

Social Media Effectiveness and Employee Recruitment in Indonesian State-Owned Enterprises: The Mediating Role of Informativeness

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Abstract

This study asks whether the effectiveness of social media used by Indonesian state-owned enterprises (SOEs/BUMN) in Aceh improves recruitment process quality, and whether this relationship operates through perceived informativeness of recruitment content. The issue is salient in Aceh's constrained formal labor market and strong demand for SOE jobs, which heightens the need for transparent, efficient, and credible digital recruitment communication. The novelty of this paper lies in providing region-specific empirical evidence for SOE e-recruitment in Aceh while explicitly testing an information-mediating mechanism. Using a quantitative survey of 306 employees across approximately 12 SOEs in Aceh (recruited in 2020–2024 and informed via Instagram, LinkedIn, or Facebook), data were analyzed with PLS-SEM and bootstrapping to estimate direct and indirect effects. Results show that social media effectiveness positively affects recruitment process quality and informativeness, while informativeness also improves recruitment process quality. The indirect effect is significant, indicating partial mediation, and the model explains 47.6% of informativeness and 59.6% of recruitment process variance.

Keywords: *social media effectiveness; informativeness; recruitment process; SOEs/BUMN; Aceh.*

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INTRODUCTION

Aceh still faces limited formal employment opportunities, reflected in the Open Unemployment Rate (TPT) of 5.50% in February 2025 – higher than the national average of 4.76% and ranking Aceh eighth out of 10 provinces in Sumatra (Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS) Provinsi Aceh, 2025). At the same time, the labor supply remains substantial: Aceh's labor force participation rate (TPAK) reached 65.63%, with a labor force of approximately 2.706 million people and approximately 148,800 unemployed (Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS) Provinsi Aceh, 2025).

Aceh's labor market structure also shows a dominance of informal employment, accounting for approximately 64.31% of the total employed, indicating that access to formal salaried/beneficial employment remains limited (BPS (Pusat), 2025). Sectorally, labor absorption in Aceh is heavily concentrated in agriculture; Nationally, the three largest business sectors remain agriculture, forestry, and fisheries, while in Aceh the share of agricultural workers is reported to be around 40.02% – far exceeding other sectors such as trade (14.23%) (BPS (Pusat), 2025; Media Indonesia, 2025).

The phenomenon of "educated unemployment" is also evident: the highest unemployment rate is among vocational high school (SMK) graduates (10.76%) and high school (SMA) graduates (7.99%), while higher education graduates (Diploma IV/S1/S2/S3) still face a TPT of around 7.05%. Furthermore, the TPT for men (6.49%) is higher than for women (3.91%). These findings indicate a mismatch of competencies and intense competition in the formal employment sector (Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS) Provinsi Aceh, 2025).

In this context, recruitment by state-owned companies (BUMN) has become a highly anticipated event for Acehnese job seekers—especially those with secondary and tertiary education—as it offers a relatively stable and prestigious pathway to formal employment. Nationally, the 2024 Joint SOE Recruitment (RBB) attracted more than 2 million applicants for 1,830 positions across more than 100 SOEs, demonstrating the extraordinary appeal of SOE job opportunities (detikFinance, 2024; Kementerian BUMN, 2024).

In the Aceh context—marked by limited formal employment opportunities and high interest in the Joint SOE Recruitment—effective use of social media is crucial for expanding candidate reach while increasing transparency and efficiency of the recruitment process. Social media has fundamentally transformed recruitment strategies by expanding candidate reach, enabling more precise targeting, and enriching interactions between organizations and candidates at various stages of the talent funnel (Woods et al., 2020). In the public sector context, field experiments have shown that signals sent through social media advertising can increase attention and application intentions for government jobs, underscoring their relevance for SOEs with a public service nature (Keppeler & Papenfuß, 2021). Furthermore, professional networks like LinkedIn play a significant role in job applicant success, making these platforms a strategic channel for organizations when targeting specific talent (Laukkarinen, 2023).

Recent research in public administration also found that the adoption of ICT for e-recruitment and the use of social media are positively associated with the creation of public value, strengthening the argument for optimizing social media channels in government institutions (AbdulKareem et al., 2024). In this study, "social media effectiveness" is understood as an organization's ability to utilize platform features (reach, interactivity, targeting accuracy, timeliness, and cost efficiency) to achieve recruitment goals, as indicated by organizational attractiveness, application intent, and candidate conversion in the early stages of selection (Woods et al., 2020).

Communicationally, the characteristics of content on social media pages—particularly informativeness (completeness, relevance, and usefulness of information) and social presence—have been shown to increase organizational attractiveness and candidate interest (Carpentier et al., 2019). Findings in emerging markets indicate that social media effectiveness increases perceived informativeness, which in turn improves recruitment outcomes, confirming the role of informativeness as a key mechanism (Si et al., 2023). The availability of organizational information on social media also strengthens the relationship between employer image/reputation and application intentions, highlighting the importance of the quality of the information displayed (Thang & Trang, 2024).

The quality of the "recruitment process" in the digital era needs to be measured not only by the number of applicants, but also by the dimensions of speed, transparency, procedural consistency, and candidate experience as process outputs (Woods et al., 2020). The literature shows that digital selection technologies elicit ambivalent reactions—some consider them innovative, others unfair—making perceptions of procedural fairness a crucial aspect of process design (Folger et al., 2022). Recent e-recruitment studies highlight that the perception of opportunity to perform is a key element of fairness and impacts candidates' assessments of the organization (Lo Piccolo et al., 2024).

On the other hand, the use of social media for candidate screening raises privacy, accuracy, and procedural fairness issues that must be managed to avoid damaging the employer brand and the candidate experience (Vosen, 2021). A review of theory and empirical evidence on social media-based assessments highlights that applicants' reactions to these practices are influenced by the perceived fairness and relevance of the assessed content, underscoring the need for uniform ethical guidelines and procedures (Manroop et al., 2022). Psychometrically, the validity and reliability of social media assessments remain variable, necessitating caution in interpreting the results and integrating them into selection decisions (Mönke et al., 2024).

Despite the rapid growth of global evidence, the literature highlights the limited rigorous research on digital selection methods – including the use of social media – across various organizational contexts and jurisdictions, opening up opportunities for contributions to the public sector in developing countries (Potočnik et al., 2021). In this context, a study of public sector e-recruitment suggests social media is a crucial component of recruitment architecture, but institutional variations and local contexts likely influence its effectiveness, necessitating region-specific empirical testing (AbdulKareem et al., 2024). Based on this gap, this study focuses on state-owned enterprises (SOEs) in Aceh to examine the influence of social media effectiveness on the recruitment process, with informativeness as a mediator, addressing calls in the literature for more unmistakable contextual evidence and mechanisms (Si et al., 2023; Woods et al., 2020).

Specifically, the research questions posed are: (1) to what extent does social media effectiveness influence the quality of SOE recruitment processes; (2) does social media effectiveness influence informativeness; (3) does informativeness influence the quality of the recruitment process; and (4) does informativeness mediate the relationship between social media effectiveness and the quality of SOE recruitment processes, in line with previous findings on the role of informativeness and communication characteristics on application intentions (Carpentier et al., 2019; Si et al., 2023). Expected contributions include strengthening the theoretical basis of public sector e-recruitment by testing information-mediating mechanisms, as well as practical recommendations on content design and social media channel management to improve the speed, transparency, consistency, and candidate experience of SOE recruitment processes.

Literature Review

Recruitment Process Quality, Social Media Effectiveness, and Informativeness

The quality of the recruitment process in the digital era concerns not only the number of applicants, but also candidates' perceptions of speed, transparency, procedural consistency, and fairness – reflected in applicant reactions and the candidate experience (Woods et al., 2020). Recent research shows that procedural clarity, informative job descriptions, and fair opportunity-to-perform (OPP) on digital channels increase organizational attraction and application intentions, thereby enhancing process quality (Lo Piccolo et al., 2024).

In the context of recruitment, social media effectiveness refers to an organization's ability to leverage platform features (reach, interactivity, targeting/timeliness, cost-efficiency) to achieve recruitment objectives such as attracting, screening, and converting candidates. Experimental findings suggest that organizations can manipulate communication characteristics – particularly informativeness and social presence – on social media platforms to enhance organizational attractiveness (Carpentier et al., 2019).

In the public sector, a series of field experiments on recruitment on social media channels demonstrated that organizational signals (e.g., social impact, job security) increased candidate interest in government jobs, reinforcing the relevance of social media

effectiveness for state-owned enterprises (SOEs) (Keppeler & Papenfuß, 2021). Furthermore, the adoption of ICT for e-recruitment—including the use of social media—is associated with broader talent reach, faster processes, lower costs, and greater transparency in public agencies (AbdulKareem et al., 2024).

Informativeness, defined as candidates' perceptions of the completeness, relevance, and usefulness of recruitment information provided by an organization on its digital channels, has been shown to increase candidate interest and application intentions when designed in conjunction with social presence (Carpentier et al., 2019). Studies in emerging economy contexts confirm that social media effectiveness increases informativeness and, through this, improves recruitment process outcomes (Si et al., 2023).

Two main frameworks explain the relationships between variables: Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) predicts that candidates seek informative and relevant content to meet career decision needs, thus the effectiveness of social media that presents such content will improve recruitment outcomes (Carpentier et al., 2019). Meanwhile, Signaling Theory explains how cues from organizational content/advertisements on social media reduce uncertainty and shape candidate perceptions, with the availability and quality of information playing a central role in forming application intentions (Keppeler & Papenfuß, 2021; Thang & Trang, 2024). In a public context, the combination of Media Richness Theory and ICT adoption for e-recruitment suggests that information-rich channels (e.g., social media) enhance public value by increasing process transparency and improving the quality of candidate-agency interactions (AbdulKareem et al., 2024).

The Effect of Social Media Effectiveness on Recruitment Process Quality

Conceptually, social media effectiveness reflects how effectively an organization utilizes platforms to attract and manage applicants. According to UGT and signaling, this will improve candidate perceptions and initial screening, making the process feel faster, more transparent, and consistent (Carpentier et al., 2019; Keppeler & Papenfuß, 2021). Evidence from the public sector shows that well-designed social media campaigns increase candidate interest in government employers, a prerequisite for a smoother, higher-quality recruitment process (Keppeler & Papenfuß, 2021). Studies on digital selection also found that perceived effective digital practices improve applicant reactions and candidate experiences—two key indicators of process quality (Woods et al., 2020). Thus, both theoretically and empirically, there is a strong rationale for social media's effectiveness in enhancing the quality of the recruitment process (Carpentier et al., 2019; Woods et al., 2020). Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Social media effectiveness has a positive effect on recruitment process quality

The Effect of Social Media Effectiveness on Informativeness

Social media effectiveness is closely linked to content design that is clear, comprehensive, and relevant to candidates' information needs, thus logically increasing informativeness (Carpentier et al., 2019). Studies in developing economy contexts explicitly show that social media effectiveness increases informativeness—that is, candidates perceive recruitment information as more complete and applicable when organizations effectively manage their channels (Si et al., 2023). Because informativeness is a communication characteristic that can be "managed" on an organization's website, organizations that more effectively utilize social media tend to achieve higher levels of informativeness (Carpentier et al., 2019). Based on the results of previous research, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Social media effectiveness positively affects informativeness

The Effect of Informativeness on Recruitment Process Quality

Theoretically, informativeness reduces information ambiguity and asymmetry, leading candidates to perceive the process as fairer, more transparent, and easier to follow – which, in turn, improves process quality (Woods et al., 2020). Recruitment communication experiments show that high informativeness increases engagement with an organization, a crucial component of the candidate experience and an indicator of process quality (Carpentier et al., 2019). Recent research on digital procedural justice also confirms that providing relevant/comprehensive information in online channels increases OPP, engagement, and application intentions throughout the process, improving its overall quality (Lo Piccolo et al., 2024). While there are more cautious findings regarding the impact of information availability on specific social media platforms on application intentions, theoretical consensus and cross-channel evidence continue to support a positive role for informativeness on process quality (Thang & Trang, 2024). Therefore, the following hypothesis can be proposed:

H3: Informativeness has a positive effect on recruitment process quality

The Mediating Role of Informativeness between Social Media Effectiveness and Recruitment Process Quality

The UGT and signaling frameworks imply that the influence of social media effectiveness on process quality occurs in part because effectively managed social media provides more comprehensive/diagnostic information, which subsequently improves applicant reactions and candidate experiences (Keppeler & Papenfuß, 2021). Empirically, studies in emerging economy contexts have found a mediating pathway of informativeness in the relationship between social media effectiveness and recruitment outcomes, confirming the mechanistic role of information in the process (Si et al., 2023). Therefore, the researchers formulated the following hypothesis:

H4: Informativeness mediates the influence of social media effectiveness on recruitment process quality

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach, using survey methods and path analysis, to examine direct and indirect (mediation) effects in accordance with the research objectives. This design was chosen because (i) the variables studied are latent and causally related, (ii) simultaneous testing of relationships between constructs is necessary, and (iii) a reliable mediation test requires bootstrapping of indirect effects. The primary analysis was conducted using covariance-based SEM (CB-SEM) with robust maximum likelihood (MLR) to accommodate possible non-normality. Hierarchical regression (the Baron & Kenny approach) was used as a robustness check for mediation results (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Hayes, 2018; Kline, 2023; Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2019).

The research was conducted at state-owned enterprises operating in Aceh Province (Banda Aceh, Aceh Besar, Lhokseumawe, and West Aceh). The unit of analysis was individual employees (permanent/contract) recruited through job postings on official social media platforms of state-owned enterprises (BUMN) (Instagram, LinkedIn, Facebook) and placed in work units within the region. Because a definitive population list was not available, non-probability purposive sampling was used with the following criteria: (1) active employees at one of approximately 12 BUMNs in the study area; (2) obtained job posting information through social media; (3) recruited within the last five years (2020–2024); and (4) willing to respond. The targeted sample size was 300 respondents. This size exceeds the 10:1 rule of thumb for path models with 12 or more indicators (Hair et al., 2014) falls within a reasonable range for large, unknown populations (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970); and is also safe for CB-SEM (Kline, 2023; Hair et al., 2019).

The questionnaire for this study consisted of two sections. The first section dealt with demographics and used a nominal scale to categorize demographic-related data. The second part of the questionnaire relates to the primary research. This questionnaire has three constructs, each with three items: Social Media Effectiveness Caers and Castelyns (2011) and Ollington et al. (2013), Recruitment Process referring to Broughton et al. (2013) and Informativeness referring to Williamson et al. (2003). This study measured respondents' opinions using a five-point Likert Scale. One indicates strong disagreement, and five indicates strong agreement.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Respondent Characteristics

According to Table 1, the study included 306 respondents. The majority of respondents were male (56.21%), while females made up 43.79%. By age, the largest group was 22–26-year-olds (61.44%), indicating that the respondents were predominantly young. Furthermore, regarding marital status, the majority of respondents were single (84.79%). All respondents had a Diploma/Bachelor's degree. Regarding the workplace, the most significant proportion came from PT Pegadaian (31.7%), followed by Bank Syariah Indonesia (27.45%), PT PLN (2.58%), PT Surveyor (8.50%), and Pupuk Iskandar Muda (9.80%). Finally, regarding length of service, most respondents started working in 2023 (27.45%), 2021 (22.22%), 2022 (16.99%), 2020 (16.99%), and 2024 (16.34%).

Tabel 1. Respondent Demographic Characteristics

No	Item	Quantity	Percentage
1	Gender		
	a. Male	172	56.21%
	b. Female	134	43.79%
Total		306	100%
2	Age		
	a. 17-21	48	15.69%
	b. 22-26	188	61.44%
	c. 27-31	70	22.88%
	d. 32-36	0	0
	e. 37-41	0	0
	f. 42-46	0	0
	g. >46	0	0
Total		306	100%
3	Marital Status		
	a. Single	260	84.79%
	b. Married	46	15.03%
	c. Widow/Widower	0	0
Total		306	100%
4	Last Education		
	a. Diploma/Bachelor's degree	306	100%
	b. Master	0	0
	c. Doctoral	0	0
Total		306	100%

No	Item	Quantity	Percentage
5	Workplace		
	a. PT Pegadaian	96	31.37%
	b. Bank Syariah Indonesia	84	27.45%
	c. PT PLN	70	22.88%
	d. PT Surveyor	26	8.50%
	e. Pupuk Iskandar Muda	30	9.80%
Total		306	100%
6	Start of work		
	a. 2020	52	16.99%
	b. 2021	68	22.22%
	c. 2022	52	16.99%
	d. 2023	84	27.45%
	e. 2024	50	16.34%
Total		306	100%

Source: Processed research data (2025)

Furthermore, this study applied the Partial Least Squares (PLS) approach to analyze the research data. PLS is a Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) technique that focuses on variance or components. The analysis was conducted using SmartPLS, a software specifically designed for estimating PLS-SEM models. The PLS-SEM model used is shown in Figure 1 below.

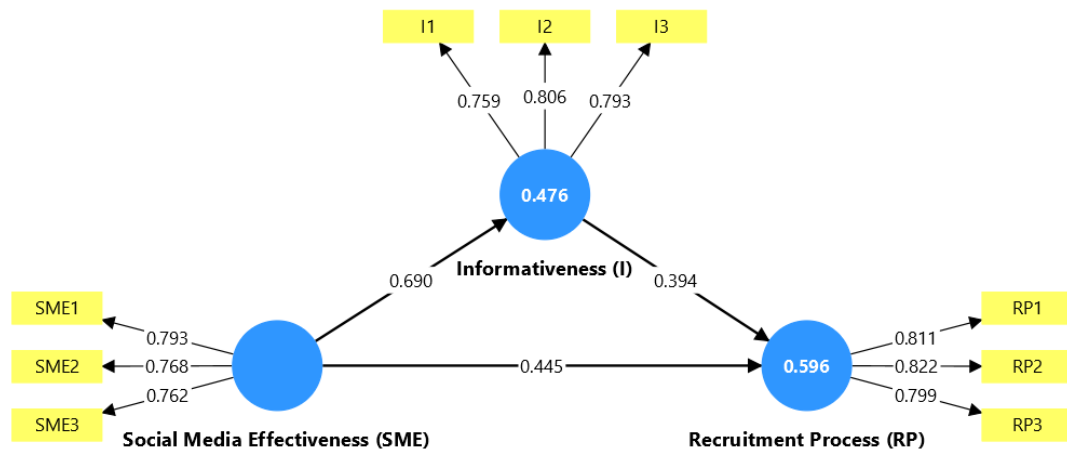


Figure 1. Structure of PLS-SEM Research Model

Source: Processed research data (2025)

Outer Model

Validity Test

Convergent Validity Test

The convergent validity test assesses the extent to which indicators within a construct correlate with one another, thereby determining whether the construct meets validity requirements. An indicator is considered valid if its correlation value is greater than 0.60.

Table 2. Outer Loading Factor Value Results

	Informativeness (I)	Recruitment Process (RP)	Social Media Effectiveness (SME)
I1	0.759		
I2	0.806		
I3	0.793		
RP1		0.811	
RP2		0.822	
RP3		0.799	
SME1			0.793
SME2			0.768
SME3			0.762

Source: Processed research data (2025)

As shown in the table above, all indicators for each variable exceed 0.60. This indicates that each indicator has adequate accuracy and meets the criteria for convergent validity.

Discriminating Validity Test

The discriminant validity test assesses a construct's validity using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) statistic. A construct is considered valid if the AVE value is above 0.50.

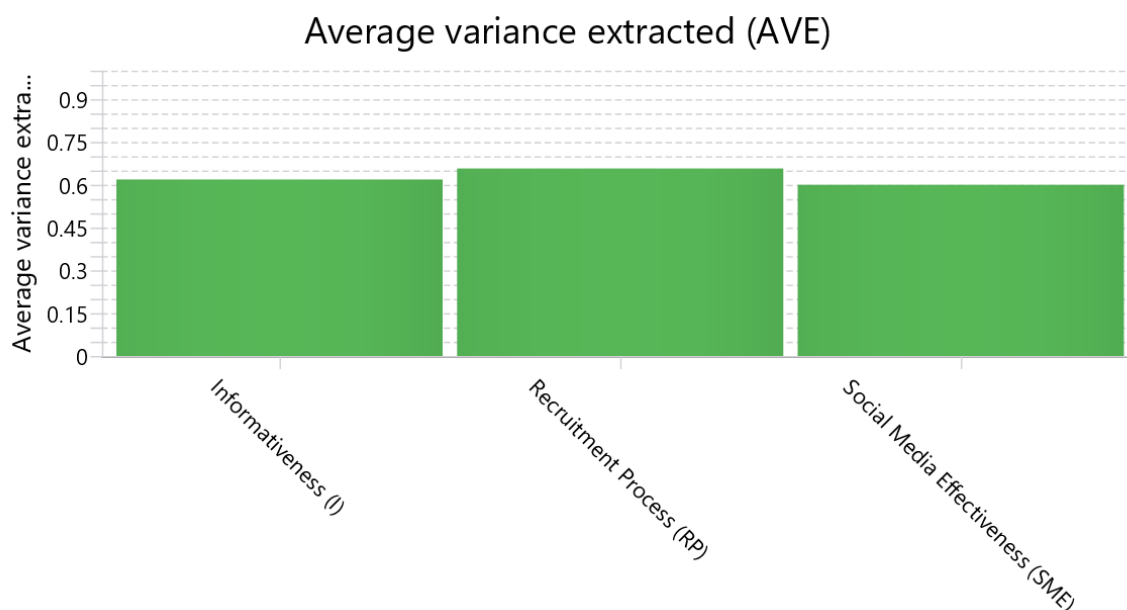


Figure 2. Average Variance Value Extracted

Source: Processed research data (2025)

According to the table above, all variables show Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values greater than 0.50. The AVE value for the informativeness variable is 0.619, Interest in the Recruitment Process is 0.657, and Social Media Effectiveness is 0.600. Thus, it can be concluded that all variables meet validity requirements.

Reliability Test

Uji Composite Reliability

Construct reliability is evaluated using two leading indicators: Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha. An instrument is categorized as reliable if both values are above the threshold of 0.70.

Table 3. Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha Test Results

Variabel	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability	Information
Informativeness (I)	0.792	0.794	0.829	Reliabel
Recruitment Process (RP)	0.739	0.739	0.852	Reliabel
Social Media Effectiveness (SME)	0.767	0.768	0.818	Reliabel

Source: Processed research data (2025)

Based on the table above, the Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values indicate that all variables meet reliability standards. Both indicators are above the 0.70 threshold, indicating that each variable has a good level of internal consistency and is reliable in this study.

Structural Model Test (Inner Model)

R Square

R-squared is used to assess the extent to which exogenous variables can explain the variability of endogenous variables in a research model.

Table 4. R-Square Value

Variabel	R-square	R-square adjusted
Informativeness (I)	0.476	0.474
Recruitment Process (RP)	0.596	0.594

Source: Processed research data (2025)

The table above shows an R-squared value of 0.476 for the informativeness variable, indicating that the social media effectiveness variable explains 47.6% of the variation in informativeness. Furthermore, 52.4% of the remaining factors were influenced by variables not included in the model in this study. Furthermore, the R-Square value for the recruitment process was 0.596, indicating that the social media effectiveness variable explained 59.6% of the variance in the recruitment process. Furthermore, 40.4% of the remaining factors were influenced by variables not included in the model in this study.

Goodness-of-fit model

The goodness-of-fit model assesses the extent to which the structural model captures the relationships among the constructs under investigation. This measure provides a comprehensive indication of the model's fit, allowing for assessment of whether the

established relationship patterns align with the empirical data. Therefore, goodness-of-fit is an important reference point in ensuring that the estimated model is of reasonable quality before proceeding to the hypothesis-testing stage.

Table 5. Fitt Summary

	Saturated model	Estimated model
SRMR	0.089	0.089
d_ULS	0.353	0.353
d_G	0.159	0.159
Chi-square	275.251	275.251
NFI	0.723	0.723

Source: Processed research data (2025)

Based on the evaluation results shown in Table 5, the SRMR value for the Saturated Model and the Estimation Model is 0.089, which is slightly above the ideal limit of 0.08. This value indicates that the model fit is quite adequate, although there is still room for improvement. Meanwhile, the d_ULS value of 0.353 and d_G of 0.159 in both models indicate that the difference between the model-generated covariance matrix and the empirical data falls within an acceptable range, indicating the stability and consistency of the measurement model. The Chi-Square value of 275.251 is included as additional information, although it is not a primary indicator in the context of PLS-SEM. In addition, the NFI value of 0.723 is below the 0.90 threshold, indicating that the model fit is still moderate and can be improved in subsequent model development.

Hypothesis

The results of this test indicate a relationship between the exogenous and endogenous variables. This evaluation can be seen in the Path Coefficient table through the t-statistics and p-values, which are used to determine whether the research hypothesis is accepted. A hypothesis is accepted if the p-value is below 0.05 and the t-statistic exceeds the critical value in the t-table.

Table 6. Hypothesis Testing Results (Path Coefficient)

Model	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Information
Social Media Effectiveness (SME) -> Recruitment Process (RP)	0.445	0.447	0.043	10.438	0.000	Accepted

Social Media Effectiveness (SME) -> Informativeness (I)	0.690	0.691	0.030	23.015	0.000	Accepted
Informativeness (I) -> Recruitment Process (RP)	0.394	0.394	0.044	8.910	0.000	Accepted

Source: Processed research data (2025)

Based on the hypothesis test results in Table 6, all relationships between variables show t-statistic values that far exceed the t-table value of 1.966 and p-values below 0.05. Therefore, all hypotheses in this study are accepted.

The Influence of Social Media Effectiveness on the Recruitment Process in Aceh

The first hypothesis, regarding the influence of social media effectiveness on the recruitment process, yielded a t-statistic of 10.438 and a p-value of 0.000; thus, the hypothesis is accepted. These findings confirm that effective social media utilization not only increases perceptions of informativeness but also directly strengthens the recruitment process. Social media provides easy access to information, expands the reach of potential applicants, and increases engagement, thus positively contributing to recruitment success.

These results are consistent with previous literature suggesting that social media effectiveness can improve recruitment quality. Carpentier et al. (2019) and Keppeler dan Papenfuß (2021) emphasized that well-managed social media utilization will increase candidate interest, enhance transparency, and expedite a quality screening process. Furthermore, a study by Woods et al. (2020) found that digital practices perceived as effective by applicants enhance candidate experience and positive reactions to the selection process, both key indicators of recruitment quality. These findings not only align with previous empirical research but also strengthen theoretical arguments from UGT and signaling theory that informative, well-managed digital content will influence applicant perceptions and decisions.

This research provides a contextual contribution, specifically to state-owned enterprises (SOEs) in Aceh, a context that has received relatively little attention in the digital recruitment literature. These findings address calls from previous researchers for more contextually grounded empirical evidence on how social media effectiveness operates across different institutional environments, including the public and regional sectors. In state-owned enterprises (SOEs) in Aceh, effective social media use is highly relevant given limited access to conventional information and the younger generation's high reliance on digital platforms. SOEs in Aceh need to optimize their digital communication strategies, improve content design, and increase interaction through social media platforms to more effectively attract potential applicants and ensure a more transparent, inclusive, and responsive recruitment process. Therefore, these findings not only strengthen existing theoretical evidence but also expand it by providing new insights into how social media effectiveness operates in regional SOE recruitment.

The Influence of Social Media Effectiveness on Informativeness in Aceh

The effect of social media effectiveness on informativeness was also significant, with a T-statistic of 23.015 and a p-value of 0.000. This indicates that social media effectiveness, in terms of reach, message delivery quality, and interactions, plays a significant role in enhancing users' perceptions of informativeness. In other words, effectively managed social media can produce content that audiences deem informative.

This finding aligns with previous literature, which asserts that social media effectiveness is closely related to the ability to produce precise, comprehensive, and relevant content that addresses candidates' information needs (Carpentier et al., 2019). Research in a developing economy context by Si et al. (2023) also shows that when social media effectiveness increases informativeness, that is, effectively managing its digital platforms through regular updates, structured job postings, and quick responses, candidates tend to perceive recruitment information as more comprehensive and useful. The empirical results of this study reinforce the theoretical argument that informativeness is a communication characteristic that can be "managed" through optimizing content design and social media management strategies (Carpentier et al., 2019).

The consistency between this study's findings and previous evidence provides strong support for hypothesis H2, which states that social media effectiveness positively influences informativeness. When social media functions effectively, candidates receive more structured, relevant, and easy-to-understand information, thereby reducing uncertainty in the recruitment process and improving their overall experience.

These findings further enrich the literature by presenting empirical evidence from Aceh, a region still facing limited access to information and a high dependence of the younger generation on social media. Optimizing digital platforms is crucial to ensure transparency and easy access to SOE recruitment information. These results address the literature's call for more diverse contextual evidence and map the specific mechanisms by which social media effectiveness enhances informativeness within public organizations in developing regions.

The Effect of Informativeness on the Recruitment Process in Aceh

The relationship between informativeness and the recruitment process yielded a T-statistic of 8.910 with a p-value of 0.000, thus accepting the hypothesis. These findings indicate that the informativeness of a message or piece of content can significantly influence the effectiveness of the recruitment process. The clearer, more comprehensive, and easier-to-understand the information an organization provides, the greater its ability to attract and influence potential applicants' decisions.

This finding is consistent with the literature, confirming that informativeness plays a crucial role in improving the quality of the recruitment process. Woods et al. (2020) explain that clear and comprehensive information can reduce ambiguity and information asymmetry between the organization and candidates, thereby leading them to perceive the recruitment process as fairer, more transparent, and more feasible. This study's findings also align with the findings of Carpentier et al. (2019), which showed that high levels of informativeness increase candidate engagement with the organization, a crucial component of perceived process quality.

Furthermore, a recent study on digital procedural justice (Lo Piccolo et al., 2024) also found that providing relevant, easily accessible information through online channels improves candidates' experiences throughout the recruitment process and their perceptions of the overall quality of the process. While there are more cautious studies on the influence of informativeness on application intentions across specific social media platforms (Thang & Trang, 2024), the theoretical consensus remains supportive of the positive role of informativeness in the quality of the recruitment process.

This study adds value to the growing literature by presenting empirical findings from Aceh, a region still facing limited access to information but exhibiting a high level of dependence on social media. In such situations, information quality is a key factor in ensuring a transparent and accountable recruitment process for state-owned enterprises (SOEs). Focusing on SOEs in Aceh, this study offers an important contribution to understanding how informativeness serves as a bridge between social media use and improved recruitment process quality in the regional public sector.

Tabel 7. Hypotheses Testing: Indirect Effect

Model	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Information
Social Media Effectiveness (SME) -> Informativeness (I) -> Recruitment Process (RP)	0.272	0.272	0.033	8.163	0.000	Accepted

Source: Processed research data (2025)

Table 7 presents the results of the hypothesis testing regarding the indirect effect through the mediating variable, informativeness. The test was conducted using the bootstrapping method with a significance level of 0.05 and a one-tailed test. A hypothesis is accepted if the t-value is greater than 1.966.

The Mediating Role of Informativeness between Social Media Effectiveness and Recruitment Process Quality in Aceh

The results of the mediation test indicate that informativeness significantly mediates the relationship between social media effectiveness and recruitment process quality, with a t-statistic of 8.163 and a p-value of 0.000. This finding aligns with the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) framework and signaling theory, which emphasize that social media effectiveness not only directly impacts the quality of the recruitment process but also improves the quality of the information conveyed to candidates. When social media is managed effectively, both in terms of message consistency, content relevance, and interaction, candidates receive more complete, diagnostic, and understandable information,

which in turn improves their perceptions of the fairness, transparency, and professionalism of the recruitment process (Keppeler & Papenfuß, 2021). These results are also consistent with empirical evidence from developing countries, which found that informativeness is a crucial mechanism that bridges the effects of social media effectiveness on recruitment outcomes (Si et al., 2023), confirming that quality information is a key channel for improving the candidate experience.

The success of state-owned enterprise (SOE) recruitment depends heavily on the organization's ability to provide clear, easily accessible information on social media. Aceh's lack of equitable distribution of recruitment information makes the quality of information on social media crucial for prospective applicants to understand the stages and requirements clearly. When information is presented comprehensively and easily accessible, applicants tend to perceive the recruitment process as more transparent, credible, and trustworthy.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that the effectiveness of social media significantly improves the quality of the SOE recruitment process in Aceh, both directly and by increasing informativeness. Well-managed social media can expand the reach of information, encourage interaction, and improve potential applicants' perceptions of information. These findings indicate that clear, relevant information is a key mechanism linking digital strategy to a more transparent, professional recruitment process. Overall, this study provides contextual evidence that strategic and informative social media management is a crucial foundation for improving the candidate experience and strengthening the credibility of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) as employers in Aceh.

SOEs in Aceh need to develop a more structured and consistent digital communication strategy by providing comprehensive, clear, and easily accessible job vacancy information and maintaining responsiveness through active engagement on social media. Regular content presentation, the use of informative visual formats, and consistent messaging across platforms are crucial steps to improve the perception of information and strengthen the overall quality of the recruitment process.

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