



To Investigate the recruitment processes applicable to a rapidly growing technology industry, in order to examine how organisations can be more competitive in the war for talent

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Abstract

The growth of the technology industry began in the early noughties. It has since become the place to work, as there is an excessive amount of jobs with a lack of talent in the industry. This in turn has led to a war for talent among the established organisations in the IT industry. This research is investigating the different methods of recruitment used in order to develop that competitive edge to seek out the best talent available.

In the 1990's IT organisations were using methods such as newspaper advertisements and recruitment agencies in order to attract candidates. Once the Internet was introduced as a recruitment tool job boards became the new way of attracting and reaching out to applicants. Then, as the new social media era kicked in, organisations started becoming more proactive, with the use of LinkedIn and Facebook to attract them.

The researcher carried out a qualitative approach using both primary and secondary research in order to clarify what the most effective methods organisations are using in order to attract the best talent.

The primary research involved the use of semi-structured interviews with six IT organisations, and one professional IT consultant. The data collected maintained that LinkedIn plays a major role in recruitment especially reaching out to passive candidates, however, other methods of recruitment are just as effective.

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

The recruitment industry has gone through some drastic changes in the past decade due to significant advancements in technology. The shortages within the IT labour market have made recruitment a very important tool. Due to the pace at which the technology industry is moving, organisations need to keep up with the most current recruitment methods to stay competitive in the labour market. There are constant changes due to the rapid growth of the industry, and in order to keep up with the competition, organisations must be able to adapt, using the most suitable methods available. For example, organisations must know when to use LinkedIn and when to use job boards; it depends on the position that needs to be filled.

This research has taken an in-depth look at the recruitment industry, looking at traditional recruitment methods such as newspaper advertisements, progressively shifting towards online recruitment methods and then looking at the current recruitment methods such as social media, used in the technology industry. With the IT industry having such a shortage at all levels it is vital for IT companies to stay ahead of their competitors in the labour market and that means keeping up-to-date with the most cost-effective ways of seeking out the best talent available.

1.2 Title/Research Issue

The title *“To investigate the recruitment processes applicable to the rapidly growing technology industry, in order to examine how organisations can be more competitive in the war for talent”*

1.3 Research Aims

This research aims to investigate if IT organisations have become more competitive in the war for talent due to new alternative recruitment methods introduced into the industry. Due to the pace at which the industry is growing, organisations are proactively looking for IT candidates, so this research investigated the best methods to use, for organisations to stay competitive in the IT labour market, based on the sample interviewed.

1.4 Overall Research Objectives

1. Illustrate the appropriate recruitment methods available to IT organisations:
 - Examine the current recruitment methods.
 - Obtaining the most effective methods used to attract the most suitable candidates.

2. Illustrate why organisations are using these methods:
 - Have they changed from traditional methods
 - Why did they change throughout the last 20 years

3. How are organisations dealing with the shortage of skills in the IT labour market?
 - Are they struggling to find skilled labour?
 - What are they doing to overcome this barrier?

4. How have organisations changed their recruitment methods to stay competitive?
 - Are organisations being proactive or reactive to their competitors?

1.5 Purpose of Research

This research is a very topical subject at the moment due to the shortage in IT labour. In order to overcome this barrier, recruiters and employers need to be proactive, look in the right places, and appeal to the right people. The IT labour market has become highly competitive for talented labour and in order to beat the competition it's vital the right recruitment methods are used. The main purpose of the research is to see if the recruitment methods used by IT organisations are keeping them competitive within the labour market. The research will investigate the most popular recruitment methods used in the IT sector and will establish the most effective methods used in the industry today. This research will benefit any new entrants into the IT labour market, as they will be able to establish which methods are the most effective in the industry and will be able to compete with other SME's in the labour market.

1.6 Outcome of the Research

The research has revealed the most effective methods of keeping organisations competitive within the IT labour market. The results have shown us a clearer picture as to what methods maintain a competitive edge for an IT organisation within the labour market.

1.7 Limitations

This research carried out is focused on the technology industry and is not an accurate account of the present recruitment methods used in other industries. The sample size cannot be accounted for the whole industry, as there were only a limited number of interviews carried out.

1.8 Structure of the Dissertation

Chapter One is an introduction to the area of the proposed research and explains as to why this it is being carried out. It gives the aims of the research and the overall objectives, which will lead to achieving the aims of the study.

Chapter Two places the research in context by reviewing the literature surrounding the broad area of recruitment. It will begin with a brief summary of the evolution of recruitment, giving a suitable framework to deal with the challenges in the IT labour market explained by Weitzel, Goethe and Laumer (2009). The report will move on to compare traditional and current recruitment methods within the framework. The literature will be discussed by drawing on academics including Taylor and Gunnigle as they have studied the area of recruitment in depth. It will then become more

focused on the technology industry explaining the most popular methods used to become and stay competitive in this field.

Chapter Three will explain the methodology used in order to find out primary research about the research topic. Initial findings will be discussed and analyzed relating to the questions posed.

Chapter Four will discuss the findings from the research carried out. Once the interviews have been completed, the researcher will analyze the data and will give an overview of the current situation regarding the recruitment methods used in order to stay competitive.

Chapter Five comes to an overall conclusion, stating the themes present throughout the research and gives advice for future research.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Evolution of Recruitment

Human Resource Management is a very difficult term to define. This is due to the fact that there is no agreed framework for understanding the HR function (Farnham, 2010). According to Gunnigle, Heraty and Morley (2011, P21), “*HRM is concerned with the management of an organisation’s workforce*”, with activities such as human resource planning, recruitment and selection, and deployment and termination of employment (Gunnigle et al, 2011) as very important tasks in relation to employee resourcing. HRM formally known as personnel management also relates to all of those who may have responsibility for people matters (Tienan, Morley, Foley, 2006). It was a very general term in the 1800’s with little importance in organisations, however, it went through some major transitions in the 1990’s, and is now a vital function to any organisation. According to Gunnigle (2011) two important developments occurred in the early nineteenth century that changed the evolution of HRM, particularly in regards to the emergence of the specialist HRM function. These involved the Welfare Tradition and Taylorism (Gunnigle et al, 2011).

When explaining the evolution of HRM, it generally traces back to the welfare tradition, factory owners regarded their labour force in instrumental terms. This involved poor working conditions very few benefits and poor pay, this in turn led to welfare officers being introduced (Gunnigle et al, 2011). Soon after the Welfare Workers’ Association was established in 1913 in order to protect workers, it was then renamed the Institute of Industrial Welfare Workers in 1927 (Gunnigle et al, 2011). This was the first step in taking a caring approach towards workers, and is seen throughout the benefits received by employees today.

Taylorism on the other hand involved the introduction of new management approaches, emphasising job analysis and creating incentive bonuses. Taylorism became an alternative method to the welfare tradition due to the economic depression, as it focused on the efficiency and profitability of the organisations, and thus led to more systematic approaches to a wide range of managerial activities (Tiernan et al, 2006).

By the 1970's, HR or personnel departments had been set up in most organisations, with a reasonably well defined range of HR activities (Gunnigle et al, 2011). More changes occurred in the 1980's with the introduction of Human Resource Management. This was seen as a new development that contrasted with 'traditional' personnel management (Gunnigle et al, 2011). This change to HRM was the movement towards what it is today, integrating employees into the business, involving more proactive work with aims of utilising HR to its full potential (Gunnigle et al, 2011). This is the period in which the HR role began to play a significant part in organisations.

It is difficult to define exactly what HR activities are, however, recruitment and selection have become key functions of a HR manager. Torrington, Hall, Taylor, and Atkinson (2011) state that, organisations have developed a need to compete effectively in the employment market by recruiting and retaining the best, affordable workforce available.

According to Taylor (2008 P214) there is a distinct difference between recruitment and selection; recruitment involves "*actively soliciting applications from potential employees*" and "*selection techniques are used to decide whether which of the applicants is best suited to fill the vacancy in question.*" Reese and French (2010 P170) have also made the distinction between the two, stating that "*recruitment is the*

process of generating a pool of capable people to apply for employment to an organisation. Selection is the process by which managers and others use specific instruments to choose from a pool of applicants a person or persons more likely to succeed in the job, given management goals and legal requirements”

Since the 1980s and 1990s, there have been fundamental changes in the structures and management processes which heavily involve recruitment and selection (Farnham, 2010). As Kessler et al (2012) maintain the evolution of the job market has resulted in traditional methods of recruitment becoming inefficient, ultimately leading to online recruitment surpassing traditional methods.

In the mid 1990's paper resumes were the norm as the dot com era had not yet come into effect (Zaper, 2011). The internet first emerged as a recruitment tool in the mid 1990's (Parry, Tyson, 2008) and due to this within the following years the recruitment industry changed, reflecting the revolution of information and communication technologies (Farnham, 2010). However, the research carried out by Parry and Tyson (2008), shows that while the use of the internet has become widespread, it has not dominated the recruitment market in the way it was predicted. As done in the mid 1990's, organisations are still recruiting through job fairs and recruitment agencies (Zaper, 2011). However, Boydell (2002) hails the internet as the driver of the recruitment revolution. The late 1990's and early 2000's referred to as the job board era by Zaper, due to the boom of online recruitment, focused mainly on employers and recruiters getting used to this type of recruitment. Online recruiting is the process of recruiting through commercial job sites or company websites that promote employment opportunities and retrieve potential employee information (Lin & Stasinskaya, 2002). It was still relatively new and some managers were reluctant to use it, however, Zaper (2011) makes the point that employers and recruiters needed to

embrace the new developments in ICT. After realizing the advantages of online recruitment, almost every employer was using it *“It allows jobs to be advertised inexpensively to a potential audience of millions”* (Torrington et al, 2011 P167).

Job boards also allowed employers to proactively go searching for potential candidates, however, the only problem was that everyone that uploaded CV's onto the job boards were job seekers. There was still no way of proactively seeking out passive candidates. This was quickly taken over by the LinkedIn era.

LinkedIn was established in 2001, and has changed recruitment forever. Flinders (2009, P1) supports this by stating *‘it's a business tool that cannot be ignored'* especially in the IT industry. LinkedIn opened up the door to social media being used as a recruitment tool. It has also introduced a new way for employers to seek out passive candidates, something they were unable to do before. Facebook, Twitter, Google+, and Pinterest have become important ways of advertising jobs and getting your brand out there, especially for young tech graduates. This has allowed organisations to recruit globally finding the most suitable people for the job. At this moment in time recruiters are trying to utilise these social media platforms to their advantage, however, it is very hard to do so when everyone is using the same methods. This has played a major part in the war for talent that has occurred.

Zaper (2011) maintains that the advancements in ICT and new recruitment tools are not destroying other recruitment methods; they are just giving employers and recruiters' alternative methods of recruitment. Employers are still using employee referrals, job boards, headhunters and recruitment agencies; however, social media has made the process quicker and more cost-effective for employers. So in order to stay competitive in the current labour market employers and recruiters must keep up

with the times and embrace the use of social networking sites, especially LinkedIn, otherwise they will be left behind.

From the 1980's to this present day, no matter what improvements or developments are made regarding recruitment methods, the purpose of recruitment never changes. Gunnigle, Heraty and Morley (2011) discuss the recruitment phase, in which they claim that recruitment has three important functions:

1. To attract a pool of suitable applicants for the vacancy:
2. To deter unsuitable candidates from applying ; and
3. To create a positive image of the company.

They maintain that in order to meet these three functions, the job advertisement should include the job description, person specification and the details of the terms and conditions of employment, and goes on to state that *“if it is completed correctly it is probably the most effective tool available to meet the three key objectives outlined above”* (Gunnigle, et al, 2011, P117).

2.2 FIT Framework

A number of academics have proposed different frameworks regarding recruitment, Sangeetha (2010) has suggested a framework to measure the effectiveness of recruitment and Girard and Fallery (2010) have proposed an E-recruitment model, however, the most appropriate framework regarding this piece of research was developed by Weitzel, Goethe and Laumer (2009). They have developed a framework in order to help recruiters deal with the challenges regarding shortages in the IT industry. According to the report carried out by Expert Group on Future Skills Needed (EGFSN) (2012), the areas in which there are major shortages involve, computer software engineers, ICT network specialists, ICT security experts, ICT telecommunications and ICT project managers with a technical background, to name a few. In order to somewhat address this problem Weitzel et al (2009) introduced this framework in order to stay competitive within the labour market. The framework is called Finding IT (FIT). It addresses the toughest challenges for recruiting IT talent, scarcity, timescale and recruitment cost. They state that *“to help IT recruiters face the challenges, we provide a four-quadrant framework that segments recruitment activities on two dimensions - the recruitment timescale and the scarcity of the skills required”* (Weitzel et al, 2009, P175).

Figure 1: FIT Framework For IT Recruitment

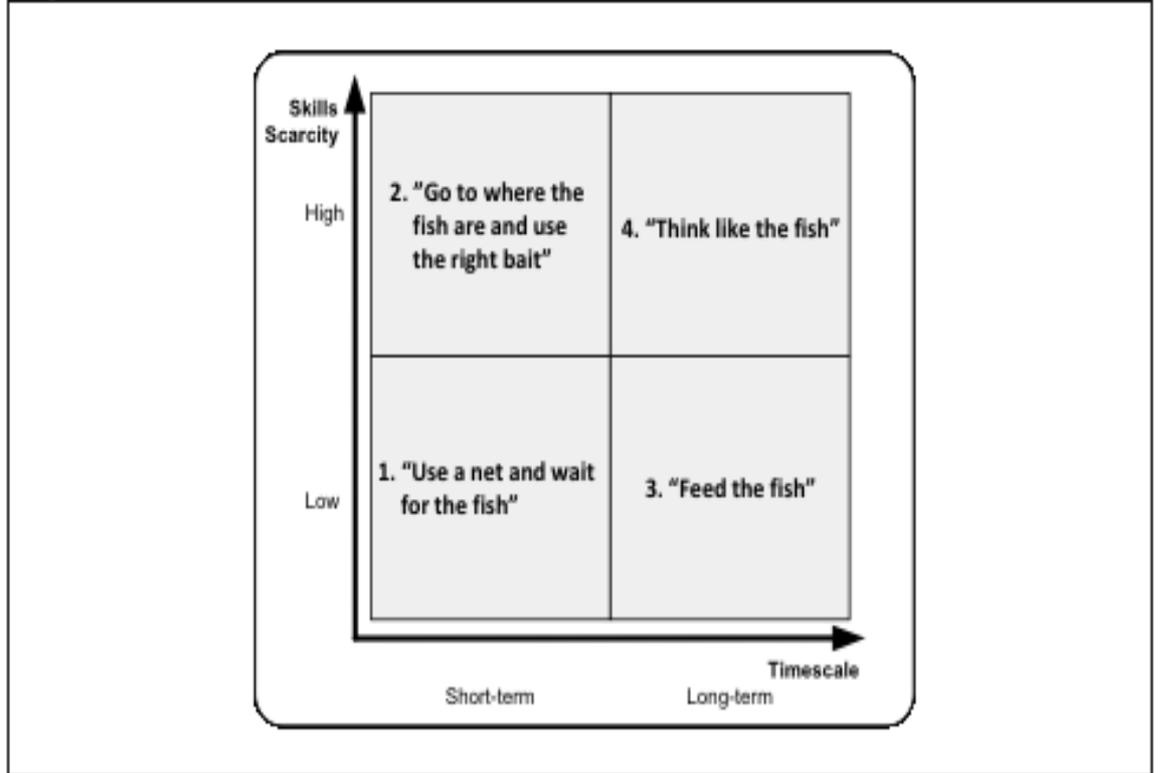


Figure 1.0

(Weitzel et al, 2009)

Setar and MacFarland (2012) justify the evidence of the growth of the industry as they explained, the accelerated speed and accessibility of the internet has led to skyrocketing growth for the industry. However, concerns have surfaced regarding the skill set of IT labour. With reference to Weitzel et al (2009) there is an expected shortage to rise throughout the industry all the way up to IT management, ultimately making skilled IT labour limited in the IT labour market.

If organisations need to fill a position promptly, they can use short-term recruitment activities, while long-term approaches focus on adding people to a company's potential candidates and binding them to the organisation (Weitzel et al, 2009).

Quadrant 1: Short Term Activities to Recruit Readily Available Skills

“Use a net and wait”

With reference to figure 1.0 this quadrant usually applies to candidates with average skill profiles. It is assumed that there will be sufficient candidates in the job market that can be reached and attracted through mass communication. The recruitment team will post vacancies and wait for responses. If there are few responses then further action is taken, which may include using different methods or increasing the current method of recruitment. That is why this quadrant is called *“use a net and wait”* (Weitzel et al, 2009).

Quadrant 2: Short-Term Activities to Recruit Scarce Skills

“Go to where the fish are and use the right bait”

Quadrant 2 in figure 1.0 is usually used when a firm is urgently looking for someone who is highly skilled in a certain area. In this instance, the recruiter will approach certain types of candidates with the required skills. In order to attract an individual to a certain role, the recruiter must approach the situation cautiously. They must get familiar with the communication channels potential candidates will use and they must understand their interests in order to advertise successfully to them. After identifying potential candidates' preferred communication channels and interests, the recruiters can design messages that will catch the attention of the scarce group of people with the required IT skills. That is why recruiters should *“go to where the fish are and use the right bait”* (Weitzel et al, 2009).

Quadrant 3: Long-Term Activities to Recruit Readily Available Skills

“Feed the fish”

In contrast with the previous two quadrants, this quadrant is used for long-term activities with a low skill set. The practices or methods used in this quadrant are used in order to attract candidates at an early stage and binding them to the organisation over the long run. This allows them to recruit for jobs in the future from a group of candidates committed to the organisation. So recruiters need to *“feed the fish”* for vacant jobs in the future.

Quadrant 4: Long-Term Activities to Recruit Scarce Skills

“Think like the fish”

Weitzel et al (2009) developed this quadrant for long-term activities that needed highly skilled individuals. In this quadrant the idea is focused on the recruiter getting familiar with potential candidates environments, values, and goals. They go on to say that recruiter could become talent ambassadors for certain roles, establishing relevant social communities. This is why they should *“think like the fish”* (Weitzel et al, 2009).

The framework itself allows for different methods of recruitment for different quadrants. The important aspect is choosing the right method in order to attract the right candidates for the job. Straightforward advertising on job boards may be sufficient for a job with a low skill level. However, a job vacancy in need of a very specific skill will require the recruiter to go searching for candidates with the

appropriate skill set. It is vital that a recruiter knows what they are looking for when choosing a recruitment method.

This framework is important for this study as it allows the researcher to slot each method of recruitment into the most appropriate quadrant. Once the interviews had taken place, the researcher was able to reference back to the framework to establish which quadrant was the most effective, leading to the most effective methods used in order to stay competitive within the industry.

2.3 Recruitment Methods

Organisations traditionally depended on low-tech, time-consuming recruitment methods such as newspaper advertisements, employee referrals, and employment agencies to attract qualified candidates (Borstorff, Marker, Bennett, 2007). As advancements in technology have been made over time, recruitment methods have been altered in order to cater for the rapid changes, and scarcity of skills in the IT sector. The researcher will discuss the progression of recruitment methods explaining from the traditional methods used such as press and media advertisements, word of mouth, internal promotions and employee referrals just to name a few, to the most current methods used at this moment in time surrounding the subject of e-recruitment and web 2.0.

2.3.1 Traditional Recruitment Methods

Internal promotion has always been an efficient and effective way on filling vacancies, and falls into the category of being one of the oldest methods used. According to research carried out by Chan (1996), among the 84 chief executives of

the Fortune 100 firms who were promoted to the position since 1984, only 11 of them were recruited from outside the organisation. Most employers will always attempt to fill vacancies internally before they consider looking for people outside the organisation (Taylor, 2008). Gunnigle et al (2011) supports Chan's research as, the decision to recruit from the internal market brings with it a number of distinct advantages, it is more cost effective, and it helps the establishment of a strong internal labour market. This gives employees incentives to stay and develop their careers further within the organisation, thus reducing the time taken to fill vacancies. Bidwell (2011) corresponds with Gunnigle et al, as he claims workers promoted into jobs have significantly better performance for the first two years than workers hired from outside the organisation into similar jobs and lower rates of voluntary and involuntary exits. However, Taylor (2008) disagrees with this as he claims there are a number of disadvantages such as eliminating fresh blood. Fresh blood is often needed to challenge the status quo, particularly at senior levels, which can only come through external recruitment (Taylor, 2008). The most concerning disadvantage, is regarding the situation if an employee does not get the job. This can cause conflict within the workplace and needs to be managed tactfully (Taylor, 2008). Looking at the current IT industry growing rapidly, retention of current IT labour is vital; however, fresh blood is vital to the growth of the organisation.

Press advertising is one of the most traditional recruitment methods. It involves local, regional, and national newspaper advertisements, professional and trade journals, and other specialist publications. For low skilled or entry-level jobs it may be sufficient to advertise in local papers (Gunnigle et al, 2011), as it is advertising to a larger pool of diverse candidates (Sangeetha, 2010). Wells (1997) makes the case that with well-

established organisations, there is less chance of them using the newspapers to lure potential candidates, as they would use more specialized magazines and trade journals in order to attract individuals not necessarily engaging in job searching but would still be interested (Sangeetha, 2010).

Television and the Radio can be used for recruiting applicants, however, it is usually used to increase customers' awareness of the organisation (Gunnigle et al, 2011). It is not the most popular method, as the use of television is confined to teletext services or used by the government to promote public sector jobs (Pilbeam, Corbridge, 2011). Radio advertisements are relatively low cost and are broadcast locally, sometimes nationally, so in some cases it can be effective, then again, only a limited amount of information can be communicated by radio (Pilbeam, Corbridge, 2011)

With reference to the framework introduced above, press and media advertisement would fit into the FIT framework in quadrant 1 "*Use a net and wait*" as; recruiters will place an advertisement in a newspaper or broadcast them over the radio, and will wait for a response from potential candidates. Advertisements in national newspapers tend to be too expensive, as Taylor (2008) explains, advertising space in newspapers is generally sold in units of 3cm by 1cm, and an advert measuring 10cm by 6cm involves purchasing 20 of these blocks of space. The cost varies considerably between different publications and over time (Taylor, 2008). However, it is becoming increasingly less effective in current labour markets due to rapid advancements in technology creating more cost-effective ways of advertising. Media and press advertisements are one of the few methods that are slowly becoming wiped out, as other online methods such as job boards have over-taken their role.

Word-of-mouth, on the other hand can be used for any job, however, it is usually used for lower skilled jobs, as those looking for skilled labour will go headhunting for them. According to The Labour Market Trends (2002) word-of-mouth was the most popular method of recruitment practice in 2002. Research provided by the Cranet Survey in 2010, shows it is still a popular methods of recruitment, however, in a recent study carried out by the CIPD (2013) only 25% of organisations still use it. A job vacancy can spread through word -of-mouth from a number of different actions, it can spread from press advertisement, current employees of the organisation, friends or relatives just to name a few. According to Sangeetha (2010) well-established organisations derive major benefits through word-of-mouth promotions from employees, customers, suppliers and other stakeholders. Word-of-mouth is one of the most cost effective ways of recruiting, as Taylor (2008 P218) states, “*it costs next to nothing*”. However, he also argues that there are some disadvantages to this method of recruitment, as it only reaches a very limited target audience. It is said that other methods of recruitment such as advertising would give the organisation a wider talent pool (Taylor, 2008). This method of recruitment would fall into quadrant 1 “*use a net and wait*” of our framework as once the word gets out employers will wait for a response.

Employee Referrals is another traditional method, however, it is different to word of mouth. Employee referrals involve current employees referring an individual they know, whom they think would be suitable for the current vacancy within the organisation. According to Pilbeam and Corbridge (2010) organisations can use an employee referrals scheme to recruit qualified applicants. The John Lewin Partnership Gazette introduced this idea, in 1918 stating “*We will pay an employee who*

introduces us to someone who we do actually employ a fee of one guinea” (Pilbeam, Corbridge, 2010, P174). Employee Referrals would fit into the framework in quadrant 2 *“Go to where the fish are and use the right bait”*, employees will only recommend individuals they feel fit to fill the current vacancy, and working with friends can be an incentive in itself. Employees have their own reputation to protect, however, they will always be on the lookout through their own connections, as they will receive benefits for their recommendation if they are successful.

Career Fairs have become very popular in the last ten years or so. It involves employers actively looking for potential talent. Sangeetha, (2010), maintains employers taking part in career fairs are catered to with culturally diverse job hunters. Taking part in career fairs and open days is a proactive response to competitive labour markets or recruitment difficulties (Pilbeam, Corbridge, 2010). It allows employers to go searching for individuals, instead of employers waiting for them, and it is effectively a shop window of opportunities (Pilbeam, Corbridge, 2010). With reference to Witzel et al (2009, P183) a Siemens hiring manager told them *“Job fairs are good for establishing the first face-to-face contact with IT talent, which helps reduce the impersonal nature of the later online application process”*.

Career fairs would fit into the FIT framework in quadrant number 3 *“Feed the fish”*, as the aim for an organisation is to capture the interest of future applicants and position the company as an employer of choice (Witzel et al, 2009).

Similar to career fairs, University milk-rounds allow employers to go seeking for potential candidates. The difference between the two is that most potential candidates in this case will be either recent graduates or future graduates, which explains why this method is only used by large multinational employers (Gunnigle et al, 2010). The traditional milk-round process involves *“Promoting employment opportunities*

through employer attendance at careers and other recruitment events at universities” (Pilbeam, Corbridge, 2011, P173). Aimed at recent graduates and post-graduates, it allows an organisation to build strong relationships with those offering specialisms and prestige (Gunnigle, et al, 2010). Organisations can offer students with the right skills, potential internships or graduate programs in order to integrate them into the organisation at a young age. Similar to career fairs, the university milk-round would fit into the FIT framework in quadrant 3 *“Feed the fish”* as the employer will actively travel to universities in order to capture the interest of potential applicants (Witzel, et al, 2009).

According to research carried out by Read (2003), even though online methods had become a popular way of recruiting, career fairs and university milk-rounds were still the most popular methods of recruitment for employers.

Moving on from the university milk-rounds, recruitment agencies have always been a popular choice for employers if they were in need of talented individuals. They have been one of the few methods that have been around for decades and still remain a popular choice for employers. The main function of a recruitment agency is to attract, pre-select and refer candidates for temporary and permanent positions (Pilbeam, Corbridge, 2011). They take over a large part of the recruitment process for employers, handling the advertising and administration by screening candidates, and supplying an employer with a short-list of potential candidates (Taylor, 2008). Employers in unknown labour markets could use recruitment agencies as an option, as they are unfamiliar with the skills needed. It can be expensive, however, it saves the employer in terms of time associated with outsourcing administration activities (Taylor, 2008), and is usually well worth it. This method fits into our framework in quadrant 1 *“Use a net and wait”* because using a recruitment agency allows an

employer to pass on all of the administration work to the agency, and they then return with a shot-list of candidates they feel have the ability to fit the vacancy.

In order to seek out the best talent around, headhunting is one of the best methods if not the best. It is mainly used for very senior positions within an organisation. Headhunters differ from the variety of agents in so far as, their job is to identify candidates for permanent employment, often in tight labour markets (Taylor, 2008). *“They act like dating agencies, selling the job to the potential candidate and then trying to sell the candidate to the employer”* (Taylor, 2008, P240). Although the headhunting process is initially expensive, the benefits of securing an influential executive can make it worthwhile (Pilbeam, Corbridge, 2011). Using a headhunter fits into the framework in quadrant 2 *“Go to where the fish are and use the right bait”* (Weitzel et al, 2009 P177) because it involves using a consultant who is an expert in their area and as they will only supply a candidate if they feel they are the right person for the job.

As the current trends of moving away from the traditional methods began to commence, organisations had to be able to adapt to the advancements in technology in order to stay competitive within the labour market. For organisations to keep up with the competition in the current labour market technology has become an absolute necessity and any organisation not using it wouldn't stand a chance.

The trends that unfolded with the introduction of the Internet into the recruitment world soon became the norm and due to the pace at which technology is moving, these methods quickly became the traditional online methods of recruitment.

2.3.2 Traditional Online Methods

Advertising job vacancies on the company websites quickly became one of the most common methods of advertising a position, as they are cheap to operate and allow the organisation to advertise vacancies in whatever way they wish (Taylor, 2008). According to Frankland (2000), the cost of setting up a fully operational website from scratch is about the same as is required to advertise one job prominently in a national newspaper. However, it has limitations, as potential employees need to be actively looking on the organisations website in order to come across the vacancies (Taylor, 2008). Due to its low cost and quick set up it is very popular for organisations, as they can use other methods of recruitment as well as their own website. This method will fit into our framework in quadrant 2 “*use a net and wait*” as applicants need to be actively looking for vacancies on the company website.

The next introduction involved the online job boards. They have taken the idea of advertising in newspapers and brought it to the Internet and remain an important way to advertise a job vacancy. They are one of the first places people go when looking for a job and according to Singh and Narang (2008) Monster.com is the most popular job board, and is ranked within the top 20 most visited sites on the Internet.

The Public Appointment Service Research Advisory Panel (PAS, 2006) claim online job boards are commercial general-purpose recruitment portals. They can be generalists for example, monster.com, gradireland.ie or aimed at a specific industry for example nursefinders.com. According to Girard and Fallery (2010) specialized job boards provide more targeted information, with CV’s in general being more qualified. Using online job boards is not only more cost-effective, it reduces the time needed for the recruitment cycle; it projects a technologically progressive corporate image and provides global job-search availability 24 hours a day (Pilbeam, Corbridge, 2011).

Job seekers expect national and multi-national organisations to be on large online job boards, according to Weitzel et al (2009, P178) *“Siemens advertise on the major online job boards, mainly because of image- all IT job seekers expect to find Siemens there”*. Becoming one of the most popular ways to attract candidates, online job boards have become one of the first steps to e-recruitment and using web 2.0 as a recruitment tool. This method of recruitment would fit into our framework in quadrant 1 *“Use a net and wait”* employers can post vacancies on these job boards, with applicants applying for the position if they feel they have the sufficient skills required. So employers will wait for suitable candidates to apply and will then progress with the recruitment process.

2.3.3 E-Recruitment

E-recruitment can be defined as *“the use of any technology to attract, select or manage the recruitment process”* (Girard, Fallery, 2010 P2) utilizing a number of different activities, such as, describing and advertising vacancies online, posting jobs to online job boards and organisations websites, online interviewing, and setting up an online application system. These methods are now known as traditional recruitment methods with the introduction of Web 2.0. According to an article published by Personnell Today (2004), when organisations were asked how do they usually fill their positions, the most frequently used methods involved internal recruitment and recruitment agencies. Since then there have been major developments in the way organisations recruit for positions because *“With the internet, recruitment methods are evolving and diversifying”* (Girard, Fallery, 2010, P2).

Organisations are realizing that due to the major advantages e-recruitment has associated with it, it is becoming the mainstream recruitment practice (Pilbeam,

Corbridge, 2011). According to the PAS (2006) the primary drivers for introducing e-recruitment are cost reductions, speedier processes, access to a wider pool of applicants and better employer branding. Pilbeam and Corbridge (2011, 167-168) support this by stating “*advertising on the internet for six months costs approximately the same as one full display advertisement in a broadsheet newspaper*”. However, there can be a number of difficulties with e-recruitment. It can lead to a much higher volume of unsuitable candidates and technical problems (PAS, 2006).

2.3.4 Web 2.0

Pilbeam and Corbridge (2011) maintain that web 2.0 is a label for second-generation web activity where individuals can interact and contribute rather than be passive receivers of information. According to Martin et al (2008) cited by Girard and Fallery (2010) web 2.0 tools give companies the opportunity to encourage greater collaboration and gives customers, employees and potential employees a greater voice, helping them to learn about each other and share their knowledge and experiences. It has broadened the opportunities to recruit scarce talent in a short timescale (Weitzel et al, 2009), using tools such as blogs, online social networks, and video platforms.

Organisations have begun to start developing blogs for recruiting purposes (Girard, Fallery, 2010). This tool will attract potential candidates who are interested in the organisation and have the necessary skills to fill the current vacancies. Social Network sites such as, LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter have become vital for headhunting and finding future employees (Girard, Fallery, 2010). According to Gale (2013) these social network sites have fundamentally changed the way companies

recruit by giving them a way of identifying and connecting with passive job seekers who they never had access to before.

These networking sites have opened up a much wider talent pool and have become essential in attracting future candidates. According to the Brockett (2007) large organisations such as Ernst and Young are using Facebook as a recruitment strategy, giving potential candidates information about the organisation, and allowing employees and potential employees to broaden their network. The trends show that social networking sites have become a vital piece for the recruitment process and LinkedIn has become a recruitment tool in itself. It allows employers to search for candidates with certain qualifications, experience, and skills, allowing them to investigate a person's profile. However, it works in the opposite way too, candidates can search for job vacancies from employers and it also gives potential candidates access to future employers or managers, Flinders (2009) claims recruiters are still only realizing how powerful a tool it really is.

Video platforms have become very useful for interviews by means of web cams (Girard, Fallery, 2010). It is very cost effective, and gives an employer the opportunity to interact with a candidate in a foreign country before hiring them. From the research carried out it looks like Web 2.0 is quickly becoming the main recruitment tool, as it is very cost effective, and only takes a quarter of the time usually taken to find candidates. In regards to our framework, Web 2.0 would fit into quadrant 2 *“Go to where the fish are and use the right bait”*, as employers will actively use social networking sites in order to seek out potential candidates.

2.4 The IT Industry and the War for Talent

The IT industry is one of few industries that have continued its growth within the economic downturn (EGFSN, 2012). According to the report carried out by Expert Group on Future Skills Needed (EGFSN) (2012), there is a major shortage for ICT graduates, ICT professionals with 2-8 years' experience, and ICT professionals with 8+ years' experience, with the most difficult, finding those with 8+ years' experience. A war for talent became very obvious in the IT sector due to these shortages. Research carried out by Scott (2009) has suggested Business has entered a "cold war" for talent, with organisations recruiting for key posts on one hand while making redundancies on the other. This has been seen throughout the IT industry, as there is a major shortage of well-qualified candidates available to fill the current vacancies. Immediate recruitment difficulties in ICT relate to Computer Software Engineers, ICT network specialists, ICT security experts, ICT telecommunications and ICT project managers with technical background to name a few "*Addressing these high-level ICT skills demands across all sectors in the economy remains a top priority*" (EGFSN, 2013, P2).

IT Organisations are fighting for the best candidates available whether they are home grown or foreign grown individuals. Chambers, Foulon, Handfield-Jones, Hankin, and Michaels (1998, P45) state "*Better talent is worth fighting for*". This statement could not be a more accurate account of the current labour market today. Organisations need to be proactive, in their approach to finding the best IT talent as they are very hard to come by. Following the trend a report released by Openview Venture Partners (2013, P1), states that "*tech companies and recruiters must be highly creative and proactive when it comes to sourcing, engaging, and hiring*

software engineers”. The war for talent is cutthroat, as companies have to pursue candidates rather than the other way around (OVP, 2013).

Without using the appropriate recruitment methods, it is very difficult to attract the right people. The EGFSN (2012) carried out a study, which found that multinational companies are likely to engage with third-level students and operate internships and work placements. This will start to build a relationship with the student and form a bond between the organisation and the candidate, leading to the student choosing to work with that organisation once they complete their third-level education. Due to the scarcity of IT talent, organisations have started looking at all types of recruitment such as recruitment agencies, in order to expand their search for talented labour.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Methodology refers to “*The way the knowledge is created and is closely related to the epistemology, which is the philosophical theory of knowledge*” (Horn, 2009, P.107).

Research on the other hand is defined as ‘*something that people undertake in order to find out things in a systematic way, thereby increasing their knowledge*’ (Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill, 2007, P5). Sekaran and Bougie (2009) support this statement as they claim that research provides the necessary information that guides managers to make informed decisions to successfully deal with the problems.

To reiterate the research objectives,

1. Illustrate the appropriate recruitment methods available to IT organisations?
2. Illustrate why have organisations moved to these current recruitment methods?
3. How are organisations dealing with the shortage of skills in the IT labour market?
4. How have organisations changed their recruitment methods to stay competitive?

In order to find the answers to these questions, the researcher has carried out a form of primary and secondary research in order to get a sufficient amount of information surrounding the subject. This chapter will examine the methods of research carried out in order to answer the questions above.

Secondary research was carried out using article, books, websites, and any relevant information found in reports, newspapers, magazines.

Saunders et al, (2007) have introduced the research onion model, which gives the researcher a platform to work off. The onion model has five layers, which include

1. Research Philosophy
2. Research Approach
3. Research Strategy
4. Time Horizons
5. Data Collection

This model allows the researcher to examine the most important aspects of the study, and presents the most well-rounded and concise information available.

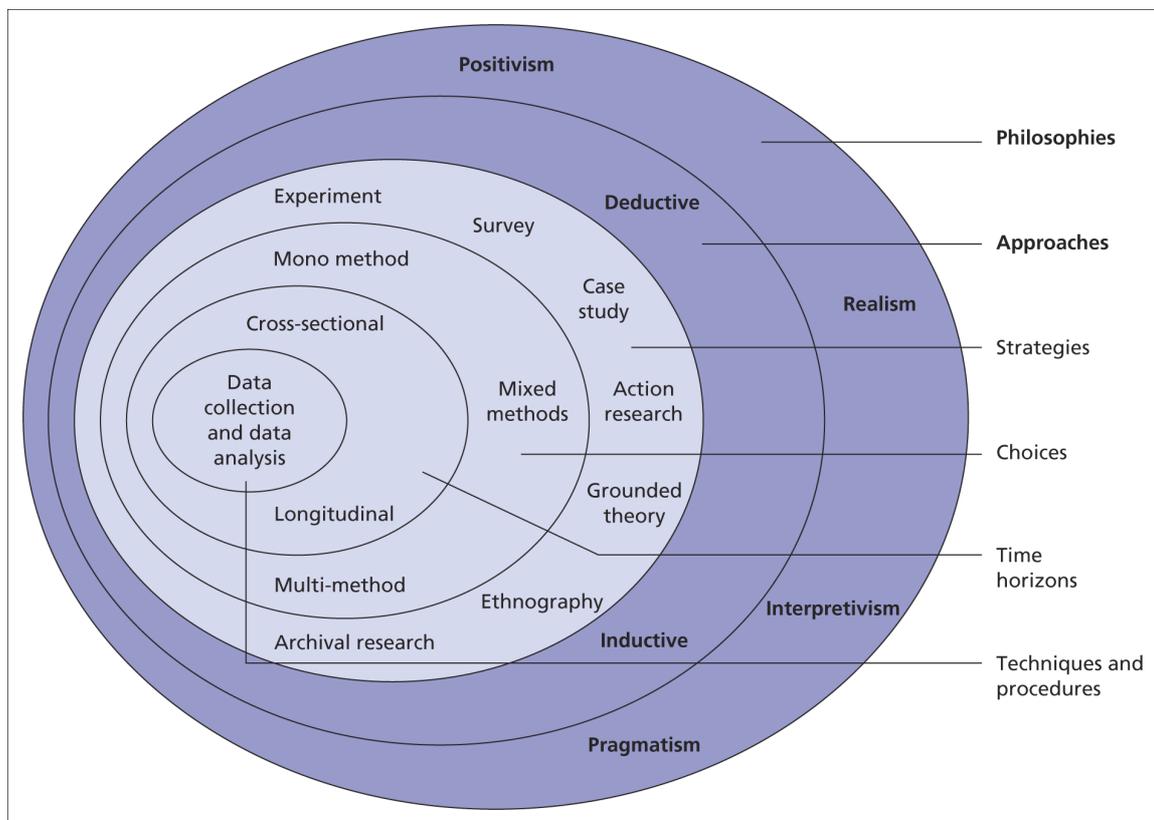


Figure 2.0

(Saunders et al, 2006)

3.2 Research Philosophy

“Research Philosophy relates to the development of knowledge and the nature of that knowledge” (Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill 2012 P127). According to Saunders et al (2012), there are three main philosophical approaches to a dissertation research, positivism, realism and interpretivism.

3.2.1 Positivism

According to Saunders et al (2007 P127), *“If your research philosophy reflects the principles of positivism then you will probably adopt the philosophical stance of a natural scientist”* They go on to explain this statement as they express, the researcher will prefer to work with facts rather than impressions or opinions. This perspective gives off the notion that certain factors being researched in the social world should be done so using objective methods while the findings must be free of any sensation, reaction or intuition supplied by the researcher. Remenyi, Williams, Money, and Schwartz (1998 P33), supports this by claiming *“the research is independent of and neither affects nor is affected by the subject of the research”*.

3.2.2 Realism

Realism on the other hand *“is that what the senses show us as reality is the truth: that objects have an existence independent of the human mind”* (Saunders et al, 2007 P104). Similar to positivism it takes a scientific approach to the creation of knowledge; however, according to Horn (2009) in the realistic philosophical approach, a reality that is completely independent of the mind exists and governs how this knowledge is in fact created.

3.2.3 Interpretivism

In contrast to positivism, the interpretivism of epistemology is considered to be the total opposite. *“Interpretivism is an epistemology that advocates that it is necessary for the researcher to understand differences between humans in our role as social actors”* (Saunders et al, 2007, P106). They go on to back this statement up by maintaining that this emphasizes the difference between conducting research among people rather than objects.

There is no right or wrong approach, each approach is better at doing different things, however, it is unrealistic to think that the research will fall into one philosophical domain, there is usually a mix between two or more approaches (Saunders et al, 2007). When deciding on what approach to use the researcher needs to consider his research questions in order to use the most accurate method available. Saunders et al (2007 P110) backs this up by stating *“Pragmatism argues that the most important determinant of the research philosophy adopted is the research question – one approach may be better than the other for answering a particular question”*

3.2.4 Paradigm Statement

Regarding the research carried out in this piece, it can be said that the research topic used an interpretivist point of view. It has been mentioned that interpretivist approach is appropriate for cases involving HRM, this is due to the fact that the researcher will be dealing with humans and not objects, receiving answers with different opinions and experience. This research requires an approach that allows the researcher to collect data from participants through opinions and past experiences and is not focused purely on facts regarding the subject matter. Two different IT organisations

may have completely different methods of recruitment, so there is no factual answer for this type of research, therefore, an interpretivist approach is the most appropriate.

3.3 Research Approach

In order for the researcher to be clear about the design, they must have a clear research approach. The researcher must decide whether to use a deductive approach, which involves developing a theory and hypothesis, or an inductive approach, which involves collecting data and developing a theory as a result of the data (Saunders, et al, 2007).

3.3.1 Deductive Approach

This approach is the dominant research approach in the natural sciences and is therefore used mainly for quantitative research (Saunders et al, 2007). Bryman and Bell (2007) explain that a deductive theory represents the commonest view between the nature of the theory and research.

3.3.2 Inductive Approach

This approach is used in order to formulate a theory through data accumulated for the research. As Saunders et al (2007 P119) claim *“using an inductive approach is likely to be particularly concerned with the context in which such events were taking place”*

In the case of this research, inductive approach was the most appropriate, as the researcher was able to carry out interviews in order to get a better understanding of the situation. The researcher asked relevant questions about the subject matter in order

to gain valuable information. The theory followed the data rather than vice versa as is the case with deductive (Saunders et al, 2007).

3.4 Research Strategy

3.4.1 Outcome of Research

The research gives an accurate account of the current recruitment methods used in the IT industry. It also shows the most effective recruitment methods used by organisations in the IT labour market. This piece of research will be of major benefit to new IT companies arriving into the labour market, as it will keep them up to date with the current recruitment methods used in the labour market in order to seek out the best talent available and stay competitive within the market.

3.4.2 Rational for Choosing Qualitative Approach

In order to decide on how to carry out the primary research, the researcher had to look at using either quantitative methods or qualitative methods of research. Quantitative methodology is usually described as '*a social research method that applies a natural scientific and positivist approach to social phenomena*' (McGovern, 2009, P58). Saunders et al (2007) supports this statement as they claim quantitative methods are predominantly used as a synonym for any data collection technique such as questionnaires that generates numerical data. On the other hand qualitative methodology described by McGovern (2009, P58) as a method that '*recommends close involvement and development of a contextual understanding*', Sampson (1972) maintains that qualitative methodology is an unfolding process rather than a

structured one, which involves the use of observation or interviews. It is used predominantly as a synonym for any data collection technique that generates non-numerical data (Sauders et al, 2007). When deciding on a methodology, the researcher considered the third option, using a mixed method approach, or as Bryman (1984) calls it a holistic approach the use of quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques and analyzing procedures either at the same time or one after the other, however, they are not combined. Bryman (1984) argues that joint utilization of methods may improve the reliability and validity of data.

Regarding this piece of research, the researcher chose to use qualitative research, in the form of semi-structured interviews. Both face-to-face interviews and telephone interviews were used, there are a number of advantages using this form which involve the opportunity to establish a rapport with the interviewee, ideas that may be difficult to articulate in a questionnaire can be brought to the surface (Sekaran, Bougie, 2009). Sekaran, and Bougie, (2009) go on and talk about the main advantage with telephone interviews, which involves being able to contact subjects dispersed over various geographic regions. As quoted by McGovern (2009 P58) “*This method recommends close involvement and development of a contextual understanding*” The researcher is investigating a social context and cannot generate results from numerical data.

The use of interviews is one of the most common methods of qualitative research, as it allows the research to investigate topics that rise throughout the process. Using an interpretivist philosophy, and an inductive research approach, it is only logical to use a form of qualitative research such as interviews, as they complement each other very well. Using a combination of these approaches and methods will give the researcher the best opportunity to seek out the best information available, and will allow them to investigate other topics that might arise throughout the process.

3.4.3 Exploratory Approach

This is an appropriate approach to the research at hand, because an exploratory study is “*a valuable means of finding out what is going ‘what’s happening; to seek new insights; to ask questions and to assess the phenomena in a new light*” (Robson 2002, P59). This describes the research topic appropriately, as the current IT industry is moving at such a rapid pace, there are constant changes occurring within it. When there are changes within the industry it can lead to changes in demand for labour, which leads to organisations adapting their recruitment methods in order to win the war for talent. This leads to exploratory questions in order for the researcher to gain an insight into the topic at hand. Saunders et al (2007) have presented three principle ways of conducting exploratory research,

- A search of literature
- Interviewing experts in the subject
- Conducting focus group interviews

The researcher has searched through literature involving a number of academics within the area, using the information found as secondary research. As a form of primary research, interviews were carried out with seven participants working within the IT industry, in which valuable information was obtained and analyzed. Collection of primary data is a vital part to any research and as O’Leary (2005) states; the collection of credible data is a tough task.

3.5 Interviews

3.5.1 Pilot Interviews

Pilot interviews were carried out in order to make sure the questions being asked were relevant to the study being carried out. Yin (2003) and Bell (1999) highlight the importance of pilot interviews by noting that piloting helps the researcher to refine interview questions and data collection strategies. The researcher carried out three pilot studies with connections of friends working for IT organisations. This allowed the researcher to refine the questions in order to seek out the most information available. The pilot interviews allowed the researcher to make the questions more focused on the organisations, using more open-ended questions in order to allow the interviewee to expand on their answer. Once the interview questions were altered, they were used to conduct semi-structured interviews for the primary research.

3.5.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

The researcher carried out seven interviews, four phone interviews and three face to face interviews. Interviews were used as the qualitative method to collect this data as Darlington and Scott (2002) point out that an in-depth interview takes the notion that people are experts on their own experience very seriously, and so are best able to report how they experience a particular event or situation. This is relevant with this study, as certain organisations use different methods of recruitment and this can be influenced from past experiences. Kvale (1996) describe interviews as an interchange of views and information between two or more people on a particular subject of mutual interest in which the interviewer asks the questions to elicit appropriate and

valid responses. According to Gray (2004 P214) there are many reasons to use interviews for collecting data,

- There is a need to attain highly personalized data.
- There are opportunities required for probing.
- A good return rate is important.

Before the interviews take place, the researcher has a lot to prepare, such as the research questions, which involves pilot interviews. Once the interview is being conducted the researcher needs to make sure the respondents have,

- Been given the interview questions prior to the interview taking place,
- A clear idea of why they have been asked,
- Basic information about the purpose of the interview and the research project of which it is a part,
- Some idea of the probable length of the interview and that you would like to record it (explaining why);
- A clear idea of precisely where and when the interview will take place (Gillham, 2000, p. 38).

There are a number of different forms of interviews,

- structured interviews,
- semi-structured interviews,
- unstructured interviews,
- non-directive interview.

Regarding this piece of research, the researcher carried out semi-structured interviews, as Corbetta (2003 p. 270) explains, within the interview, the interviewer is

not stuck to a rigid structure and can allow the conversation flow as he feels fit. Saunders Lewis and Thornhill (2008) explain that semi-structured interviews are sometimes known as qualitative interviews, mainly because they are most suited to this approach.

Semi-structured interviews ask similar questions as structured interviews, however, the interviewer can ask certain questions to probe for views or opinions of the interviewee. The questions asked were primarily based on themes and objectives, which the researcher wanted to explore (Saunders et al, 2003). Semi-structured interviews allow the interviewer to go deeper into the given situation, and are by no means restricted by a rigid interview structure. This form of interview will allow the interviewer to find out the reasons behind why organisations are using certain recruitment methods, and whether they are still a competitive force within the IT labour market. Certain answers could bring up different questions, and in the case of this research, the interviewer may not be able to ask the exact same questions to everyone, for example different questions may be asked to a new organisation entering the market, and a well-established organisation within the market. Both have different challenges and different methods to overcome those challenges.

This approach falls within the interpretivism research philosophy. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2003) explain that interpretivism advocates it necessary for the researcher to understand differences between humans and social actors. It is useful for the researcher to take this approach as each respondent may have a different reply to the questions, since they will be taking into consideration the human circumstances of their organisation and the changes it may be experiencing.

3.6 Time Horizons, Data Collection and Analysis

In order to answer the research aims, the interview had nine questions surrounding the topic in order to get a vast amount of information surrounding the topic. The researcher carried out seven interviews with some of the biggest multinationals in the industry including SAP and Google. It was made clear to each interviewee that any information obtained in the interview would be kept confidential and if any of them wanted to stay anonymous, that was no problem either. In order to get a balance across the whole industry, the researcher also interviewed a manager working in a relatively new organisation within the Industry established in 2005 that are still currently expanding, plus an IT consultant who gave a different view of the recruitment processes used in the industry. The researcher received some very detailed answers, allowing them to understand the methods and procedures each of the organisations use when recruiting new candidates. The author used two different forms of semi-structured interviews, phone interviews and face-to-face interviews. Three were carried out face to face, while four were carried out over the phone, due to location issues and convenience for the interviewees. The data obtained from the interviews, clarified which methods were the most popular and most effective, which in turn clarified which of the quadrants was the most popular within the IT sector when referring back to the FIT framework. It clarified which are the best methods to use in order to attract the best talent available. Results are analyzed in the findings section below.

There was both qualitative and quantitative secondary research carried out. The literature examined involved articles and books from experts in the area of HR and recruitment, reports were also used in order to find up to date statistics relevant to the study.

3.6.1 Sample Strategy

This is the richest and most invaluable form of data required for this study. As clarified above, seven interviews were carried out, mainly from IT organisations, however, the researcher carried out one interview with an IT consultant, to get broader and more general answers about the industry and its labour market. The six other interviews involved managers from IT companies. The breakdown when selecting candidates involved a number of different questions; the researcher was looking for three multinational organisations within the IT industry and three either well-established SME's or new entrants into the market, giving the researcher a good range of different organisations in the industry. This in turn allowed the researcher to see if the multinational organisations have a different approach to the SME's or new entrants in recruiting skilled labour. The multinational organisations chosen for this study involve Google, SAP, and Oracle, three very well-established global organisations within the IT industry. They were chosen due to their power and brand strength within the industry. On the other hand, the three other interviews involved two well-established organisations, Duolog which was founded in 1999, and Guidwire Software founded in 2001. The last interview carried out with an organisation, involved a relatively new player to the industry called Integrity Solutions, founded in 2005. It is currently staying very competitive within the labour market and hope to expand to the UK in the next 2-3 years. The IT consultant was interviewed in order to get an overview of the industry, the respondent gave a very in-depth analysis regarding the changes in the recruitment processes focusing on the last decade.

The interviews were carried out over a 2 month period being conducted from the start of July to the end of August. Four out of the seven interviews were carried out over

the phone, while the other three were carried out face-to-face. The face-to-face interviews took place in the office of the interviewee for their convenience, and were recorded with a phone belonging to the researcher. The phone interviews took place in quiet surroundings, which did not disturb it and were recorded by being put on loudspeaker with another phone recording the interview. At the start of every interview the researcher requested permission to record the interview in order to transcribe and refer back to it when analyzing the data. With all participants obliging, every interview was recorded and is available at request. The interviews lasted between 20-40 minutes asking questions focusing on the experiences of the organisation regarding their recruitment processes over the last decade, and their efforts to stay competitive within the labour market. All participants were asked similar questions depending on the organisations size and establishment. The researcher was able to alter the questions in order to suit each organisation appropriately, this allowed for more clarity concerning the questions asked.

In order to contact the managers who participated, the researcher used network connections and LinkedIn. The researcher joined a number of groups on LinkedIn posting a status looking for any assistance. The researcher received responses from three employees who worked in different IT organisations and were of great help for the research. Four other connections were found through network connections of family and friends, and were also of huge benefit for the topic being investigated.

3.7 Ethical Issues

The main ethical issues regarding this piece of research involves the confidentiality concerning some of the information provided by the managers that participated in the interviews. Any information they did not want recorded was scraped by mutual consent.

3.8 Limitations

This research will be limited in so far as, the researcher only carried out seven interviews. This is not an accurate account of the recruitment methods used for the whole IT industry in Ireland in 2013. Due to the short time period in which the researcher had to conduct the research, only limited information was gathered.

4.0 Findings

In this section, the researcher will discuss the data obtained from the interviews conducted. There was some interesting results obtained from the questions presented to the interviewees. The questions consisted of 9 core questions in which each interviewee was asked. Depending on their response, other questions may have been posed in order for them to expand on their answer. This was possible due to the fact that the interviews were semi-structured and allowed the interviewees to give any additional information they may have had.

7 respondents took part in the interviews, 6 were either managers or recruiters for their respective IT organisation, and 1 interview involved an IT recruitment consultant, who gave an overview of the methods used in the industry. 3 of the IT organisations were multinational organisations, globally recognized in the IT industry, Google, Oracle, and SAP. The other three participants are SME's and new entrants to the IT industry, Duolog, Integrity Solutions and Guidewire. Interviewing a range of different organisations allowed the researcher to acquire information and make comparisons between multinationals and SME's in the industry, regarding the different recruitment methods that allow them to stay competitive within the labour market. The researcher is aware that bias is possible due to misinterpretations of the questions; however, the author has tried to be as non-biased as possible when analyzing and presenting the findings.

4.1 Interview Questions Main Findings

The interview questions were compiled in order to find out the research aims. In order to do this the researcher asked questions surrounding each research aim. The researcher is using the research objectives as a framework for the interview questions.

The questions proposed to the interviewees were chosen as they were relevant to each of the research objectives.

1. What are the current recruitment methods used by organisations

The answers obtained from this question were similar in some respects. The organisations that were globally recognized such as Oracle and SAP used similar methods, while on the other hand the SME's Guidewire, Integrity Solutions and Duolog all used similar approaches too. Relating to the short term methods, the most common answer, which came out of all seven interviews, was the increased use of employee referrals. The Oracle interviewee made some important points regarding the increased focus on employee referrals, *"I think it's starting to become a much bigger thing now, because people are getting money for it. It gives them more of an incentive to do it, and if it's a friend of a friend, it's easier to make the sale because they can actually ask their friends 'what is it like to work in the organisation?'"* This shows that all organisations in the IT industry are looking for highly skilled labour using a short-term method of recruitment, relating it back to the FIT framework *"Go to where the fish are and use the right bait"*. The importance of referrals can really be seen in Google as they have set up referral clinics, which basically gives its own employee's awareness that it is there and the benefits that can come from it.

Following the trends of the social media era all six organisations clarified they use LinkedIn regularly, some more so than others but it is mainly used for proactively searching for suitable candidates. Google use it for headhunting as do Oracle, and SAP. One of the interviewees from Duolog stated *"LinkedIn has changed the recruitment industry forever"* a very strong statement, however, when I posed this as a question to the other interviewees they all agreed. From previous research carried

out we can see that Gale (2013) would support this statement by claiming, that it has fundamentally changed the way organisations recruit giving them a way of identifying and connecting with passive job seekers who they never had access to before. The interviewee from SAP actually said “*almost 20% of all recruitment is being done through LinkedIn*” It has proven to be extremely cost effective, providing quality candidates in a much shorter space of time.

Regarding the short-term methods such as job boards mentioned in our FIT framework, they are still used by 5 out of the 6 organisations interviewed, and the IT consultant also explained that job boards are still popular. Guidewire use job boards mainly for getting the brand out there, the same reason Weitzel et al (2009) explain Siemens use it. In contrast to SAP who actually find job boards as one of their main recruitment tools. The use of specialized IT job boards were mentioned in four of the interviews as they have become more prominent, Girard and Fallery (2010) have explained, they provide more targeted information. The 3 other respondents clarified they do not solely depend on job boards; they use them with a variety of other methods such as company websites, LinkedIn and employee referrals. Every organisation advertises jobs on their job website, some utilizing it better than others. Google focus an awful lot of attention on their website, while in contrast Integrity Solutions are not utilizing it to the best of their ability at all.

Headhunting has gotten a lot more popular as Google and Oracle and Guidewire have said it has become a lot easier to headhunt with LinkedIn, which in turn leads to organisations becoming more proactive looking for passive candidates.

Recruitment agencies have still got a role to play in the IT labour market. 4 out of the 6 organisations claimed they would use recruitment agencies, but only on very rare occasions.

The long-term method, in which all of the organisations use, is internships. Within the framework in quadrant 3, internships act as a long-term activity focused on lower skill levels in order to build their skill level up and bind them to the organisation. Internships are one of the biggest recruitment tools for Google and for Duolog, however, for different reasons. Google use internships all year round, in order to integrate graduates into the organisation, Duolog on the other hand use them due to the recruitment cycle in which they are currently in, hiring 1 to 2 people a year. All of the other organisations use them to a certain extent, but they are not their main recruitment tool. They are a great way of introducing graduates into an organisation; it also allows the organisation to see if the intern has potential, and in which case they will most likely be offered a job. None of the organisations have a graduate program, however, a number of them focus on hiring graduates.

SAP attend job fairs, and do university milk-rounds in order to attract potential candidates to their organisation, while, Guidewire's workforce are made up of 70% graduates or recent graduates.

The methods that look to have completely faded out of the IT labour market involve newspaper advertisements and word-of-mouth. Not one organisation claim to be using newspaper advertisements, which would back up the statement made by Weitzel et al (2009, P178) "*ads in newspapers tend to be too expensive and less effective*" as one of the participants said "*the money can be put to better use elsewhere*" Word-of-mouth was another method not mentioned at all throughout the interviews, it seems organisations have become a lot more proactive, and that impedes this method because it involves spreading the word and waiting for a response. In the war for talent, organisations cannot afford to do this. This supports the research

carried out by the CIPD (2013) in which the results showed less than 25% of IT organisations use word of mouth anymore, it seems to be falling every year.

All of these methods are mixed between short-term and long-term methods, some more effective than others, however, it depends on the organisation as we can see from these results. The overall results to the question shows that 'yes' social media has had a major impact on the whole of recruitment, however, it has not over taken the other methods used. Employee referrals, internships, job boards, are all still very much in use in the IT labour market. As Zaper (2011) previously said, it is offering an alternative method.

The consensus from the interviewees is that organisations want to use a mix of methods from quadrant 1 and quadrant 2 in the FIT framework. They like to be proactive, headhunting for skilled talent, while at the same time being able to look at those candidates that have applied for certain positions, whether it be through job boards, employee referrals, or company websites, attracting potential candidates as much as possible in every way possible.

2. The most effective methods

This question gave back some definitive answers, 4 out of the 7 interviews carried out, said that LinkedIn was their most effective method, and 3 out of the 5 claimed they use it along with employee referrals. . Integrity Solutions use headhunting and employee referrals as their most effective methods, using LinkedIn to some extent. Google claimed that their careers website is their most effective method, along with proactively sourcing candidates. SAP, claimed they do not have one most effective method and that it is a mix between a number of different methods including job boards, referrals, their own website and headhunting. They seem to have taken the

idea from Rees and French (2010) who explain, that organisations are enhancing their brand visibility and credibility by having a wider internet recruitment presence. The results of this question clarify that the most effective methods for recruiters at the moment within the IT labour market is LinkedIn and Employee Referrals. As Weitzel et al (2009) state “*It provides one of the best channels for reaching job seekers currently employed by another company*”. However, Google are an exception, due to their brand influence.

3. Have organisations changed their recruitment methods

Recruitment has gone through some radical changes, especially in the IT industry. Organisations have had to alter their methods and embrace the new social media aspect of recruitment. The data collected very much reflected the establishment of the organisations. The well-established multinational organisations went through much greater changes than the SME’s established in the late 90’s and early 00’s in order to stay ahead of the competition. Oracle went through some major changes, they explained the changes from resume letters to emails then to online job boards. Even though Google is still relatively new, it still made some extensive changes to stay ahead of the competition and compete at the very top. Google and Oracle both agreed, that proactively sourcing candidates has been the biggest change. Google justified this by maintaining that nobody had the tools to proactively search for candidates before the noughties. Oracle also made the claim that, before the recession people were applying for jobs directly, because of the opportunities that were available. Conversely, after the recession people were afraid to leave their jobs, this led to organisations proactively searching for talent, and with the tool such as LinkedIn having been introduced, it was much easier to reach passive candidates.

Even though job boards have become a traditional form of online recruitment, SAP are still getting results, and yes they have introduced a number of different alternative methods as well, but they have not changed their methods, they have just added to them.

The newer entrants to the industry, Duolog, Integrity Solution and Guidewire, have also gone through some changes. Guidewire on one hand had used job boards regularly, claiming they used to be very effective, however, with the introduction of LinkedIn job boards have become a less productive recruitment tool, and thus, they do not use it to the same extent. Duolog on the other hand declared they went through some major changes, going from a startup organisation using short-term methods such as newspaper advertisements and online job boards, the organisation began to grow, and they started to introduce the long-term methods such as internships. Then of course to keep up with the competition they had to embrace LinkedIn and use it to its full potential. Duolog has followed the trends since it was established and has been able to maintain a presence in the labour market. Integrity Solutions are the newest organisation in the industry, they have not gone through any major changes to date, starting off they used employee referrals and headhunting, and these methods are still their most effective methods to date. They have added a number of short-term methods such as job boards and long-term methods such as internships; however, their main recruitment methods have not changed since they were established in 2005. The researcher came to the decision that organisations have changed their recruitment methods to either stay competitive or stay ahead of the competition. All of the organisations know how important proactively sourcing candidates is, emphasized by the multinationals above. In the case of the SME's, Duolog, use LinkedIn for sourcing, Guidewire follow a similar suit and Integrity Solutions go headhunting for

candidates again with an aspect of LinkedIn involved. So the researcher has come to the conclusion that in the modern labour market, organisations cannot just “*Use a net and wait for the fish*” they must proactively “*Go to where the fish are and use the right bait*”.

4. What other methods have been considered

The focus was on the social media platforms, and the advancements in Web 2.0. The respondents discussed a number of new methods they were trying out in order to get ahead of the competition, especially the multinational organisations. Google mentioned the increased focus on employee referrals, something other organisations are taking advantage of at this present moment in time. The respondent gives reasons to back this up stating “*potential is there*”. Oracle discussed the other social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest, explaining, these sites are very informal but allows potential candidates to interact with current employees. This develops the interest of potential candidates very quickly. SAP also talked about new methods, which involve utilizing mobile recruitment. The respondent went onto say, people have access to the internet on their phones but bringing out recruitment apps is the next big thing. Duolog stressed the importance of LinkedIn as a recruitment tool, stating, we have used a number of methods that have failed, but LinkedIn has been very effective for us. Integrity Solutions are still slightly behind the multinational organisations, as they have mentioned LinkedIn as another method they have used, but also said, they have not used it to their full advantage. Guidewire talked about the methods that didn’t work, maintaining “*recruitment agencies are a lottery, it depends on the consultant you get*”. Thus, the IT consultant also mentioned methods that were

unsuccessful, such as magazines and newspapers as she goes on to say “*Now days I don’t even think about using them*”.

The replies of this question led to some interesting findings. As it shows that most organisations in the IT industry are trying to utilize everything social media and technology has to offer, especially the multinational organisations. They want to develop a competitive edge, which in turn will lead to them succeeding in the war for talent, recruiting the best candidates in the labour market.

5. How does an organisation make sure they get the best people for the job

To get the right person for the job, all organisations have procedures in place. Each respondent gave a brief overview of their procedures, some more rigorous than others. For example, Google have seven stages, including the candidate’s application going through a number of committees, the overall process takes between 50-90 days before anyone is hired. Due to the vast numbers employed by Google, it is vital they have appropriate procedures in place. All other organisations have procedures in place, however, some are not as rigorous as this. Look at Integrity Solutions, they certainly do not hire the same numbers as Google and so their hiring procedures are not as intense. Holding two on site interviews one with a department manager, and another with a technical director of the organisation. This is then followed by an interview with a department manager and a director to see if the candidate is the right fit, before a candidate is chosen, this is still quite a rigorous procedure. There needs to be a lot of background work done on the candidate, as one of the respondents state “*You have to know the person you are hiring, you can never do enough background checks*” that respondent also made another very important point regarding the whole process by maintaining “*The process is as good as the weakest link*”. Explaining that in order to

get the best people for the job, the methods used must be testing the individual on the skills and qualifications needed. Supporting this statement the respondent from Guidewire explained that no matter how difficult it is to find the right people, it is vital that the standard of people being hired does not drop *“Employees expect to be working with other talented and focused employees”*. As another respondent from Google made the point, those working in the organisation expect to be working with others of a similar quality. The IT consultant made the point that not all organisations have the most rigorous procedures, it depends on how long the company has been around and whether the recruitment manager is experienced.

One of the main concerns mentioned by three organisations involves hiring someone, who then decides to leave after a number of weeks. 2 respondents emphasized the cost of this, especially if they are coming from abroad. The respondent from Guidewire explained, after putting them up in accommodation, giving them travel expenses and sending them off to the US for training for 4 weeks, with their wages on top, there is still no guarantee that they will stay. This could end up costing the organisation a few hundred thousand, a very costly mistake to make if the wrong person is hired. The respondent from Duolog supports this as he said, the cost is not far off \$1 Million and then you are back to square one again. All of the procedures that have been put in place for all organisations show that everyone is very cautious about who they hire nowadays, gone are the days where you know someone and within a week you have a job. Everyone has very rigorous procedures in place to make sure they are getting the best and most suited candidate available to them.

6. Is recruitment a main focus

5 of the respondents emphasized that recruitment is a main focus for them. The multinational organisations underlined how important it was for them to continue hiring all year round. The respondent in Google used the term that there is a “*massive push*” at the moment for recruitment, hiring vast number through a number of different mediums. Oracle maintained they hire all year round for their European offices.

A surprising result that came from this question was that Guidewire, only one of the SME’s claimed that recruitment is a main focus for them at the moment. They are currently growing at 30% a year and are still expanding at the moment. However, both Duolog and Integrity Solutions both said that recruitment is not a main focus of the organisations. What this is telling us is that the SME’s have not got as much focus on recruitment because of the size of their organisations. Integrity Solutions has 50 employees and at the moment have no jobs available. This implies that they cannot hire anyone at this moment in time and Duolog are in a very similar position only hiring one or two people a year, both organisations are very limited when it comes to recruiting new candidates because they are not expanding. Look at the multinational organisations, they have offices and facilities all over the world, and in order to keep filling positions worldwide recruitment is a necessity. Guidewire are currently growing at 30% a year and are still expanding at the moment, so in order to facilitate the new job vacancies that arise, recruitment has to be a main focus. As can be seen above, it depends on the size of the organisation, recruitment becomes a main focus when the organisation is consistently recruiting or expanding, if an organisation is not expanding then not many job vacancies will be available, leading to managers focusing on other issues within the organisation. This is having an effect on the

quality of people hired by the SME's that are not focusing on recruitment, as the shortage is not really affecting the multinational organisations, while some of the SME's are struggling to find quality talent.

With Integrity Solutions looking to expand into the UK in the next 2-3 years, they must start following the multinationals, and focusing on their recruitment because, they must have talented people ready to step in to important positions once they begin their expansion.

7. Is there a large turnover rate

All of the organisations gave back the same answer, in saying that there was not a large turnover rate in their organisation. SAP mentioned they have a turnover rate of about 5-6%. Due to the vast amount of different areas employees can move into, they tend to stay within the organisation for a long period of time. This applies to all multinationals, because they can offer the opportunity to travel to one of their foreign branches, or even just offer a different area of work. However, SME's do not have a large turnover rate either, Integrity Solutions have a 97% retention rate with their staff, stating *"We know our employees are our most valuable asset"*. Duolog and Guidewire did mention that it is difficult to compete with the multinational organisations such as Google and Facebook, but the respondent from Guidewire also said that it works both ways, some working in Google decide they need a change and will seek work elsewhere. The consensus is that IT organisations do not have a large turnover rate, some SME's may lose employees to the multinationals but they all seem to treat their staff very well, which in turn creates loyalty from the employee towards the organisation. One of the respondents quoted *"People are mainly staying*

in their organisations because there are always new internal opportunities arising”.

This has definitely become the norm for multinationals.

8. With the current skills shortage in the technology industry how do organisations deal with the competition from other multinationals

When discussing the war for talent one of our respondents explained they were struggling to compete due to the American organisations setting up here in Ireland, saying *“We are finding it very hard to compete with multinationals”* however, all of the SME’s had the same response giving the metaphor *“Would you rather be a big fish in a small pond, or a small fish in a big pond”* One of the respondents said *“we are competing just fine, as, people can see the growth potential here and are excited to get onboard”*. The SME’s communicated how they must recruit from abroad due to the amount of IT organisations arriving into Ireland. All respondents explained that they are very happy to recruit from abroad because it adds to the culture of the organisation. One of the respondents explained *“they make the place great, bringing their own culture”* All of the organisations described their offices as very diverse, there is not enough qualified Irish IT labour to fill all of the job vacancies in the IT sector in Ireland.

The multinationals on the other hand are in a very strong position, yes there is competition between the multinationals but they have a lot more to offer potential candidates than SME’s, such as opportunities working abroad, incentives such as free meals, free access to the gym, free daycare facilities, all of these little incentives on top of a very competitive salary can be very attractive for a potential candidate, as one of the respondents said *“we are in quite a strong position at the moment”* . The brand name is also a key aspect for the multinationals to attract potential candidates, and

that is one area SME's cannot compete. The SME's on the other hand stay competitive by focusing a lot more on the culture of the organisation, maintaining employees will be given recognition and rewards for their work, as they say employees can either blend into the crowd in a multinational or they can stand out from the crowd and be recognized and appreciated in an SME. They may not be able to offer the same incentives, but an employee will become a part of a community and will be treated very well, and appreciated for their work. No matter what each organisation is offering they are all finding it tough, however, as Chambers et al (1998) states "*Better talent is worth fighting for*" and due to the current war for talent, every organisation needs to be fighting for the best talent available.

9. Are organisations struggling to find the right talent

Surprisingly only one of our respondents claimed to be struggling stating "*We are finding it very hard to get good people*" On the other hand, organisations that have put major focus on recruitment are finding the right people, a respondent claimed they have over achieved, due to the fact that they have invested heavily in recruitment. The multinationals described the situation as a "challenge", however, as one of the respondents claimed "*we always manage to get them it just takes a lot longer*" The challenge is to attract the best talent before your competitors do, and as our respondent in Google maintained they are putting more emphasis on sourcing in order to find the best talent ahead of their competitors. The respondent from SAP stated "*It's a struggle but we can cope*".

The researcher can clarify that after analyzing the responses, those organisations that have focused on recruitment as a main function for their organisation are the ones that

are finding the right talent. This shows that investing heavily in recruitment will eventually pay off.

4.2 Research Objectives

4.2.1 Illustrate the appropriate recruitment methods available to IT organisations.

The first questions above relate give us a very accurate response regarding our first research objective. A number of different methods are used in the industry, some more appropriate than others, however, it depends on how the organisation uses the recruitment tool. For Example, Duolog have seen continuous success when recruiting through LinkedIn as a lot of quality candidates can be found. SAP do not use one method as their most effective, they spread them out using a variety of methods to bring in the best talent. Then of course there is Google, the dominant force in the IT industry, they use their careers website, as they have little trouble attracting candidates, in fact they actually have an excessive amount of CV's sent in to them. However, the best candidates want to work for the best organisations, and for that reason, the best of the best will always be drawn towards the industry leaders such as Google.

4.2.2 Illustrate why organisations are using these methods

The questions above gave back some vital information in finding out this research objective. In order to answer this question the researcher went investigating as to why organisations were changing their methods of recruitment, and what other methods have been considered. The results as mentioned above led to organisation moving

away from those methods in quadrant one of the framework, and are moving towards methods in quadrant 2. Proactively looking for candidates instead of reacting to job advertisements, as one of the respondents stated when on the topic of job boards “*the fact that it’s not proactive is disturbing because if you are just posting and praying, and you have a hiring manager breathing down your neck, they want to see you doing proactive research than just posting an advertisement and waiting*”. Two main factors that have been cited by the respondents involve the easy access social media platforms have created and the war for talent.

Social media platforms including LinkedIn has provided organisations with access to a much larger pool of job seekers, but more importantly, it has opened up access to passive applicants, making it easier to find potential candidates. Now days LinkedIn especially has become one of the first places employers and recruiters go when recruiting for a new position.

The next factor is the war for talent, it’s very simple for IT organisations, if they do not proactively search for candidates they simply will not get the quality and skill level needed. The shortage of skilled IT labour has given graduates and passive job seekers a lot of bargaining power. This in turn has led to organisations making the changes to their recruitment process in order to attract the best talent available.

The researcher has come to the conclusion that in order to stay competitive organisations especially the SME’s needed to keep up with the changes. As the data illustrates, the multinational organisations are a step ahead of the SME’s when it comes to new recruitment methods. There seems to be a different attitude between the multinational organisations and the SME’s, as the multinationals are always looking for ways to stay ahead of their competitors, while SME’s are only looking at ways to stay competitive in the labour market.

4.2.3 How are organisations dealing with the shortage of talent in the IT labour market

The conclusion in which the researcher has come to is that organisations need to put a major focus on recruitment if they want to get the best talent available. Due to the war for talent the labour market is ruthless as a respondent said *“Its dog eat dog world out there”* everyone for themselves. The multinationals are in a much stronger position than the SME’s, however, there is still major competition between them for available talent. The assumption would have been that SME’s are finding it very difficult to compete, however, the research shows that SME’s are not struggling too badly, they are finding it very tough but as mentioned by all three SME’s, people can get lost in a multinational organisation, whereas in a smaller company they can be part of the culture, this can attract a number of potential candidates from multinationals. Nevertheless if the SME’s begin to expand they will need to follow suit regarding the approach they will need in order to attract talented labour. Overall, organisations are managing to deal with the shortages reasonably well. If they are unable to find the suitable talent in Ireland they look abroad, especially in Brazil, as one of the respondents claimed *“the Brazilians are brilliant engineers and are delighted to be given the opportunity to work abroad”*. So yes there is a shortage in the IT labour market at the moment, however, if you invest in recruitment, using a mix of short-term and long-term approaches, whilst looking on a global scale you will find the talent required.

4.2.4 How have organisations changed their recruitment process to stay competitive

From the data collected at the interviews, it is clear that organisations have had to make some key changes to their recruitment process if they are to stay competitive within the labour market. As mentioned above social media has played a major part and organisations have altered their recruitment methods in order to utilise the most effective method, which is LinkedIn. Organisations have begun to focus more on the methods within the framework in quadrant 2, these methods are more proactive methods, and involve the recruiter chasing the candidate. In order to do this, recruiters are using LinkedIn, it has become one of the most powerful recruitment tools in the market and this can be clarified from the data collected, allowing recruiter to advertise jobs and to proactively search for passive candidates. Sourcing for candidates in this way has become the norm in the IT labour market, as talented labour is hard to come by due to the shortages. It can be seen that those organisations that have invested heavily in their recruitment processes are reaping the benefits snatching up the well-qualified, talented labour. The researcher has come to the conclusion that there is two main factors as to how the organisations have changed their recruitment processes, the first is their methods, organisations still use a mix of methods to attract candidates, however, they are now focusing on the social media platforms a lot more, as that is where they will reach their target audience. This in turn keeps the organisation very competitive in the labour market. The other major factor involves the heavy emphasis currently being put on recruitment, this can be clearly seen by the multinationals, however, the heavy investment in it is paying off, as, none of the multinationals are struggling to find talent, the process is just taking a longer period of time.

5.0 Conclusion

The researcher has found that there are three main themes that have been frequently mentioned throughout the study from both academics and interviewees. The themes are related to the results and the overall conclusion of the topic of research.

5.1 Main Themes

5.1.1 Social Media's Effects on Recruitment Methods

Social media has been mentioned as a theme throughout the research and as it was mentioned by one of the respondents, has changed the recruitment industry forever. As can be seen from the research carried out, organisations are using it to their full advantage. With the access to reach out to passive candidates and to effectively source for suitable candidates, organisations utilizing it are reaping the benefits. Organisations are moving away from posting jobs and waiting for a response, instead they are proactively searching for candidates, due to the social media platforms. Relating it back to Weitzel et al (2009) framework, organisations have started focusing on those methods in quadrant 2 "*Go to where the fish are and use the right bait*" as those methods are the most proactive methods available.

Regarding the access social media has granted to recruiters, it opened up the doors to passive candidates. Especially in the IT industry due to the shortage, passive candidates are valuable for any organisation, and attracting them can be a major bonus. Organisations have specifically started targeting passive candidates, as they are the candidates with the most experience in the industry.

5.1.2 War for Talent

Another major theme that is unavoidable within this piece of research is the war for talent. At this current moment in time the war for talent in the IT labour market is at an all-time high due to the shortages. As can be seen from the access granted to recruiters of approaching passive candidates, social media is a main factor in this war for talent. For this reason organisations have begun to proactively look for quality talent, in order to get them before competitors do, or in the case of passive candidates, offer them better incentives to attract them to join their organisation. Supported by OVP (2013) the war for talent is cutthroat, as companies have to pursue candidates rather than the other way around. This was seen throughout the interview process, as the SME's were not having the same success as the multinationals in attracting the best talent. The war for talent is of great concern to all of the organisations in the IT industry at the moment and it has led to recruiters attempting to find new ways of attracting the best talent from their competitors. However, with the current rapid growth of the industry, the war for talent will only increase, as more jobs will become available with inadequate talent being able to fill them.

5.1.3 Focus on Recruitment Processes

The research has shown that those organisations that have invested heavily in recruitment have seen the benefits. However, the reason organisations have started to focus so much on recruitment has been down to the access they now have to passive candidates via LinkedIn and other social media platforms, and the war for talent. In order to get the best talent they must go looking for it and in order to go looking for it, they must focus on finding the right places to look, questions such as, whether to look abroad or within Ireland, or even whether to look for graduates or passive candidates. In order to seek out the best available talent organisations must invest in their

recruitment tools. If that means getting a premium account on LinkedIn or on Monster then that is where they will benefit. In order to do this they must make sure they are using the right tools and looking in the right places. It could be seen from the interviews carried out, those organisations that invested heavily and had a strong focus on recruitment were getting results, while those that weren't were struggling to find good talent.

The title of the research was to “Investigate the recruitment processes in a rapidly growing technology industry to examine how organisations can be more competitive in the labour market” the researcher has carried out an in-depth examination of the research topic. After investigating the recruitment processes within the technology industry, and examining the war for talent, the consensus from carrying out both primary and secondary research that LinkedIn is the most powerful recruitment tool in the industry at present, for both employers and job seekers. All seven respondents conclusively agreed LinkedIn is an invaluable tool in order to stay competitive in the labour market. According to the research carried out, in order for companies to be more competitive in the labour market, they need to make recruitment a main focus within their organisation. They need to be able to utilize LinkedIn to its full potential, which in turn leads to the best way to win the war for talent in the current labour market,.

5.2 Validity of Research

The researcher believes that the research question and the research objectives set out have been achieved to justify the validity of the research. The dissertation and the data

obtained verify this. Also that the methodology used caused the analysis of the data to be an accurate account of how organisations stay competitive in the IT labour market.

5.3 Reliability of Research

The data obtained shows that organisations had to change their recruitment methods in order to stay competitive within the IT labour market. The affects social media has had on the recruitment world was concentrated on by a number of respondents, thus making this a reliable piece of research.

5.4 Limitations of Research

As previously mentioned, the research focuses on the IT industry, and IT labour market, therefore it is not an accurate account on recruitment as a whole. There was time constraints which limited the amount of research carried out. As LinkedIn plays such a major part in this research, the researcher was unable to acquire an interview with a representative from LinkedIn as the representative was unable to fit in an interview due to time constraints. Looking back on the research, my research objectives could have been more focused, which in turn would have made my interview questions more concentrated around the research topic.

5.5 Considerations for Future Research

After investigating the area in-depth, this research would suggest that the social media era is currently on going, however, with the IT industry moving at such a rapid pace, major changes could occur in the next few years. For example, as SAP was

investigating, the app era could be next and new innovative ways of recruitment may be introduced. What is for certain is that the future for IT talent is very bright, with colleges reinforcing it with appropriate courses, the graduates will be very well qualified in their area of IT. This will intensify the competition for talent even more. There is constant changes throughout the industry and the ability to adapt to the changes is going to play a major part in the future when recruiting the best talent, as those that attract the talent first, get first choice, all other competitors are then playing catch up.

If this research was carried out again in another five years, there is a very strong chance new and more effective methods of recruitment will have been introduced, due to the growth of the IT industry. If the growth of the industry continues, this in turn will lead to the war for talent becoming even more competitive, thus, leading to organisations having to alter their recruitment methods yet again to stay competitive.

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Appendix 1

Recruitment Processes Interview Questions

1. *What are the current recruitment methods used by the organisation? Are they short-term methods (Press + Media Advertisements, headhunting) or long-term methods (Internships, Graduate Programs)?*
Why do you use these methods?
2. *How have they changed since the organisation was established?*
Why did they change? E.g. Before and after the recession
3. *What other methods have you considered using?*
Why these ones, why have you not used them?
4. *What is the company's most effective method at the moment? Why?*
How is that measured?
5. *How does the organisation make sure they are getting the best people for the job? Is there a rigorous procedure?*
6. *Is recruitment a main focus for the organisation?*
What challenges do you face in trying to get the right people?
(Skills shortage or abundance of talent available)
7. *Is there a large turnover rate in the organisation? If so why*
8. *With the current skills shortage in the technology industry, how does the organisation deal with the competition from other multinational organisations?*
9. *As an international organisation, are you still struggling to find the right talent?*