual framework

2.1 AVIs vs. face-to-face interviews

A critical goal for hiring managers is to enhance applicants' willingness of accepting a job offer, defined as the "degree to which job applicants intend to accept job opportunities offered by a specific organization" (Tsai et al., 2016; pp. 95), so that an organization can successfully hire the employees it needs (Harold et al., 2016). Previous work suggests that different interview modalities may influence applicants' job acceptance intentions (Hausknecht et al., 2004)—a point supported by prior empirical work (e.g., Chapman et al., 2003). For instance, Proost et al. (2021) showed that participants expected lower opportunity to perform and to use nonverbal cues in video conference interviews compared to face-to-face interviews, and hence reported decreased attraction towards the organization.

The asynchronous video interview (AVI)— a pre-recorded video interview where an applicant answers to a series of predefined interview questions on camera— represent a new technological solution that is affecting how companies assess job applicants and is gaining increased attention because of its operational efficiency (i.e., saved recruitment time, money, and effort) (e.g., Chamorro-Premuzic et al., 2017). Nevertheless, AVI's efficiency does not come without a

cost. Aamira Dixon, an executive assistant in Los Angeles, in a recent interview said "My husband had to do one of these (i.e., AVIs). He is a great communicator. People absolutely love talking to him. He was struggling with this because he felt like his strengths were in building rapport. He couldn't do that here." (Holmes, 2022). Unlike face-to-face interviews – which can accommodate interpersonal dynamics – AVIs minimize social bandwidth (i.e., extent to which relevant communication information can be exchanged) and social interactivity (i.e., the extent to which it is possible to interact during a conversation) to make the hiring process more efficient (Lukacik et al., 2022). Consequently, it could be that the use AVIs will be less appropriate for soft skills- vs. hard skills- based jobs (e.g., Blacksmith et al., 2016). Despite the importance of this question, no previous research has looked at how different interview modalities (i.e., AVIs versus face-to-face interviews) interact with different job types to shape applicants' job acceptance intentions, which is of critical importance for organizations seeking to hire the best candidates.

2.2 The role of job type

Research on hiring practices suggests that job type is a key factor in job applicants' responses to selection processes (Mirowska & Mesnet, 2021; Ryan and Ployart, 2000). However, despite the apparent importance of job type, prior work has not examined whether the use of AVIs in hiring practices affects applicants' perceptions and job acceptance intentions based on the characteristics of the job to which applicants are applying for. We build on previous literature distinguishing between hard and soft skills as the two main constituents of the universe of skills required to perform a job (Deming, 2017). Soft skills are defined as 'non-technical and not reliant on abstract reasoning, involving interpersonal and intrapersonal abilities to facilitate mastered performance in particular social contexts' (Hurrell et al., 2013; pp.162). Examples of soft skills include team working, customer handling and self-presentation (Hurrell, 2016). Hard skills, instead, consist of technical expertise, such as those required to operate a machine (Schultheiss & Backes-Gellner, 2023).

Previous studies indicate that by shaping applicant perceptions about the selection process, job characteristics can foster favorable outcomes in hiring practices, such as increased job acceptance intentions (McCarthy et al., 2017). One important perception could be perceived congruence, defined as the perception of similarity between two elements based on functional attributes or a natural connection (Simmons & Becker-Olsen, 2006). For instance, Moharana et al. (2023) found that consumers' perceived congruence between sponsors and club brands enhances their purchase intentions.

Drawing from these insights, we expect that when applying for a soft skills-based job, applicants would perceive the AVI (vs. face-to-face) job interview's features as less congruent with the characteristics of the job, as it will involve interpersonal aspects which are unlikely to fit with the asynchronous nature of an asynchronous, entirely online job interview. On the contrary, since hard skills are technical in nature and easier to be communicated also in technology (Fan et al., 2016), we do not expect applicants to perceive different congruence between AVIs (vs. face-to-face) job interviews for hard skills-based jobs.

That said, job type may play a central role in technology acceptance in hiring practices (Mirowska & Mesnet, 2021). For instance, Mirowska & Mesnet (2021) interviewed 33 job seekers to investigate their opinion of technology (i.e., artificial intelligence) usage in hiring practices: participants indicated the type of job they were applying for as one important factor to consider when evaluating artificial intelligence usage and its acceptance.

We believe that when applying for a soft skills-based job, applicants would perceive an AVI (vs. face-to-face) job interview as less suitable to provide information about the soft skills necessary to perform the job, as the AVI guides applicants' through a standardized interview process in which their answers are recorded in front of a camera, and hence lacks a social interaction in which soft skills may emerge. Consequently, we expect that job acceptance intentions towards AVIs (vs. face-to-face) interviews would be lower for soft skills-based jobs. On the contrary, as hard skills should be easier to convey in such interviews**,** we believe that applicants will perceive both the AVI and

face-to-face job interview as interview formats through which the hiring organization can evaluate if the applicant has the required hard skills for the job. For this reason, we expect that applicants applying for a hard skills-based job will not report differential job acceptance intentions between AVI (vs. face-to-face interviews). Formally:

H_1: Applicants will be less willing to accept a job offer with an AVI (vs. face-to-face) job interview when applying for a soft skills-based job, but not for a hard skills-based job.

H_2: Applicants will experience decreased perceived congruence with the AVI (vs. face-to-face) when applying for a soft skills-based job, but not for a hard skills-based job. Perceived congruence, in turn, will affect job acceptance intentions.

2.2 The role of mental imagery

Extant empirical evidence shows that mental imagery—defined as the cognitive process of representing cause-and-effect simulations in working memory based on available information (DeRosia & Elder, 2019; Lee & Gretzel, 2012)—is an important factor in business relationships (e.g., Skard et al., 2021). More specifically, mental imagery could be evoked by specific stimuli (e.g., product characteristics or visual elements) (e.g., Lee & Qiu 2009), which may facilitate the generation of picture-like representations in a gestalt form in working memory (Xu et al., 2020), which then tends to guide consumers' attitudinal and behavioral responses (Yim et al., 2022), such as promoting their willingness to purchase a product (Yoo & Kim, 2014). For instance, de Visser-Amundson et al. (2021) showed that when companies adopt strategies that highlight associations between physical waste and rescue-based foods, those associations can generate negative mental imagery, which can mitigate positive consumer attitudes towards the food. In the retailing environment, meanwhile, Aydınoğlu & Krishna (2019) showed that retail-store deals which communicate stronger association

between products ("get matching shirt free") are more imagery-evocative compared to those with weaker association ("get second item free"), thereby impacting consumer evaluations.

Based on these findings, we propose that mental imagery may play an important role in shaping job applicants' behavioral intentions in organizational settings such as AVIs. In an AVI selection process, the lack of social interactivity (i.e., real-time communication and the possibility of sharing verbal and non-verbal cues) may decrease applicants' mental imagery when applying for a soft (vs. hard) skills-based job (Lukacik et al., 2022), as the association between the asynchronous nature of the AVI (vs. face-to-face) and the interpersonal nature of a soft skills- (vs. hard-) based job should be less imagery-evocative, which should lead to lower job acceptance intentions.

Furthermore, prior works indicate that perceived congruence can affect important perceptions related to the human-organization relationship. For instance, previous research showed that when people perceive a good congruence between an organization and the cause it sponsors, this perception enhances sponsor credibility (Rifon et al., 2004). Similarly, when people evaluate a product and perceive different stimuli as congruent, this perception could help increasing the clarity of the mental images associated with such a product (e.g., by creating a cohesive and consistent image of the product), and enhance their attitudinal and behavioral responses (e.g., Zhao et al., 2014). In response, we assume that candidates' mental imagery with the AVI (vs. face-to-face) job interview could be mediated by perceived congruence.

H_3: Job applicants will perceive lower congruence with the AVI (vs. face-to-face) job interview, which will lead to a decrease in mental imagery, which will then lead to a decrease in job acceptance intentions.

3 | Study 1: Manipulating soft vs. hard skills-based job

3.1 | Method

Stimuli validation

We conducted a stimuli validation test on the soft skills- and hard skills-based jobs with a sample of 80 participants recruited through the Prolific platform in exchange for a nominal payment. First, participants were given a definition and some examples of soft skills and hard skills (i.e., "soft skills: non-technical and not reliant on abstract reasoning, involving interpersonal and intrapersonal abilities to facilitate mastered performance in particular social contexts. Examples of soft skills include oral communication, team working, customer handling and self-presentation" (Hurrell, 2016); "hard skills: consist of technical expertise, such as those required to work with equipment or software, and for creating a spreadsheet" (Schultheiss & Backes-Gellner, 2023). Next, we asked them to use a 7-point semantic scale (1 = "soft skills-based"; 7 = "hard skills-based") to rate how they perceived a series of jobs. We conducted a repeated measures ANOVA with job types as a factor with 8 levels. The results showed a significant effect of job types on hard skills scores (F (7, 553), = 75.86, $p < .001$, $\eta 2 = 0.49$). From the Bonferroni's post-hoc analysis, we selected the waiter / waitress job (considered one of the most based on soft skills) and the software developer job (considered one of the most based on hard skills) (M_{waiter} = 2.75 ± 0.17, $M_{softdevelop}$ = 6.1 ± 0.16, $p < .001$) as the job types for our main study.

Participants and procedure

We recruited 279 USA residents (M_{age} = 42.20, SD = 14.63, 60.09 % female) via Prolific and pre-screened them to find actual job seekers. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the conditions in a 2 (interview type: face-to-face versus AVI) x 2 (job type: soft skills-based versus hard skills-

based) between-subjects design. Participants were instructed to play the role of a job seeker and asked to imagine applying for a job. Specifically, in the soft skills-based job scenario, participants were asked imagining applying for a waiter/waitress job position and read a description detailing the skills required for the job (e.g., team working and customer handling). In the hard skills-based job scenario, instead, participants were asked to imagine applying for a software developer position and told to read the skills required to perform it (e.g., programming languages).

Also, we specified whether participants had to perform a face-to-face or an AVI job interview as the selection process. In the face-to-face job interview condition, participants were told that they would perform a face-to-face interview with a hiring manager in his/her office, at the company's facility. In the AVI condition, instead, they read that they would complete an asynchronous video-interview on an online hiring platform, read the interview questions on their computer screens and record their answers on camera.

Next, we collected data on the variables of interest. We measured respondents' job acceptance intentions using two items measured on a 7-point Likert scale (e.g., "I would accept the job if it is offered"; Claus Wehner et al., 2015; 1 = "Strongly disagree", 7 = "Strongly agree"; Cronbach's alpha = .87; see Web Appendix A, Supplementary Materials for scale items). Finally, participants completed the manipulation check and demographics (i.e., age, gender). The manipulation check revealed that respondents correctly perceived the soft skills-based job as less technically oriented then the hard skills-based job (M_{Soft} = 2.55 vs. M_{Hard} = 5.72, t (277) = – 21.919, p < 0.001).

3.2 | Results

Job acceptance intentions. The results of a two-way ANOVA on job acceptance intentions revealed a main effect of interview type (M_{ftf} = 4.92, SD_{ftf} = 1.13 vs. M_{AVI}= 4.17, SD_{AVI} = 1.56, F(1,275) = 21.99, p = < 0.001), and job type (M_{soft} = 4.31, SD_{soft} = 1.52 vs. M_{hard}= 4.78, SD_{hard} = 1.24, F(1,275) = 8.61, p = .004). Importantly, a 2x2 ANOVA revealed the interview type X job

type interaction (F (1, 275) = 4.83; p = 0.02). The AVI (vs. face-to-face) job interview decreased applicants' job acceptance intentions (M_{AVI} = 3.76, SD_{AVI} = 1.59 vs. M_{ftf} = 4.86, SD_{ftf} = 1.22, F (1, 275) = 23.98, p = < 0.001) in the soft skills-based job, while it had no impact in the hard skills-based job (M_{AVI} = 4.58, SD_{AVI} = 1.42 vs. M_{ftf} = 4.97, SD_{ftf} = 1.02, F (1, 275) = 3.06, p = 0.08) (See Figure 1).

The results of Study 1 show that, compared to the face-to-face job interview, the AVI decrease participants' job acceptance intention, but only when applying for a soft skills-based job.

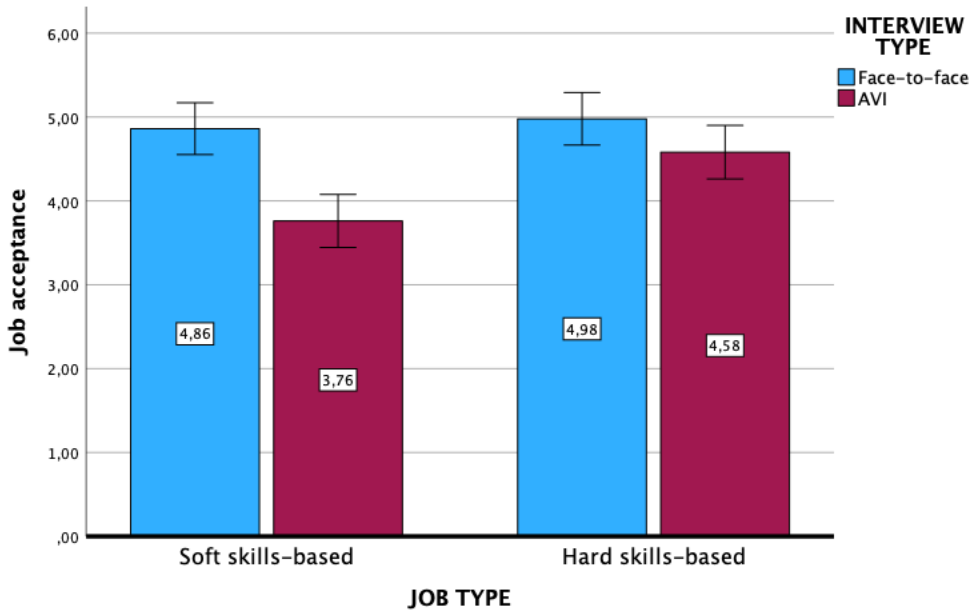

Figure 1

4 | Study 2: The role of perceived congruence

4.1 | Method

Participants and procedure

We recruited 274 USA residents (M_{age} = 38.34, SD = 14.21, 59.01 % female) via Prolific and pre-screened them to find actual job seekers. Study 2 used the same procedure and material from Study 1. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions (soft skills-based job/face-to-face interview, soft skills-based job /AVI, hard skills-based job/face-to-face interview, hard skills-based job/AVI). In the soft skills-based job scenario, participants were asked imagining applying for a waiter/waitress job, while in the hard skills-based job scenario, they read that they were applying for a software developer job. Further, we manipulated weather they had to take part in a selection process based on a face-to-face or an AVI job interview.

The measure for job acceptance intentions (Cronbach's alpha = .88) was the same as in Study 2. We measured participants' perceived congruence with three items rated on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = "Strongly disagree", 7 = "Strongly agree"; adapted from Moharana et al., 2023; Cronbach's alpha = .95; see Web Appendix A, Supplementary Materials for scale items). Lastly, participants completed the manipulation check and demographics, like before. The manipulation check revealed that respondents correctly perceived the soft skills-based job as less technically oriented then the hard skills-based job (M_{Soft} = 2.52 vs. M_{Hard} = 5.68, t (272) = – 19.805, p < 0.001).

4.2 | Results

Perceived congruence. The results of a two-way ANOVA on perceived congruence revealed a main effect of interview type (M_{ftf} = 5.53, SD_{ftf} = 1.41 vs. M_{AVI} = 4.02, SD_{AVI} = 1.69, F(1,270) = 77.54, p < 0.001), and job type (M_{soft} = 4.86, SD_{soft} = 1.99 vs. M_{hard} = 4.85, SD_{hard} = 1.34, F(1,270) = 0.42, p = .51). Importantly, the 2x2 ANOVA revealed the interview type X job type interaction (F (1, 270) = 121.38; p < 0.001). The AVI (vs. face-to-face) job interview decreased applicants' perceived congruence (M_{AVI} = 3.22, SD_{AVI} = 1.56 vs. M_{ftf} = 6.34, SD_{ftf} = 0.83, F (1, 270) = 212.02,

p < 0.001) in the soft skills-based job, while it had no impact in the hard skills-based job (M_{AVI}= 5.06, SD_{AVI} = 1.24 vs. M_{ftf} = 4.71, SD_{ftf} = 1.40, F (1, 270) = 2.27, p = 0.13).

Job acceptance intentions. The results of a two-way ANOVA on job acceptance intentions revealed a main effect of interview type (M_{ftf} = 4.85, SD_{ftf} = 1.37 vs. M_{AVI}= 4.33, SD_{AVI} = 1.42, F(1,270) = 7.64, p = 0.006) and job type (M_{soft} = 4.40, SD_{soft} = 1.52 vs. M_{hard}= 4.87, SD_{hard} = 1.25, F(1,270) = 8.28, p = .004). Importantly, the 2x2 ANOVA revealed the interview type X job type interaction (F (1, 270) = 4.07; p = 0.04). The AVI (vs. face-to-face) job interview decreased applicants' job acceptance intentions (M_{AVI}= 3.97, SD_{AVI} = 1.34 vs. M_{ftf} = 4.78, SD_{ftf}= 1.57, F (1, 270) = 12.33, p = < 0.001) in the soft skills-based job, while it had no impact in the hard skills-based job (M_{AVI}= 4.80, SD_{AVI} = 1.40 vs. M_{ftf} = 4.92, SD_{ftf} = 1.14, F (1, 270) = 0.26, p = 0.61).

Moderated mediation. We employed a moderated mediation analysis (PROCESS model 7; Hayes 2017), incorporating job type as a moderator of interview type's effects on perceived congruence. We included age and gender as covariates. We found a significant moderated mediation on job acceptance intentions (b = 1.17, 95% CI = 0.78, 1.59). The effect of interview type on job acceptance intention was driven by perceived congruence (b = 0.33, SE = 0.05, t = 6.56, p < 0.001). In the soft skills-based job condition, the AVI reduced participants' perceived congruence (b = – 3.13, SE = 0.21, t = – 14.58, p < 0.001), thus decreasing job acceptance intentions (b = – 1.05, 95% CI = – 1.41, – 0.70). In the hard skills-based job condition, the AVI had no effect on perceived congruence (b = 0.36, SE = 0.23, t = 1.56, p = 0.11), while the mediation on job acceptance intention was no longer significant (b = 0.12, 95% CI = – 0.03, 0.28) (see Figure 2).

The results of Study 2 show that, compared to face-to-face job interviews, AVIs decrease participants perceived congruence, which in turn, decreased their job acceptance intentions, but only when applying for a soft skills-based job.

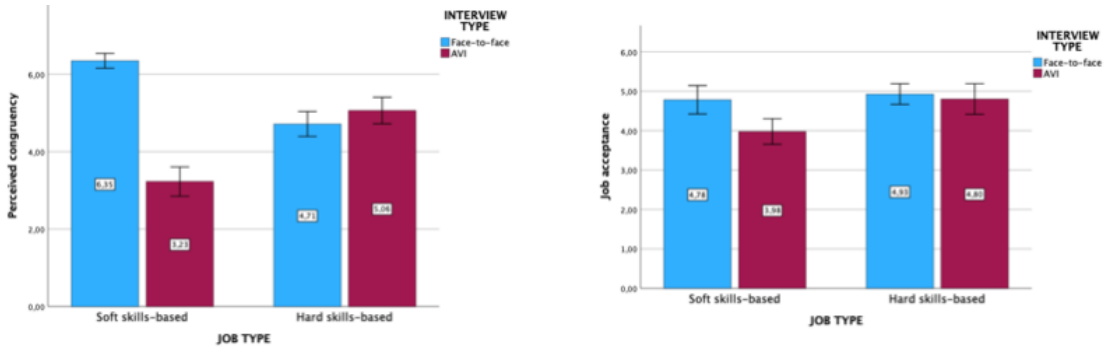

Figure 2

5 | Study 3: The role of mental imagery

5.1 | Method

Participants and procedure

We recruited 282 USA residents (M_{age} = 37.26, SD = 12.32, 59.09 % female) via Prolific and pre-screened them to find actual job seekers. Study 3 used the same procedure and material from Study 1 and 2. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions (soft skills-based job/face-to-face interview, soft skills-based job/AVI, hard skills-based job/face-to-face interview, hard skills-based job/AVI). Participants were asked imagining applying for a soft (vs. hard) skills-based job. Then, as part of the organization selection process, they were invited to participate in a face-to-face or AVI job interview.

Participants' perceived congruence (Cronbach's alpha = .95) and job acceptance intentions (Cronbach's alpha = .89) were measured with the same 7-point Likert scales used in the previous experiments. Moreover, mental imagery was measured with a three-items, 7-points Likert scale (e.g. "When you read about the type of job, to what extent did images of the type of interview come to mind"; anchored with 1 = "strongly disagree", 7 = "strongly agree"; adapted from de Visser-

Amundson et al., 2021; Cronbach's alpha = .91; see Web Appendix A, Supplementary Materials for scale items). At the end of the survey, participants completed the manipulation check and demographics. The manipulation check revealed that respondents correctly perceived the soft skills-based job as less technically oriented then the hard skills-based job (M_{Soft} = 2.43 vs. M_{Hard} = 5.42, t (280) = – 19.125, p < 0.001).

5.2 | Results

Perceived congruence. The results of a two-way ANOVA on perceived congruence revealed a main effect of interview type (M_{ftf} = 5.32, SD_{ftf} = 1.39 vs. M_{AVI}= 3.93, SD_{AVI} = 1.82, F(1,278) = 64.16, p < 0.001), while the main effect of job type was not significant (M_{soft} = 4.59, SD_{soft} = 1.96 vs. M_{hard}= 4.66, SD_{hard} = 1.53, F(1,278) = 0.13, p = .71). Importantly, the 2x2 ANOVA revealed the interview type X job type interaction (F (1, 278) = 79.84; p = < 0.001). The AVI (vs. face-to-face) job interview decreased applicants' perceived congruence (M_{AVI}= 3.15, SD_{AVI} = 1.67 vs. M_{ftf} = 6.05, SD_{ftf} = 0.85, F (1, 278) = 145.63, p = < 0.001) in the soft skills-based job, while it had no impact in the hard skills-based job (M_{AVI}= 4.74, SD_{AVI} = 1.61 vs. M_{ftf} = 4.59, SD_{ftf} = 1.45, F (1, 278) = 0.42, p = 0.51).

Mental imagery. The results of a two-way ANOVA on mental imagery revealed a main effect of interview type (M_{ftf} = 5.43, SD_{ftf} = 1.24 vs. M_{AVI}= 4.45, SD_{AVI} = 1.87, F(1,278) = 27.57, p < 0.001), while the main effect of job type was not significant (M_{soft} = 5.05, SD_{soft} = 1.88 vs. M_{hard}= 4.83, SD_{hard} = 1.44, F(1,278) = 1.44, p = .23). Importantly, the 2x2 ANOVA revealed the interview type X job type interaction (F (1, 278) = 11.80; p = < 0.001). The AVI (vs. face-to-face) job interview decreased applicants' mental imagery (M_{AVI}= 4.25, SD_{AVI} = 2.16 vs. M_{ftf} = 5.86, SD_{ftf} = 1.06, F (1, 278) = 38.27, p = < 0.001) in the soft skills-based job, while it had no impact in the hard skills-based job (M_{AVI}= 4.66, SD_{AVI} = 1.51 vs. M_{ftf} = 5.00, SD_{ftf} = 1.27, F (1, 278) = 1.62, p = 0.20).

Job acceptance intentions. The results of a two-way ANOVA on job acceptance intentions revealed a main effect of interview type (M_{ftf} = 4.82, SD_{ftf} = 1.23 vs. M_{AVI}= 4.16, SD_{AVI} = 1.59, F(1,278) = 15.61, p < 0.001), and a main effect of job type (M_{soft} = 4.26, SD_{soft} = 1.50 vs. M_{hard}= 4.73, SD_{hard} = 1.37, F(1,278) = 8.00, p = .005). Importantly, the 2x2 ANOVA revealed the interview type X job type interaction (F (1, 278) = 9.61; p = 0.002). The AVI (vs. face-to-face) job interview decreased applicants' job acceptance intentions (M_{AVI} = 3.68, SD_{AVI} = 1.59 vs. M_{ftf} = 4.85, SD_{ftf} = 1.15, F (1, 278) = 25.23, p = < 0.001) in the soft skills-based job, while it had no impact in the hard skills-based job (M_{AVI}= 4.66, SD_{AVI} = 1.43 vs. M_{ftf} = 4.88, SD_{ftf} = 1.31, F (1, 278) = 0.35, p = 0.55) (See Figure 3).

Serial moderated mediation. We employed a serial moderated mediation analysis (PROCESS model 85; Hayes 2017), incorporating job type as a moderator of interview type's effects on perceived congruence. We included age and gender as covariates. We found a significant serial moderated mediation on job acceptance intentions (b = 0.28, 95% CI = 0.08, 0.53). The effect of interview type on job acceptance intentions was driven by perceived congruence and mental imagery (b = -0.11, SE = 0.04, 95% CI = -0.21, -0.03). In the soft skills-based job condition, the AVI reduced participants' perceived congruence (b = – 2.94, SE = 0.23, t = –12,32 p = < 0.001), which decreased mental imagery (b = .57, SE = 0.05, t = 10.17, p = < 0.001), thus decreasing job acceptance intentions (b = -0.27, 95% CI = -0.50, -0.08). In the hard skills-based job condition, the AVI had no effect on perceived congruence (b = –0.35, SE = 0.24, t = 0.27, p = 0.78), while the serial mediation on job acceptance intentions was no longer significant (b = – 0.006, 95% CI = – 0.04, 0.06).

The results of Study 3 show that, compared to face-to-face job interviews, AVIs decrease participants' perceived congruence, which in turn decreased their mental imagery, which then decreased their job acceptance intentions, but only when applying for the soft skills-based job.

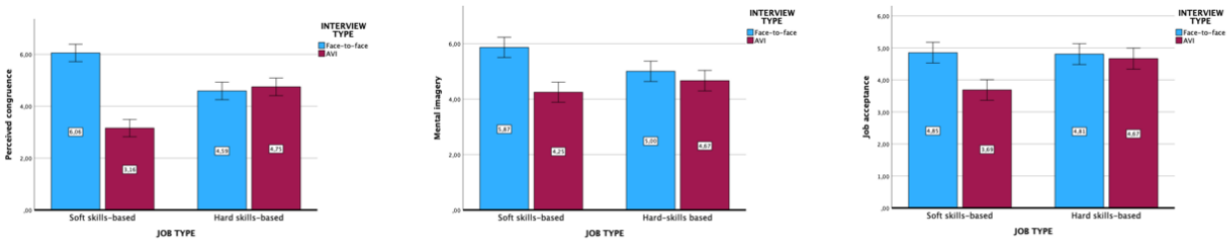

Figure 3

6 | General discussion

Organizations are increasingly using AVIs to make their hiring process more efficient, but job applicants are not necessarily favorable towards this new technological solution. To this end, we investigated the contextual factors shaping applicants' job acceptance intentions toward AVIs, as well as shed light on the underlying psychological mechanisms. Through three controlled experiments, we examined when and how the job type (soft skills-based vs. hard skills-based) determines applicants' perceptions and job acceptance intentions toward a company that uses AVIs (vs. face-to-face) job interviews, illustrating based on which type of job the former decreases said intentions.

Study 1 found that job applicants performing an AVI (vs. face-to-face interview) reported lower job acceptance intentions, but just when applying for a soft skills-based job. Study 2 extended the results by showing that this effect stems from applicants' perceived congruence between the AVI characteristics (i.e., asynchronous communication) and those of soft skills-based jobs, which involves interpersonal skills. Study 3 corroborated these findings and went further by identifying mental imagery as a key antecedent of job applicants' low job acceptance intentions in the AVI when applying for a soft skills-based job. Specifically, the low perceived congruence between job characteristics and job interview characteristics impaired applicants' mental imagery (i.e., the generation of picture likes representations of applicants completing an AVI when applying for a soft skills-based job), which in turn decreased their job acceptance intentions. Meanwhile, job applicants

applying for a hard skills-based job showed no difference in perceived congruence, mental imagery, and job acceptance intentions between the two types of job interview.

7 | Theoretical implications

This research offers some relevant theoretical contributions on job applicant responses to job interviews (Roulin et al., 2022). Previous studies comparing job applicants' responses to AVIs (vs. face-to-face interviews) did not examine how these different interview modalities affect applicants' job acceptance intentions, which is a critical hiring outcome for organizations seeking to select the best candidates (Harold et al., 2016). We filled this gap by investigating applicants' job acceptance intentions toward AVIs (vs face-to-face) job interviews. Thus, our first contribution is finding that AVIs reduce applicants' job acceptance intentions as compared with face-to-face interviews.

Second, we contributed to the scant literature on the contextual factors that influence job applicants' responses to AVIs by addressing the novel question of whether the type of job (soft skills-based vs. hard skills-based) to which applicants are applying for drives their willingness to accept a job offer from an organization integrating an AVI (vs. face-to-face) job interview in their hiring practices. Our empirical results showed that the negative effect of AVI usage in selection processes was contingent upon the type of job to which applicants are applying for. In particular, applicants applying for a soft skills-based job experienced less perceived congruence between the job characteristics and the AVI, and find the association between the asynchronous nature of the AVI and the interpersonal nature of a soft skills- based job as less imagery-evocative, which reduced their mental imagery and lead to lower job acceptance intentions. On the contrary, job applicants applying for a hard skills-based job perceived similar levels of congruence between the job characteristics and the AVI, and thereby did not differ in their experienced mental imagery and willingness to accept a potential job offer. As said earlier, since hard skills are easier to communicate, individuals should

perceive both the AVI and the face-to-face interview as suitable as a selection method for this type of job.

Third, we enriched knowledge on the drivers of job acceptance intentions in AVIs (Lukacik et al., 2022). Specifically, our results show that job applicants experienced less mental imagery in AVIs (vs. face-to-face interviews), thereby decreasing their job acceptance intentions.

8 | Managerial implications

AVIs have become increasingly popular in hiring practices (Lukacik et al., 2022). For instance, video interviewing software market size was valued at USD 250.45 Million in 2022 and is projected to reach USD 708.93 Million by 2030 (Verified Market Research, 2022). The aspiration is that this novel interview modality will strengthen the efficiency of hiring while improving job applicants' experience and behavioral intentions. Thus, many organizations are closely evaluating "when" and "how" to integrate AVIs into their hiring practices. In that regard, our research attempts to improve hiring managers' knowledge about the contextual factors that shape job applicants' acceptance of AVIs. Based on our results, we offer actionable implications for tailoring interview modalities and communication strategies toward specific job openings.

First, our results suggest that the type of job to which applicants are applying for may predict how they respond to AVIs in hiring practices. Thus, organizations might consider job characteristics as a segmentation criterion when deciding whether to adopt AVIs managing the company's image on the job market. Specifically, organizations that intend to use AVIs in hiring practices should initially focus on hard skills-based jobs: Applicants might respond more favorably to AVIs replacing more traditional interview modalities (e.g., face-to-face interviews) when applying for these types of jobs. Because of the more technical nature of hard skills-based jobs, applicants seem to experience similar perceived congruence, mental imagery, and job acceptance intentions in both traditional and AVI interview formats. When hiring for this type of job, hiring managers could customize their

communication messages around the practical benefits of performing an AVI, such as no information loss (Lukacik et al., 2022), or consistency (i.e., every applicant is asked the same interview question in the exact same manner) (e.g., Torres & Gregory, 2018). On the contrary, when applying for a soft skills-based job, applicants might show lower job acceptance intentions with an AVI due to perceiving a lower congruence between the interview characteristics and the job characteristics, thereby holding a more negative mental imagery. Hence, organizations should avoid using AVIs to assess applicants for a soft skills-based job, as that approach risks undermining the employer's attractiveness. Instead, in this context applicants might be allowed to choose their preferred interview modality. Certainly, that strategic approach may not be sustainable in the long-term if the organization's purpose in using AVIs is to bring down hiring costs.

9 | Limitations and further research

Some limitations of this study might help stimulate additional research. First, to keep the information related to the two interview modalities comparable, we leaned toward a general description of the interview process. However, organizations may specify other interview-related characteristics that future work could emphasize. Hence, future work could investigate the impact of different interview characteristics: For instance, applicants might react more favorably towards specific types of interview questions based on how suitable they find them for the type of job they are applying for (e.g., Bangerter et al., 2014).

Additionally, our studies converged in showing that job type affects job applicants' responses to AVIs. However, future work may want to investigate the role of other contextual factors, such as the company's technical reputation (Mirowska & Mesnet, 2021). It is possible that when applying for an organization with a high (vs. low) technical reputation, applicants may show higher job acceptance intentions with an AVI (vs. face-to-face interview) due to seeing the AVI as signaling a high technical

status as compared with an organization conducting a more traditional hiring process such as a face-to-face interview.

Finally, technology usage may manifest national and cultural differences. Previous research demonstrates cross-cultural differences in technology adoption behaviors (Malik et al., 2020; Pan et al., 2022). Hence, future research could aim to examine how AVI acceptance varies across countries, focusing on the role of the broader environmental context.

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Web Appendix A: Measurement scales

Scales

Construct/variable	Source	Scale
1. Perceived congruence (adapted)	Moharana, T. R., Roy Bhattacharjee, D., Pradhan, D., & Kuanr, A. (2023). What drives sponsorship effectiveness? An examination of the roles of brand community identification, brand authenticity, and sponsor–club congruence. *Psychology & Marketing*, 40, 1211–1236.	To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (1 = "strongly disagree", 7 = "strongly agree") Q1: There is a logical connection between the type of job and the type of interview Q2: The type of job and the type of interview fit together well Q3: It makes sense to me that for this type of job the company uses this type of interview
2. Mental imagery (adapted)	de Visser-Amundson, A., Peloza, J., & Kleijnen, M. (2021). How Association with Physical Waste Attenuates Consumer Preferences for Rescue-Based Food. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 58(5), 870-887.	To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements below? (1 = "not at all", 7 = "very much") Q1: How vividly could you imagine the type of job being associated with this type of interview Q2: How clearly could you imagine the type of job being linked with the type of interview Q3: When you read about the type of job, to what extent did images of the type of interview come to mind
3. Job acceptance intentions	Claus Wehner, M., Giardini, A. and Kabst, R. (2015). Recruitment Process Outsourcing and Applicant Reactions: When Does Image Make a Difference? *Human Resource Management*, 54, 851-875	To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (1 = "strongly disagree", 7 = "strongly agree") *Q1*: I would accept a job offer from this company Q2: I would make this company one of my first choices as an employer

General Conclusions

Organizations are increasingly using asynchronous video interviews and AI evaluation agents to automate their hiring practices.

One key challenge in this regard is helping managers increase job applicants' acceptance of these new technological solutions. To this end, we sought to shed light on the explanatory mechanisms of job applicants' responses and acceptance. Through three empirical papers, this dissertation illustrates when and how the use of these new tools decreases applicants' job acceptance intentions, as well as reveals the factors underlying these effects.

The first paper contributed to prior research on job applicant responses to AI evaluation agents (Black & van Esch, 2021; Meijerink & Bondarouk, 2023) by examining the effect of trust in the evaluation agent and its underlying process (i.e., the agent's ability to parse unique skills) on job applicants' job acceptance intentions to AI (vs. human) evaluation agents. It demonstrated that the AI evaluation agent reduces applicants' job acceptance intentions by sequentially decreasing applicants' perceptions of the agent's ability to assess their unique skills and trust in the evaluation agent. Further, drawing from attachment theory (Mikulincer et al., 2005), it showed that the negative effect of AI usage in asynchronous video interviews is contingent upon job applicants' attachment avoidance levels. In doing so, this work also contributes to the literature on the role of individual differences in shaping job applicants' responses to hiring practices (Hiemstra et al., 2019; McCarthy et al., 2017).

The second paper makes several contributions to research on job applicant responses to job interviews (Roulin et al., 2022). It investigated applicants' job acceptance intentions toward AVIs (vs face-to-face) job interviews, finding that AVIs reduce applicants' job acceptance intentions, and that this effect is sequentially driven by perceived psychological comfort and willingness to self-disclose. Second, drawing from attachment theory (Mikulincer et al., 2005), it showed that the negative effect of AVI usage in selection processes is contingent upon job applicants' attachment

avoidance levels. In doing so, this research extends knowledge on the drivers of job acceptance intentions in AVIs (Lukacik et al., 2022), and adds to the literature on the role of individual differences in influencing job applicants' responses to job interviews (Han & Ling, 2016; McCarthy et al., 2017).

The third paper contributes to the scant literature on the contextual factors shaping job applicants' responses to AVIs by addressing the novel question of whether the type of job (soft skills-based vs. hard skills-based) to which applicants are applying for drives their willingness to accept a job offer from an organization using an AVI (vs. face-to-face) job interview in the selection process. In particular, it shows that the negative effect of AVI usage in selection processes is contingent upon the type of job to which applicants are applying for: When applying for a soft skills-based job, applicants experience less perceived congruence between the job characteristics and the AVI, thereby experiencing decreased mental imagery, which in turn reduced their job acceptance intentions. However, job applicants applying for a hard skills-based job showed no difference in perceived congruence, mental imagery, and job acceptance intentions between the two types of job interview.

Based on these findings, this dissertation attempts to improve hiring managers' knowledge about the factors that influence job applicants' acceptance of AVIs and AI evaluation agents, and offer actionable implications for integrating these new hiring tools while taking into account contextual and individual factors.

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