

Influence of social media on job seeking behavior of post graduate students –understanding recruiter’s perspective

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this dissertation is to investigate use of social networking sites by recruiters and job seeking post graduate students, highlighting factors considered by employers while selecting or rejecting candidates and methods post graduate students could implement to influence recruiters through social media.

Methodology: A qualitative research methodology was utilized for this research. Request for research interviews were emailed to 10 recruiters whose email address was known and personalized LinkedIn messages were sent to 60- recruiters and talent recruitment specialists. There were 9 responses obtained in the specified time frame. For interviews of post graduate students 25 participants were invited by emails. Wherein, 15 participants communicated their availability in stipulated time period. Template analysis approach was used to deduce the findings.

Findings: The findings suggested that there is disparity in use of social media between employers and job seeking students. It is found that job seeking students who are actively utilizing social networking sites for communicating and sharing personal experiences are not completely equipped while utilizing these mediums for seeking employment.

Limitation: There are a few limitations to this research which involves gathering more responses from recruiters and targeting a specific industry for conducting analysis if there were no time restrictions. A mixed methodology might uncover different outcome.

Value: This research would add substantial value to all job seeking students who are enabling themselves to become employable. Career consultants could utilize knowledge obtained through this study to understand areas where post graduate students need to be trained. Nonetheless, study could enable recruiters to avoid from overlooking talented candidates who might not be completely equipped with utilizing SM platforms for getting hired. Methodology of research helped gather extensive information and attempted to fully comprehend different views obtained from participants.

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List of Abbreviations

HR	– Human resources
HRM	– Human resource manager
PG students	– Post graduate students
SNS	– Social networking sites
SN	– Social networks

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Amazingly social media has become very powerful tool for entrepreneurs, job seekers, celebrities or anyone who is planning to advance their career. There are millions of people connecting with each other through social networking sites like LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook. The major distinguishing factor between the traditional networking platforms and social networking channels is that social networks are working 24 hours a day for 365 days connecting you to all kinds of people across the world; In addition an individual can expand scope and quality of his network like never before. Analogous to traditional networking method of meeting people face to face and connecting with them, networking online is an important aspect for seeking professional enhancement. At present, considering the huge amount of information present- jobs found, connections made, self advertising and business transaction possible; social networks cannot be paralleled or corresponded by any other means or method. Either an individual can participate on this platform or be willing to be left behind in the world of virtualization and technology. To up their game all individuals need to collaborate, communicate and form connections over social media. (Graveli and Fait, 2017)

Presumably everyone acknowledges that the mediums used for hiring and recruiting talents has evolved over the years. It was found in a research that almost 79% of job seekers utilize social media for searching jobs (Glassdoor). For job seekers the former method of searching ads in newspaper, magazines or obtaining interviews through campus placements is long gone. Moreover recruitment through social media has grown with 84% organizations already using this method of hiring. Statistics that 80% recruiters are affirming that with social media they have more access to passive candidates. 70% hiring managers confirmed of hiring through social media. (Kunsmann, 2019)

Nonetheless 91% employers utilize social media to hire potential candidates today (careerArc). Astonishingly employers are claiming social media marketing as the most required skill in human resource management by 2020, preceded by predictive modeling and data analysis (Kunsmann, 2019). Studies are demonstrating that social media is the place where maximum

people are spending their time; in fact some specify that time spent is almost equal to 5 years of an individual's life.

There are astonishing figures mentioned by Durfy (2018) which confirm that 73%(CareerProfiles) of millennial found their last position through social media. So it is prudent to target social media if someone is looking to hire the most motivated workforce and recruit people from someplace where they spend most of their time. Furthermore an article discussed by Taylor (2019) published in The Irish times, 90% of Irish people between the age of 16 and 24 use social media, additionally EU statistics demonstrated 60% of Irish adults using social media. Nowadays most recruitment is taking place through online databases as compared to the traditional method via newspapers or recruitment agencies. This research attempts to find the impact social media has on recruitment process of the recruiters and the degree to which they utilize social media as a part of evaluating and sourcing candidates. Also this study attempts to find from students how effective social media has been for them while searching jobs.

Taking into consideration the continuous addition of features and modifications to the social networking sites this research tries to establish how recruiters scrutinize from the vast breadth of information available on the SNS sites given that they are constrained in time availability while evaluating huge pool of applications. Also this research tries to understand various aspects from the recruiter's point of view which affect a post graduate student positively or negatively. This research would focus only on elements considered significant by recruiters for determining employability of postgraduate students.

Purpose of research

The chief approach for conducting this research is to retrieve how job seekers with post graduate degree can utilize social media platforms to best of their potential in their job search efforts. It inspects which social media platforms are most targeted and utilized by employers while advertising and searching for candidates and how these platforms are used by employers and job seekers.

The aim of this research is to examine the use of social media in HR recruitment from both employee and employer perspective. We examine a number of key matters. Are job seekers intelligently using social media while applying for job vacancies? Where could a job seeker possibly change his approach for searching jobs? To investigate how job seekers perceive social media is being utilized by recruiters?

To support the data collection process and answer the main question -objectives were formed.

- Use of social media by employers and post graduate job seekers in Ireland.
- The first sub objective intends to find which recruitment method- social or traditional is being preferred by recruiters of Irish organizations presently and how they are using social media as a recruitment tool.
- The second sub objective is to investigate use of social media as part of recruitment process: how job seekers perceive social media is being utilized by recruiters and what recruiters are doing differently.
- The third sub objective is to understand benefits and limitation of using social media in recruitment.

In order to attain the above objectives qualitative method was employed for collecting data from both recruiters and job seeking post graduate students which facilitated the researcher to determine the key issues through exploratory technique. Thus, through this method extensive data could be obtained from both recruiters and post graduate students.

Although similar research has been undertaken by few authors like Slovensky and Ross (2011), Thomas (2012) and Reger (2014); however these papers covered research from recruiter's perspective. Further, mentioned researchers all had utilized qualitative approach to this study; as technology in this field keeps evolving every year and only quantitative approach might limit researcher due to restricted knowledge.

The dissertation consists of six chapters:

After the first chapter Introduction, the Literature is reviewed where viewpoints of various authors and researchers are brought together to understand their philosophy and findings. The

theory presents understanding of social media and how it evolved into Human resource practices. Additionally, perspectives of authors have been collaborated to understand social media as a recruitment tool, followed by overview about the top three social media sites in recruitment. The subsection elaborates literature presented by other researchers on SM applications. Finally an attempt to understand the legal implication of using publically available SM platforms is established.

Chapter three presents the methodology used for achieving aims and objectives of this research. Then the strategies, research choices made and time horizons are conferred. The chapter concludes with method of data collection and analysis.

First segment of chapter four presents the themes and findings obtained from semi structured interviews of Recruiters which would achieve the first sub objective. In the next part findings obtained from interviews of job seeking post graduate students is determined which would help attain the second sub objective. In the final part titled discussions –all objectives are explained in collaboration with literature reviewed.

In finishing part conclusion summarizes main findings obtained from the research conducted and provides recommendation for further studies.

Final touch to this research is given by attaching references and appendences.

Chapter 2- Literature Review

2.1 Social media and -what it does not include

Social media is a system for communication which enables its users -that could be an organization, individual or groups to create and exchange user produced content (Crompton and sautter, 2011; Din, Anuaromer and Dahlan, 2015 and Graveli and Fait, 2017). Social media has often been associated with the term web 2.0, this terminology was initially developed in 2004, emphasizing the way in which users and software developers had modified how World Wide Web was being used; which is no longer only a platform where content and applications are being created and broadcasted, but rather a platform on which multiple users work collaboratively (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010).

In an effort to classify social media into coherent categories and types they had classified basis media presence or richness & self presentation/ Self disclosure. (Matdin, Anuaromer and Dahlan, 2015).

Social presence/ media Richness	Self presentation/ Self disclosure	
	High	Low
High	Virtual social world	Virtual game
Medium	Social networking sites (e.g. twitter, LinkedIn)	Content community (e.g. YouTube)
Low	Blog	Collaborative projects (Wikipedia)

Source : Kaplan and Haenlein (2010)

For a source to be considered as user produced content which includes ways in which people use social media: Primarily it should be broadcasted on a public website or should be available to a group of people openly (Din et al., 2015). Secondly this content should have been generated outside the scope of professional or work environments. And lastly it should reflect creative Endeavour (for instance publishing a copy of newspaper post in the blog without any modifications or alterations). (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010)

2.2 Social Media and Human resource management (HRM)

With social media penetrating into various industries like (marketing, supply chain and Entrepreneurship) (Crompton, Diane and Sautter; Ellen, 2011), it has now replaced the traditional methods for screening and recruiting in HRM. With paradigm shift now research is being conducted to understand whether this movement towards social media is bringing competitive advantage and new processes to HRM (Olivas-Lujan, Miguel, 2013). Previous to introduction of technology using social media, recruiters used to focus on face to face interview and screening and short listing through cold calling. During such times organizations used to rely on job boards, agencies, councilors and recommendation. In recent study it was found that almost 83% of organizations are now using social media as an element of their recruitment (Blacksmit and Poeppelman, 2014).

2.3 Online recruitment process and use of social media

Online process for recruiting postgraduates has been a typical feature for many multinationals with online applications; website and talent management systems for attracting the top university graduates for job Offers. Utilizing social media is seen as a cost effective and convenient system for recruiting postgraduate students for such firms (Dery, Transley and hafermalz, 2014). Increasingly companies are utilizing social mediums like, facebook, twitter, microblogging (Jin, Tang and Zhou, 2016) and content community to enhance recruitment activities and attract applicants to their website and online applications. This phase can also be

termed as the fishing phase in which the applicants apply to many online applications and organizations and await a response. During this phase social media is utilized to answer simple question and provide support with their online applications. In the next stage the applicants who are selected are encouraged to engage through social media with the firm for understanding if they are a good fit and facilitate them to be better acquainted about the firm. During these phases participants also try to build networks with the existing employs through social media platforms. Participants get to know the organization better through the open communities, blog posts and such discussions (Dery, Transley and hafermalz, 2014). Today, social media is facilitating recruiters to entice candidates who might not even be looking for an opportunity. Earlier it was a difficult task to reach a person who would not be actively involved in a job search process. Maharani (2018) mentions that the chief three networks which are influential for jobseeker and employer alike are LinkedIn, Facebook and twitter (Maharani, 2018). Enterprises are utilizing this platform for intimating candidates of their requirements through categorizing data from online profiles like LinkedIn (Shahani-Denning, Patel and Zide, 2017). For example if a student logged into their profile they might find suggestions based on their previous search or skill set. (Blacksmit and Poepelman, 2014).

2.4 Objective of using Social Media by hirers

Past SM research has given researchers indication that SM platforms can help give them a glance into the applicant's behavior and personality. Considering the depth of information that can be found on social media through twitter includes tweets, videos, retweets, favourite tweets, personal comments; Facebook includes status updates, profile pictures, groups joined, comments of friends, number of friends, likes etc; LinkedIN includes work history, education history, connections, designation of the connections, companies followed, blogs published; it is believable that the HR practitioners and the hiring managers might access the social media accounts to access personality and probability of being hired. An organization constitutes of personals and individuals who are prone to access the personality and behavior of one another. As mentioned by the socio analytic theory, people possessing different personality traits are inspired to take on different behavioral approach to enhance their values in the organization.

Individuals could either possess getting along or getting ahead behaviors. Both of these traits can be related positively to a person's job performance, as both of these traits depict an individual's ability to either involve in task or contextual performance. (Rosen et al., 2014)

Blacksmit and Poeppelman,(2014) have mentioned a technical recruiter saying that he utilized Google+ for performing keyword search on the resumes being posted on the site. Technologies use search engines and social media to track pool of qualifying individuals who are applying. As quoted by Maharani (2018), social media is majorly used in two ways by employers- 1) For recruiting and attracting talented individuals 2) to carry out background checks on post graduation students for confirming information provided by them. It can be further used by HR for influencing candidates, by creating an image of the company which in turn helps attract talented postgraduates. For organizations social media can operate as a grapevine for keeping potential recruits linked to their classmates (Harbold and Douma, 2013). Social media enables enterprises to receive tens and thousands of candidate curricula thus saving on cost. Thus this has caused increase in the number of companies using social media for their recruitment. (Gravili, Ginevra, Fait and Monica, 2017).

However Wahba and Elmanadily (2018) provides a distinct view by stating that with rise in the group of qualified and highly educated candidates who are chasing a decreasing pool of jobs utilizing social media has become imperative for categorizing students and sorting them basis few other aspects that social media platforms provide.

Another alternative view is to diminish noise caused by e-recruitment sites- Lujan, Miguel, Bondarouk, Tanya (2017) affirms that almost 81 percent of job offers are broadcasted online. However they further emphasize that although the market is more transparent than before but it has become noisier. This platform has led to decrease in self regulation by candidates leading to large pools of unqualified candidates applying for the job openings.

2.5 Personal characteristics

The big five personality traits have been used as a measure of personality in various studies carried out by the researchers. These traits can be classified as openness to experience,

Conscientiousness, extroversion, Agreeableness, and neuroticism, later on a measure of narcissism was included as a subset of personality traits, this trait is considered to correlate negatively to the organization applicable outcomes relative to task and contextual performance. Extroversion however is measured on the basis of how gregarious a person is as those individuals who obtain high scores on the scale of extroversion are considered to be “sociable, outgoing, friendly, and active”. Agreeableness relates to friendliness and likability (Iddekinge et al., 2013). The traits associated to this personality are “trusting, tolerant, flexible, cooperative and good natured”. Conscientiousness refers to being thorough, organized and responsible (Back et al., 2010) .Traits associated to such personalities are intelligence, imaginative, artistic, curious and broad mindedness. Neuroticism is associated with the characteristics of anxiety, depression, anxiousness and worry. (Stevens and Kristof, 1995)

2.6 Self Representation

Online media has led to individualization and self representation by launching new practices of self communication, this method allows individuals to have an online profile either anonymous like Myspace or specific like Facebook and LinkedIn (Olivas-Lujan, Miguel R., Bondarouk, Tanya (2017). The most significant product a postgraduate student would sell or market is himself. Personal brand is a concept of generating a positive image as an employable candidate. Personal brands are created based on how someone is perceived by public. Branding is established based on how the student is able to arrange his aspirations, interest and skills instead of simply mentioning a set of skills and capabilities.

As similar to products it is important for the person to differentiate himself strategically based on personality, values, strengths and interests. This personal brand should customize him in a way that it is marketable to the desired audience by creating positive perceptions for instance he might present himself through conservative profile, professional attire and physical appearance. After creating his brand a student must do an audit on his current Brand which is presented for the others to be viewed. His image should be consistent with the various accounts like Facebook, Twitter & LinkedIn, websites, blogs and the professional bios and any

other for communicated to the employer. This personal branding must exemplify both need for employment and personal promotion.(Tifferet and Yavetz, 2018)

2.7 Role of social networking sites in Recruitment process

Social media platforms like Facebook, LinkedIN, Instagram, snapchat, Pinterest and Youtube (Nagendra,2014), are channels for daily communication and sharing of ideas which have pervaded the education sector and became important information centers (Diale and Wessels, 2017). Surveys of HR practitioners showed SM sites have been extensively used in screening processes. Rosen, Solomon, McLarty, Esken and Taylor (2018) analysis of subjects in their research established that subjects who were high in extroversion would have many followers, group pictures and comments aimed at different people. Similarly an agreeable person would send congratulatory message and displayed empathy through status. Whereas highly conscientious people had more professional profiles, followed organizations and companies and followed news on their social networks. Individuals who weighed high in openness had appealing profile photos, displayed interesting photos of activities and travel. Neuroticism traits were displayed through posting critical comments about oneself, displayed negative feelings towards life and in general (Rosen et al., 2014).

Researchers have felt that applicant's personality is of prime importance when it comes to making decisions regarding selection. Experienced raters could accurately surmise an applicant's personality. In particular, they hypothesized stating that social networking sites have plenty quality and quantity information which would help raters make accurate deduction about personality through online profiles. Trained raters could also differentiate among high and low performers through profile analysis. (Zide, Elman and Denning, 2014)

SNS permits recruiters to mine from a pool of high skilled passive or active candidates. Active candidates are applicants who could be looking for a job currently whereas passive candidates are contenders who are not actively searching for a job and are already employed but could bring value to an organization if the conditions are favorable to them. (Sameen, 2013)

It was noted that possibility of prejudice on Facebook occurs when suitable applicants are rejected on basis of profile picture. Moreover it was observed that hiring manager consider factors like gender, age, race and demographics while selecting candidates (Caers and Castelyns, 2011)

2.7.1 Facebook

Social media technologies influence the socialization process of the young people (Herbold and Douma, 2013), impacting on their attitude and personalities. dimingo, Aranda and Fuentes(2017), suggest that Facebook makes it possible to analyze the fundamentals of personality like narcissism, extraversion, self-esteem and shyness. For instance extroversion is characteristic (Chou, Hammond and Johnson, 2013) to risk behavior, socialization, impulsive behavior and carelessness. Few other researchers found that high use of facebook was indicative of low self esteem as they find comfort in communicating through social networking platforms (Domingo, Aranda and Fuentes, 2017 and Bodroza and Jovanovic, 2015). Authors like hall and Pennington (2013) predicted that students who were self monitors would develop a more extroverted image where as the students who were more honest and truthful in their approach would represent a conscientious profile. Bodroza and Jovanovic, (2015) further claim that facebook could be utilized for establishing psychological aspects on the students (Stott, Dicks and Fielding, 2015)

Iddikinge, Lanivich, roth & Junco(2016) stated that surveys and interviews can help analyze the applicants performance in the future. Also through examining the kind of post the applicant displays on his status- can help judge the applicant's personality. For instance "If an applicant runs competitive races, it would suggest that he is ambitious and competitive"; similarly posts establish the intensity of applicants judgment and provide an insight into their personality". In an interview, hirer stated that there is nothing that can establish accurately an image of you than your Facebook page. However they also stated that in current scenario the human resource managers and hiring managers have limited guidance towards the use of social media platforms relating to how these platforms should be used during the staffing process. The

author also states that networking site like Facebook is designed to connect with friends and family rather than being used as a job measurement attribute.

In another research, it was claimed that students below the age of 25 years had more tendency for developing addiction to social networking sites (Tifferet and Yavetz, 2018). With respect to gender classification was done that women gained more emotional and psychological pleasure by uploading images, photos and videos and receiving comments and likes whereas men shared more articles and interesting news.

2.7.2 Twitter

Twitter handle is used for twitter Bio which helps in portraying information through 160 characters. Twitter has created its mark through hash tags and twitter handle

Although there are various ways students can utilize social media networks to their benefit however in a research by Wheeler (2014), it was found that employers take only six seconds per resume to make a decision on whether to hold the resume or toss it into not fit pile. Such analysis has left students bewildered about how to represent themselves on social media to gain the recruiters attention and has left them wondering, how recruiters analyze their behavior and personality through these sites. (Rosen et al., 2014)

2.7.3 LinkedIn

It is the most prominent social networking site for developing professional networks. This networking site for professionals became widely accepted after its launch in 2003. According to its press release professionals started joining the website at the rate of two new members every second across 200 countries. LinkedIn is utilized for researching on people and companies, connecting with past colleagues, discovering potential job opportunities (Han, 2016). LinkedIn helps a candidate built his profile through both implicit & explicit methods. Most important form of conveying implicit data is through profile photos. LinkedIn also plays a vital role in screening by providing network connection which helps in validation of profiles during recruitment. While some recruiters have wholly replaced resumes with LinkedIn profile, in majority cases it is utilized for supporting the traditional method of recruitment process.

Other methods for branding on LinkedIn include adding work, experience, using keywords (Proulx, 2016) and updating education. LinkedIn enables the job seekers to enter their credential in such a manner that they are searchable or identified through job searches. (Koch, Gerber and De Klerk, 2018)

In a study researchers were inclined to find what hirers were most interested while looking at a LinkedIn account found that appearance of individual was of importance while analyzing their profiles as it leads to immediate impression formation. Also the more information they found on an individual's profile would enable them to gather a better understanding of the candidate's education, work experience etc. In contrast LinkedIn users who did not have completeness of profiles might lose points (Zide, Elman and Shahani-Denning, 2014). As modern recruitment pattern moves from the traditional Resume pattern to a digital resume, job seekers need to be aware of the distinction between the two formats. For instance grammatical and spelling mistakes are looked upon in more negative light as compared to traditional resumes as in contradiction to traditional resumes a digital resume can be corrected and fixed as and when an error could be identified. (prolx, 2016)

2.7.4 LinkedIn products and services:

LinkedIn history timeline shows that by 2014 LinkedIn had over 332 million members. The numbers itself reflect that the platform should be taken very seriously considering it provides substantial reach to professional networks. With addition of various features like integration of twitter has adjoined its social networks thereby increasing the engagement amongst its members and organizations. The more features being added to LinkedIn, the more it needs to be managed at an individual and organization level. Astonishingly a LinkedIn URL search result is most probable to appear on top, in any exploration of your name, if the profile is complete. (Google your name). There is billions of searches happening every year. This professional site has continued to add new instruments and features to its list. LinkedIn offers various products and services known as its business solution to organizations. It offers foremost four product category known as "Hire, Market, sell and Learn".(www.linkedin.com)

- Through the Hire category, LinkedIn promoted talent management solutions with an objective of targeting different segments based on; (1) the size of company- Enterprise companies, small and medium businesses, search agencies and nonprofit organizations. (2) The frequency at which hiring was being done by the companies. In fact for those organizations hiring 1-2 people a year it offered posting rights which were established on pay as you go model and made the payment for such companies flexible (3) the resources or features that organizations desired to utilize.
- Market category was used for generating leads, promoting brands and driving traffic to the website of the organization. Through this organizations could sponsor job content and Inmails to candidates, generate pipelines and advertise through texts and video.
- Sales category helped business to accurately target the buyers, generate leads, Integrate with CRM and close deals.
- With the learn category linkedIn provides a knowledge development platform for different teams and workforce in an organization to learn and succeed.(www.linkedin.com)

With LinkedIn promoting its talent management solutions, recruiters and human resource managers who avail subscription of LinkedIn to search and find talent could be using one of the following services referred as recruiter lite, recruiter professional services (RPS) and recruiter. Each of the services is priced differently since each support different features.

Table 2.7.4: LinkedIn services:- Recruiter Lite, RPS and Recruiter

		Recruiter Lite	RPS	Recruiter
Collaboration and organization	Multi-user collaboration	One seat per account	Multiple seats; seamless collaboration with recruiting team	Multiple seats; seamless collaboration with recruiting team
	Talent Pipeline	No access to Talent Pipeline	Fully enabled with the ability to: - add tags, statuses, and custom fields to profiles - search via tags and statuses - reporting and analytics for their talent pipeline, and so on	Fully enabled with the ability to: - add tags, statuses, and custom fields to profiles - search via tags and statuses - reporting and analytics for their talent pipeline, and so on
	Number of Projects	100 projects per seat; not shared	100 projects per seat; pooled together	200 projects per seat; pooled together
	Hiring Manager 2.0	No access to Hiring Manager	Enabled to allow recruiters to share LinkedIn profiles and get feedback from the hiring managers they work with. Every Recruiter seat can work with up to 20 hiring managers.	Enabled to allow recruiters to share LinkedIn profiles and get feedback from the hiring managers they work with. Every Recruiter seat can work with up to 20 hiring managers.
	Data Migration		Available	Available
	ATS Integration: Cross System Awareness		Enabled; allows LinkedIn profile visibility within ATS	Enabled; allows LinkedIn profile visibility within ATS
Messaging	InMail Messages per month	30 InMail messages per month (no pooling or collaboration)	100x the number of seats per account. InMail allotments are pooled, allowing active recruiters to send more messages	150x the number of seats per account. InMail allotments are pooled, allowing active recruiters to send more messages

Profiles, Reporting, and Analytics	Profiles, Reporting, and Analytics	Ability to search within custom fields, pipeline analytics, monthly usage reports, and Recruiter usage reporting options	Ability to search within custom fields, pipeline analytics, monthly usage reports, and Recruiter usage reporting options
	Reports	The following reports are available: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • InMail Analytics Report • Job Analytics Report 	The following reports are available: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruiter Usage Report • Monthly Usage Report • InMail Analytics Report • Pipeline Analytics Report • Job Analytics Report • Cross Contract Reporting • Performance Summary Report
Search	Saved Search Alerts	10 daily saved search result alerts	50 daily saved search result alerts
	Search facets	Enabled to search for limited details	Enabled to search for more details than Recruiter Lite like candidate's field of study, years at the current company, and years in the current position, among others
	In-ATS search filter		Filters to search for candidates within the Applicant Tracking System (ATS)
	Search Radius	Location search radius is 100 miles	Location search radius is 400 miles

2.8 Use of social media in screening

Research has shown that almost 77% of HRM professional used social media sites for recruitment wherein almost 80% used social media sites for validating the potential candidates.

It has been found that utilizing social networking and media sites for screening has increased. In a survey in 2014, it was established that almost 34% had declared that they had rejected student's basis information found on the social media & networking sites. Further it originated that one in five recruiters has used social media for gathering information about a candidate. (Hood, Robles, and Hopkins, 2013)

Although there is high acceptance of social media in recent times however various challenges are posed to a hiring professional as mentioned:

Privacy: With speedy technology evolution, unique ethical and legal challenges are being faced. This issue is controversial as there is not much clarity relative to the expectation of social media users. Ambiguity exists around whether social media users are entitled to legal protections. Applicants and job seekers might consider such instances as invasion of privacy whereas organization and recruiters might consider it as information publicly available. It has been stated that websites and content publicly viewable have no expectation of privacy attached to them.

Negligible Hiring- Organizations who do not conduct background check they would be vulnerable to negligent hiring. Specifically in certain occupations if employee is involved in illegal activities this might cost the organization a lawsuit.

Validity: In certain cases recruiters are casually scanning through the profiles without a certain context in mind. This is also a form of criterion related validity in which the recruiter is trying to establish a correlation. For instance for employer an important criteria is task performance, which means that through social media screening the employer is capable of weeding out students who might be low task performers.

Kluemper and Rosen(2019) established that with information being available online it may lead to discriminating against applicants based on race, color, ethnicity, religion and disability which are otherwise considered illegal while making employment decisions. However it has been mentioned that considering the broad amount of information available it would be more

beneficial and practical to access broad characteristics than the narrow aspects present on the social media websites.

Although there are various research done on adaptation of social media in recent times but not much research is available on understanding how hiring professionals are going to address the challenges.

2.9 Top reasons for applicant rejection

Top reasons shared by recruiters for rejecting the applicants are (Tanya, 2013)

- Showcasing inapt photos or information
- Written matter about drinks or drug usage
- Unkind or vicious remarks about a previous employer
- Non acceptable communication skills
- Prejudiced comments
- Being deceitful about the qualifications
- Involved in sharing confidential inputs or data about the previous organization

2.10 Self presentation and hiring recommendation:

Few researchers have found that job seekers can persuade employers by impression management. Researchers found that job seekers could influence the employers by person environment fit perception by promoting themselves through communities and media. Person-environment fit comprises of two aspects. Person organization fit and person-job fit which emphasizes on qualifications, skills and personality as desired for the job role. Few researchers have indicated that students who were getting closer to graduation were aware of the need to maintain online professional image. An under graduate student may maintain her profile in a manner that it appears cool to his peers while after graduating the same student might tailor the profile to appear more professional. It is an individual's responsibility on how they present themselves through social media websites (Zide, Elman and Denning, 2014). It has been established that hiring decisions can be made based on both objective impressions and subjective impressions. In certain scenarios subjective impressions would affect substantially

hiring decisions; this could also be related to prejudice. In subjective impression there is a raise in recruiter's perception of person- person fit. For instance the student's background data might exhibit recruiters "similar to me" expression which might increase the chances of employability. (Chiang and Suen, 2011). On the contrary Zide, Elman & Denning (2014) contradicted by stating that applicants may consider that they can have full control over what they allow people to view on their online profiles, however the social networking websites are constantly changing their privacy setting policies. Studies have found that when an individual applies for a job and comes in professional contact of another person there are high chances that they would be searched online. Even-though it is considered as an unethical practice in the professional world.

2.11 Concerns for Equal employment opportunity

It must be taken into consideration that not every segment of the population uses social media. This has increased apprehension about the less advantaged segment of the society losing on opportunity. Also concerns are raised on discrimination against certain ethnic and racial segments of the population.

Hence to attract these talent organizations must approach other methods of hiring and not utilize social media as the sole medium of recruitment. Nowadays it is expected from employs in Ireland to include equal employment opportunity clause in their advertisements and job postings. Moreover these postings should be held as a proof of record for legal purposes. (Segal, 2014)

2.11.1 Methodology of following fair hiring procedure

Recruiters could follow the following few methods while using social media to avoid discrimination in hiring.

- An applicant should not be expected to share their social media passwords by company law. Thus employers should be entitled to view only the publicly available information.

- It is advised for the HR to first view the candidates profile and perform the shortlisting instead of the line manager as the HR will be more aware of the policies and rights to be practiced in the hiring process.
- An applicant's social media profile should be viewed only after an interview has been conducted.
- HR personnel's are expected to be consistent in their screening and not look only into a certain applicants profile
- Any hiring decision taken on basis of social media content should be documented as this would protect the HR personnel in case the content is removed later by the profile owner.
- Focus should be only on the content posted by the candidate himself instead of concentrating on what comments others have given on his social media. (Jonathan A. Segal, HR magazine)

2.12 Literature Overview

Through the literature review we understand that there is consensus between many authors about visible movement towards e-recruitment since the year 2013. Various authors have presented their views on how span of data is analyzed by recruiters. While some claim that personal SM sites are being utilized for gathering information on personality traits (Iddekinge et al., 2013 and Diale and Wessels, 2017); few other authors assert that SNS are being used for diminishing the noise thus elaborating that transparency of job availability has created lot of noise in market (Lujan, Miguel, Bondarouk and Tanya, 2017). Use of SNS as a screening tool was established by researchers like Crompton and Sautter (2011).

Reviewing few papers showed self presentation is considered as an important aspect. Job seekers discovered that they could impress employers by promoting themselves (Zide, Elman and Denning, 2014). LinkedIn is determined as best SNS for professional connection owing to advanced features available on its platform and its user interface provides ease of use. Also, LinkedIn offers a range of subscriptions to organizations. Lastly in this review we gathered about necessity for creating equal employment opportunity.

Chapter 3 -Research Methodology

3.1 Overall aims and objectives:

The overall aim of this research is to identify how job seeking post graduate students can utilize the social media to best of their potential through understanding the difference in its use by recruiters and job seekers.

3.1.1 First sub objective:

The first sub objective attempts to find which method of recruitment is preferred by the Irish recruiters- traditional or social. The aim is to discover through the interviews how there has been a shift towards social media platforms as a recruitment tool.

3.1.2 Second sub objective:

The second sub objective intends to investigate how social media is being used as a part of the recruitment process- It establishes how job seekers believe social media is being used by recruiters and how are recruiters using it differently. Through this study we find the gap in usage of social media by recruiters and job seeking post graduates henceforth obtaining insights into ways of influencing recruiter in the hiring process.

3.1.3 Third sub objective

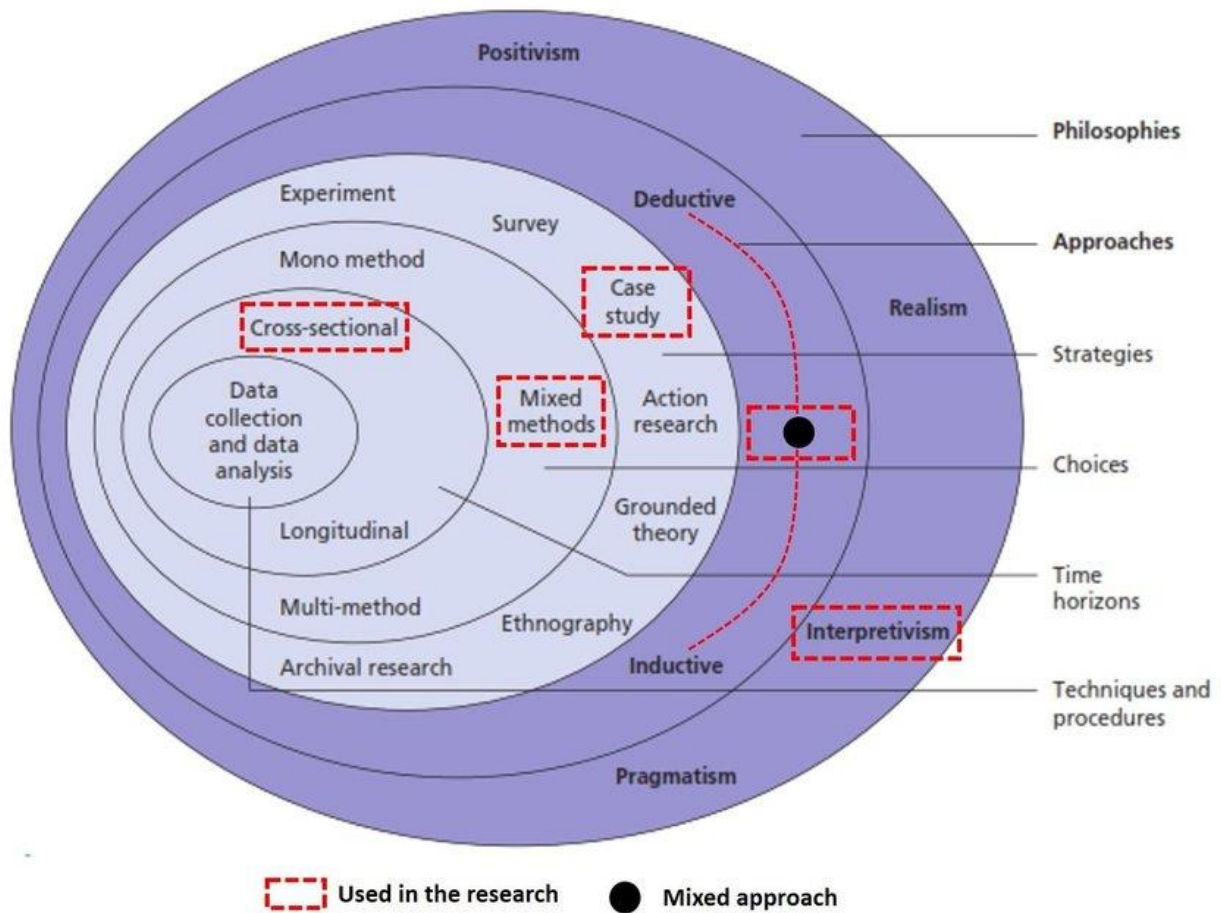
To uncover drawbacks and advantages of using social media in recruitment from both recruiters and job seeking post graduate students.

3.1.4 Final sub objective

To determine from recruiters and job seekers the legal implication of social media usage in recruitment; further hirers are inquired if any organization law has been implemented to address GDPR issues.

3.2 Introduction to research methodology

This segment helps clarify process for obtaining the research aims and objective set in the earlier chapters. The methodology of this study would be elaborated using the research onion introduced by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016). This section would help justify the choices for research philosophy, research approach and research design. Research design would further elaborate on methodological choice, purpose of study and research strategy, time horizons, ethical considerations and research credibility. In the final segment insights would be provided into process of data collection and its analysis.



3.3 Research Philosophy

This term is associated with the development of knowledge. It provides a precise description of what is being done while embarking a research thus it is a journey of retaining & gaining knowledge in a certain field of interest (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2014). Research philosophy can also be defined as methods selected for answering the research questions (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The methodology selected is interpretivism which falls under Epistemology. Epistemology relates to what can be considered acceptable knowledge in the desired field of research. This research would follow the interpretivist model supported by constructionism which suggests that every individual likes to distinguish and analyze their environment exclusively. Through research the participants would attempt to analyze and interpret a series of questions asked by the researcher. All the responses would be further analyzed and inferred by the examiner using his judgment.

Research philosophy can be categorized majorly into three spheres that is axiology assumption (defines role of value within a research), ontological consideration (concerned with the nature of reality) and epistemological consideration (concerns what is considered as acceptable knowledge in field of study). Additionally, characteristics attached to each of the three considerations would be examined. (Saunders et al, 2016)

Firstly ontology concerns with the nature of reality. It can be described as knowledge created with two aspects- Objectivism and subjectivism. It is related to the question whether social articles are perceived as subjective or objective. Objectivism specifies that social phenomena are independent of social actors. Subjectivism states that “social phenomena and their meanings are continuously accomplished by the social actors. These phenomena and representations are not only being formed by the social actors but are also in a constant state of change”. As an individual’s perception of scenarios would affect its interaction with others hence subjective nature of research is more suitable for research on impact of social media on job seeking behavior of postgraduate students. As each participant would interpret impact of social media differently and inferences might change depending on scenarios provided. (Bryman and Bell, 2015; Saunders et al., 2016)

Secondly, Epistemological considerations concerns with what is believed to be contemporary knowledge in the domain of study. It has three aspects which are realism, positivism and interpretivism. Positivism states that the knowledge which can be calculated and examined by senses can be regarded valuable. Positivism assumes that society has objectivity; researchers should stay detached from feelings also implying that it is performed in a value free method. A macro approach is taken to measure its reliability, through obtaining quantitative data will help in attaining measurable outcomes. This implies that questionnaires would be structured; questions would be asked in the same format and would be interpreted through accuracy in analysis. Since quantifiable analysis is performed examination would lead towards statistical results. Realism is an additional philosophical positioning which suggests that what senses recognizes as reality- is the truth (This state's objects have existence independent of the mind). Realism is similar to positivism which assumes that knowledge can be gained scientifically. Interpretivism discards the individual role of statistical methods; it tries to concentrate on subjective aspect of social action. This method suggests that theories are constructed through meanings formed by individuals. Each individual forms his own understanding of the subject and is not impacted by the external sources. This kind of study is conducted through participant observation, ethnography and unstructured interviews. This study aims to understand impact of social media on recruitment, while taking into account individual opinion, feeling and communications hence interpretivist philosophy is the best match for conducting this research. (Denzin and Lincoln, 2018a; Saunders, et al.,2016;Bryman and Bell, 2015; Quinlan, 2011)

Axiology is an aspect of philosophy which states that the role one's own values play during the research process is of great significance. Heron (1996) contends that one's values are guiding motive of all human interaction. The choice of philosophical approach is replica of one's own values. For instance data collection through personal interviews signifies that the researcher values his personal interaction more with participants than data collected through anonymous questionnaire. As a result having clarity about your own value proposition will help decide what is correct ethically and defending position in case any questions arise, this is a significant factor for this study as well

3.4 Research approach

This helps the researcher to formulate a plan with regards to research design and strategy. The extent, to which the researcher has clarity about his research at the outset, would help establish his research design. Majorly research approach can be classified in two ways inductive approach and deductive approach. In deductive approach we design a hypothesis and form a theory, thereafter design a plan to test the hypothesis. Deduction entails several essential characteristics which firstly includes finding explanation to casual relationship between the variables. This approach would follow a structured methodology for enabling replication which is an important factor to guarantee reliability. In the induction approach firstly data would be gathered and then analysis is performed on that data. It is common amongst researchers to associate induction approach with interpretivism. Through induction approach a deeper understanding of the events would be obtained as attested by humans. This kind of tactic enables to collect qualitative data and detailed understanding of the context. The researcher would pursue an inductive approach where the theory ensues after data collection instead of visa versa. Furthermore the result from this research may affirm the existing theory of effect of social media on recruiter and job seekers, or it may present with a contemporary theory. This methodology would provide researcher with a more flexible structure to enable changes as the research progresses. Hence induction approach is the most suitable method for carrying out this research. Henceforth during the data collection and analysis, focus on developing a theory would be ensured. (Bryman and Bell, 2015; Saunders et al., 2016)

3.5 Research design

This section helps identify a plan of action for achieving research aim and objective. Here we provide valid motive for all research design decisions. The justifications should be in line with research questions and purpose also should be inclined with research philosophy. This provides clear objectives extracted from the questions, specify how data will be collected, and identify the sources from which data needs to be collected and method for analyzing it. Nature of research could be descriptive, exploratory, explanatory or a mix of any of these. Importantly it should specify the elements of research design as different methodology will support different

elements. This area of exploration includes choice of methodology, objective of study, strategies adapted, credibility of study and ethical considerations.

3.6 Choice of Methodology & Objective

The research methodology can be classified as qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods. These methods are essentially differentiated on the basis of data collection techniques and its analysis. While deciding on our research method researcher can either choose only one kind of data collection technique and corresponding way of its analysis (Mono method) or could prefer to choose more than one kind of data collection methodology and accordingly analyze the data collected. Quantitative research concerns with analysis based on numeric, statistics and graphs. It is based on hypothesis formation and finding variable relationship (multiple methods). Taking the nature of study into account qualitative method of study would be the most appropriate for this research; which can be supported with the fact that this method of study is more flexible in the context that it could help analyze broader range of context allowing modifications as we proceed with the research. There is use of phonemic analysis, semiotics, discourse, narrative content and archival in qualitative research. Basically research is conducted through the use of conceptualization. The quality of data being collected would have implication while analyzing it, as the complex form of data needs to be condensed, transcribed, summarized and categorized as narrative to derive meaningful conclusions.

3.7 Purpose of research

In earlier references we understood the context of our research question, now we need to recognize the purpose of our research. Research purpose can be classified into three segments exploratory, descriptive or explanatory. Certain research projects might have more than one rationale. In explanatory studies we establish a casual relationship between the variables. The prominence here is to examine a problem which would explain the association between the variables. Through descriptive studies an accurate picture of situation, person or event is portrayed. When a research utilizes this method it means that it is a pioneer to an explanation. Whereas exploratory research examines and accesses the experience in new light, it

investigates new insights to the study. The advantage of an exploratory study is that it is flexible and accommodating to change.

This research would be of exploratory nature. As defined by Saunders et al. (2016) that this method of study is based on exploring recognized issue, Gap and occurrence based on inductive tactic. This can be conducted through unstructured interviews whose output would depend upon the contribution of the participants. Consequential to elements discussed earlier the exploratory method of studies appears to be the best suited because of requirement for flexibility and adaptability attached to the characteristic desired for this study.

3.8 Research Strategy

As described in earlier section by now we have identified the purpose of study as investigating recruitment in Ireland through social media- which will be analyzed using qualitative research through exploratory method. The chosen research strategy should facilitate to answer the research questions and meet the defined objectives. Choice of research strategy would be directed by our research objectives. As mentioned by Saunders et al. that many strategies exist however in the study we would focus on the strategy relevant to qualitative study. Various strategies as listed by Saunders et al (2016) are survey, case study, action research, grounded theory, ethnography and narrative inquiry. The survey approach is generally related to the deductive approach. This approach allows the researcher to collect data from a large population. However this is utilized for quantitative data which would be further analyzed using inferential statistics and descriptive strategies. Through this method is it probable to find results representative of the whole population. This method will be more relevant for quantitative research; in our study we would be utilizing qualitative methodology. Case study is a technique of doing research which involves an experiential investigation into real life subjects through utilizing multiple sources of evidences. This approach is relevant if the researcher is attempting to obtain affluent knowledge in the particular context of study. Nonetheless the timeframe provided for this particular study would not permit for use of this methodology. However certain characteristics of the case study method would be utilized in our study.

For the researchers undertaking action research – it involves the transfer of knowledge from one particular subject to another. This kind of research differs from others because it has focus on action, specifically advocating change within an organization. This study particularly focuses on change. Thus the action research does not fulfill the objective of this study. In grounded theory, data collection is undertaken even before theory is formulated. Theory is formulated based on a sequence of data collected. It is argued by a few authors that grounded theory cannot be used as an excuse to overlook the literature. They state that it is important to consider the data at a theoretical level to extract conclusion. Hence grounded theory would not fulfill the research objectives. Furthermore ethnography is not relevant as it is used to study the field of anthropology. This study concerns with the way research subjects would portray their social world or culture group. Thus conclusively narrative inquire is best relevant and appropriate for conducting this research as it permits the researcher to collect data established on participants experience. These would be in form of semi structured interviews which would engage the participant into storytelling. (Saunders et al., 2016)

3.9 Time Horizons

While planning research it would be important to decide whether to take research as a series of snapshots or like a diary. The time horizon in form of snapshots is called cross sectional whereas that in form of diary is known as longitudinal. The main aim of longitudinal study is to determine change and development. This kind of study requires observing people for a long time and implement controls over variables under consideration. It has been observed that most of the modules taken under academic scope as constrained in time hence longitudinal study won't be feasible for study on impact of social media on recruitment. The cross sectional study is most appropriate in a constrained time frame. This method of study permits for understanding a specific phenomenon in a particular time period. Thus the choice of study would be cross sectional through interviews conducted in a short time frame. However some extent of longitudinal aspect might be included through collecting secondary data like statistics, journals and report on recruitment through social media. (Saunders et al., 2016)

3.10 Research Credibility

Reinforcing the decision on research design it is essential to access the credibility of our research. It is important to make certain the reliability and validity of our research. Reliability concerns with the extent to which the data gathering technique and its analysis would retrieve a consistent result. Robson (2002) affirms that there could be majorly four kinds of threats to reliability. The first would be subject or participant bias wherein the participants might not be honest about their opinion on the subject of research. In such scenarios attention should be paid that participants mean exactly what the researcher is interpreting. The second is subject or participant error wherein time of the day or week when participants are being interviewed might affect their response. For instance in our study if the participant is interviewed in the morning might lead to more short answers due to his prior commitments for the day as compared to the evening time when the participant might be more relaxed. Third could be observer bias which emphasizes that observer might interpret the information being obtained in different forms. Observer error states that when there are multiple people involved in conducting research they might conduct in different ways. Hence the more structured the interview the more reliable it might be. However Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson and Spiers (2002) argue that to attain credibility in research the responsibility should be undertaken by researcher himself rather than handing it over to external reviewer. However the common practice in qualitative research is to remove reliability and validity from the research hence this study would pursue its own trajectory.

3.11 Sampling

Due to various constraints of time, budget and accessibility it is not possible to collect data from the whole population. Hence the method of sampling is used wherein you need to select a sample of the population for answering the research questions. There are basically two kinds of sampling available

- Probability or representative sampling
- Non probability or judgemental sampling

Probability sampling – In this case the probability or opportunity of each event being selected is known or is equal for all the events. Probability sampling is frequently associated with surveys or experimental data.

Non probability sampling- For non probability sampling the chance of selection of each event is not known, it is also difficult to analyze this data on the basis of statistical inferences for answering the research objectives. Although it is possible to generalize results obtained from the non probability sampling however it cannot be done on basis of statistical grounds. Unlike probability sampling the sample size for non probability sampling is ambiguous and there are no rules- except Quota sampling. Subsequently the sample size would be decided by the research objectives.

Sampling techniques in Non probability sampling:

Having decided on the size of sample further decision has to be taken on the sampling techniques. The most suited sampling technique would help answer the research questions. On one side is the quota sampling which has a very similar process to the probability sampling and has similar requirements as the probability sampling for qualifying the results. This method is completely non random and is used in interview surveys.

Snowball sampling- This sampling technique is usually used when it is tough to identify the desired population. The initial stage of making contact with this population is difficult, however when you identify the members they then make further contacts and then similar system follows.

Self selection sampling- This kind of sampling occurs when researcher advertises need for participants and additionally collects data from those who would respond.

Convenience sampling- It is a haphazard way of selecting participants who are easily available. Such a sample selection method would be persisted till the sample size is reached.

Purposive sampling- Such technique would facilitate to use judgment while selecting the participants who would best enable the researcher to address his research aims and objectives.

This might also facilitate the researcher to adopt grounded theory strategy. Such cases would subsequently guide how to carry on research further based on earlier data collected.

The researcher would base his study on non-probability sampling, unlike probability sampling for which statistical data would be required; this research would be relying on the subjective analysis of the researcher. Purposive sampling which allows researchers judgment to select participants best suited for his research would be used. Through this study, interview would be conducted with a small number human resource manager, recruiting managers and career councilors identified based on predefined characteristic. The author emphasizes that by considering a small sample with considerable diversity helps produce results which are high in quality, unique and descriptive (Patton, 2002). The sampling structure for this study would consist of human resource personals, recruiting managers or career councilors with approximately five or more years of experience and are currently practicing in the recruitment field.

As stated by Patton (2002) the logic on which sampling can be based in purposive sample-relies on the research questions and objectives. In reference to this research there is a need for selecting cases that would be information rich.

3.12 Data collection method

Data would be collected through interviews; which could be either highly formalized or standard or could be in the form of informal or unstructured dialogues. The interviews are formally classified as

- Structured interviews
- Semi structured interviews
- Unstructured interviews

Another typology is classified as

- Standardized interviews
- Non standardized interview

Structured interviews are predefined standardized form of questions, where the answers are recorded in the same order as the question with every participant. Such interviews are carried out for the quantifiable data sets. Semi structured interviews are non standardized interviews which are conducted to gather in depth data and can vary from interview to interview. These kinds of interview permits to omit question or add additional question based on the organizations context. The data would be audio recorded and transcribed later in such cases. Unstructured interview is one in which there is no particular format to how the interview would be conducted. Through such methods in depth topics would be explored. Informant interview is similarly characterized as participants lead the interview through their perceptions and help guide the interview further. In contradiction Participant interview is the one where the researcher would help guide the interview further.

Data gathering would be carried out through unstructured and anonymous one to one interview for a small number of audiences; this process is mostly used for qualitative analysis. Also interview would be conducted through participant interview technique. Consent for the same would be taken from the participant before the interview itself. The chosen structure of data collection would enable flexibility thus allowing smooth maneuver through data questions. The interviews with participants would be recorded for exploring and analyzing later. (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2015)

3.13 Data analysis method

Qualitative data would range from short responses to questionnaire to in depth and open ended interviews. It might involve complex data like transcripts or policy documents. Qualitative data is characterized by its wealth and in depth knowledge into the subject of research. While performing analysis on the qualitative data the quality of data collected would be vital, due to its subjective nature; the data collected needs to be summarized, grouped or restructured for forming significant analysis on the subject. For the interviews that are not standardized, an audio recording of these interviews have to be maintained subsequently the recorded data needs to be transcribed. Transcribing is a time consuming method of putting the audio recording into words, which means that not only does it include recording exactly what

was said by the participant but also needs to record the tone in which it was said. It is important to distinguish between the interviewer and participants while transcribing. Researcher further needs to anticipate how he intends to analyze the transcripts.

This research would follow induction approach to analysis, which further has various procedures to analyze the data. In our study, the template analysis method is the most appropriate procedure for forming investigations. Saunders et al.(2016) describes the procedure of template analysis as the procedure in which the themes are divulged from the data through a list of codes and categories. Through this process it is possible to pre determine the code and then add or amend the same as the data collection progresses. Here we have preferred template analysis over grounded theory method as grounded theory is more structured as compared to the template methodology. Through this methodology we have more flexibility to provide course to the examination, consecutively this would permit to make amends as the research progresses.

In this method data is coded and categorized to discover themes, patterns and relationships, further arranging them in a hierarchical format. Monitoring the interview transcripts would lead to generation of themes and codes and might need to be revised as the interview progresses. Whenever new themes need to be introduced into analysis the researcher has to consider its implication on the existing code in the template.

King (2004) has identified four ways of revising an existing template.

- Inserting a fresh theme into the template after identifying its relevance to the research.
- Deleting a specific code or theme as a result of revision
- Altering the rank of the code within the template
- Changing the category of the code.

Template can be revised till a point all the data has been collected, coded and analyzed. Hence it can be represented as a framework which could be amended in order to represent important themes and codes.

A mix of open coding and axial coding would be performed on the data. In this approach the data is disaggregated into units called codes. A further lead to formation of multiple conceptual labels, this process helps extract meaning and conclusions from the subjects being analyzed. Axial coding is implemented for deriving relationship between the subjects which is not valid in this study.

3.14 Ethical consideration

Ethical consideration in the business research is basically applying standards and contemplation into the research process. This philosophy provides ability to distinguish between right and wrong. In recent times ethics in research has become a critical issue specifically because it is not being adhered to in some businesses. While undertaking research we are representing ourselves as a part of community, organization or institution and consequently must endeavour to abide by the ethical standards. A researcher should begin by understanding the initial steps to research and the basic steps taken in a research process. As we must always present ourselves as a ethical practitioner.

In this research the researcher should display appropriate behavior to anyone taking the research or anyone being affected by the research. A prior consent form would be signed by the participants. A copy of the interview recording would be offered to participant. Also since all people preserve right to anonymity hence name, designation and any other piece of information the individual is not willing to share would honored.

3.15 Limitation

The researcher comprehends that bigger sample size and higher response rate would have allowed the researcher to collect data from more number of recruiters. Given the short period of time and limited availability to resources the researcher figured that Job title on LinkedIn might have hindered response rate of recruiting professionals in Ireland. However changing LinkedIn title for conducting this research would have proven unethical, for participants pursuing research in this field in future and attempting to get a better response rate it would be advised to grow first degree contacts on LinkedIn with titles- talent hunt professional or human

resource managers. Furthermore using template analysis method although permits addition of themes as the research progresses, however limitation of time did not permit to revisit the new themes with previous participants. Additionally it is recommended to get in touch with professionals over emails if have access to their email IDs as this would permit to write detailed information about expectation from them. Many a times professionals visit their LinkedIn profiles after few weeks or in certain time periods and might not access linkedin message, conversely they usually have access to their professional email IDs.

Chapter 4 - Findings and Discussion

Chapter Introduction

The previous chapter described research methodology which elaborated data collection process based on the semi structured interviews that provide answers to research objectives. The purpose of the study is to understand use of social media for recruitment from both recruiters and candidates applying for jobs. Further the study attempts to understand disparity in the usage by both segments and finds the gap.

The following section presents primary data collected through interview, analyses and confers the findings. Firstly analysis of themes obtained from recruiter's interview would be presented; it would additionally investigate and introduce the themes obtained from the interview of post graduate students. Finally difference in usage of social media by both the segments would help in finding the gap.

4.1 Use of SM by recruiters

This research interviewed seven recruiters based on pre defined criteria. The research aspired to examine a small sample of participants in line with the qualitative approach for obtaining in depth information. Interviews were done on basis of an identified set of questions which would help answer the aims and objective of the research. The interviews mostly lasted between 45 minutes to 1 hour. Nonetheless after interviewing seven participants, it was understood that the data was sufficient to obtain results and no other contributor would be required.

Table 4.1 presents information about the participants. Nonetheless, before participants were contacted for interview, they were expected to meet the following criterion: Participant should have Human resource management experience, should be working for Irish organization, and should have minimum recruitment experience of 3 years. One of the research participants is working as a senior recruiter in Autodesk and previously handled recruitment in Yahoo. Another research participant works for a multinational company in construction industry. Other recruiters work for midsized Irish forms. Two participants dropped out of research due to personal reasons.

Table 4.1. Participant information

	Nationality	Years of recruitment experience	Position in current organization	Sector	Size of Organization
P1	Irish	10	Senior Human resource Manager	Software	Large scale industry
P2	Irish	10	Senior Human resource Manager	Software	Mid scale Industry
P3	Turkish	3.5	Human resource assistant	Software, Construction	Large scale Industry
P4	Irish	8	Human resource Manager	Education , Retail	Mid scale industry
P5	Irish	15	Career Advisor with previous HRM experience	Law, Education	Mid scale industry
P6	Irish	3	Career coach and assistant	Education	Mid scale organization
P7	Indian	5	Human resource Manager	Food and services	Small scale industry

The sample includes a mix of human resource manager and career consultants. Human resource managers have essential recruitment experience whereas career consultants also had

previous human resource management experience; in addition they consistently interact with both job seeking post graduate students and employers which would help provide significant insights about the topic of research.

4.2 Themes

Table 4.2- Themes and Sub themes

Themes	Sub Themes
Popularity of Social media	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Traditional media 2. Social Media
Use of SM as recruitment tool	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Influence of SM in search for specific skills 2. SM gives greater outreach to search candidates 3. Use of social media as screening tool
Use of SM in recruitment process	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use of different social media platforms 2. Most Preferred platform 3. Subscriptions of LinkedIn 4. Reviewing profiles on social media
Negative feedback on social media	
Addressing GDPR issues	

4.2.1 Popularity of social media

Table 4.2.1 – SM popularity

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7
Social media							
Referrals							
Job Boards							
Recruitment agencies							
Job fairs							

Utilizing various channels in recruitment: This question was asked from recruiters to understand the magnitude to which social media has penetrated the recruitment field. Different mediums of recruitment was mentioned by the participants (Table4.2.1) like Networking, referrals, Job fairs, magazines and newspapers as being traditionally used by them. Astonishingly all 7 recruiters stated that social media has not replaced traditional methods with referrals being considered the most reliable source of recruitment in traditional approach. One recruiter (P1) added that she even considers online job boards like Indeed, Irishjobs.ie and jobs.ie as traditional platforms. Also two recruiters revealed that they reach out to recruitment agencies to employ for certain positions. One recruiter mentioned that if a company does not have a social media account then it would not be well known, then instead of receiving 200-300 applications it would only receive something like 15 or 20 for each position. All 7 recruiters stated that they prefer a mix of both social media and traditional media platforms in their recruitment processes.

4.2.2 Social media used as recruitment tool

It was identified by all recruiters that they were utilizing social media in some or the other form. All participants mentioned that in current era social media plays a very significant role in recruitment process and cannot be disregarded. Six interviewees stated that social media has become a primary tool and was surpassing the traditional methods like career fairs and job boards in terms of efficiency and effective usage. With one HR professional mentioning that

“Social media has seeped into every area of our lives and while it might have been a little slower in HR due to the codes of conduct we have to abide with”.

Interestingly though all seven recruiters and career councilors stated that traditional mediums are still in use as part of recruitment process. It was testified by all that social media is not only being used for attracting and recruiting younger generations but also being fast adopted for all age groups including generation X, who have now found themselves adapting to the social media trends. One recruiter also asserted-

“With millennial being the biggest percentage of population who are technology oriented, social media has become an incessant part of Human resource managers”

4.2.2.1 Social media provides greater outreach to candidates: While talking about advantages of using social media, all respondents confirmed that social media gave greater reach to candidates with one recruiter commenting that “social media can be considered as a database of CV’s”.

One recruiter stated that social media has made it quite accessible for everyone to post jobs.

4.2.2.2 Influence of social media in search for specific skills:

Four respondents indicated that social media was vital to search for candidates with specific skills although they specified that it principally depended on the information being presented by the participants.

Respondents mentioned that if candidates did not put sufficient information about their qualification, experiences and key skills, it becomes much more difficult to find those candidates and they would not appear in search results. Thus such candidates would lose on opportunities. Candidates were also expected to specify the skills and search words to be discovered during exploration.

4.2.2.3 Social media used as screening tool: It was found through the studies that a recruiter could check a candidate’s social profile at any stage. Thus social media sites could be utilized at various stages like screening, pre interview, post-interview or background checks. Through the research it was established that recruiters who used LinkedIn extensively, utilized it enormously while screening. This is because subscription of LinkedIn enabled recruiters to facilitate filters that define the work experience, skill set, education etc. Also it was established by the recruiters that LinkedIn provided advanced features and ease of use as compared to job boards like Indeed, jobs.ie and monster.com.

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7
Screening							
Before Interview							
After Interview							
Background checks							

All respondents indicated that social media specifically LinkedIn was being utilized for screening and short listing candidates. Four contributors affirmed use of social media platforms during pre interview phases. One participant (P5) testified its use after interviews and for background checks.

4.2.3 Use of social media in recruitment process:

4.2.3.1 Use of different social media platforms in recruitment: All recruiters suggested that they used LinkedIn as their primary recruitment tool. One recruiter also stated that

“LinkedIn is not one of the tools but ‘The tool’ when it comes to recruitment.”

One recruiter (P6) quoted an example from US where Mc Donalds is now utilizing Snapchat for conducting video interview.

Six recruiters although denied using Facebook for recruitment in their own organizations however accepted that it is possible in the industry for HR or Hiring professionals to access Facebook accounts of the candidates as the information being provided by them is available publically. One recruiter who had also worked in Turkish company stated the use of Instagram as a big platform for recruitment in Turkey. Three recruiters although not personally using twitter for hiring in their current organization however proposed that twitter is used for driving traffic to their websites and to some extent for marketing. Interestingly five recruiters suggested that their marketing team was using facebook and twitter as a media for marketing and communication for their organization. With one confirming that they had utilized facebook for understanding candidates beyond the professional context in their previous organization.

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7
LinkedIn							
Facebook							
Twitter							
Snapchat							

4.2.3.2 Most preferred Platform for recruitment: All the participants identified that they were utilizing LinkedIn frequently as a primary tool for recruitment purposes. When it came to the most preferred platform for recruitment, LinkedIn was mentioned by all 7 recruiters, with 2 mentioning that they couldn’t consider their day without LinkedIn. LinkedIn is considered synonymous to CV. Furthermore it was mentioned by one recruiter that LinkedIn provides platform to stand out and get noticed like by giving pertinent comments on posts being shared or being a part of group discussion corresponding to your interests enabled you to get noticed and in certain circumstances be approached by a recruiter.

4.2.3.3 Subscription of LinkedIn:

LinkedIn could be utilized by recruiters in multiple ways. LinkedIn offers various products and solutions to its customers depending on the organizations willingness to invest into their products; it has various levels of subscriptions available. However since the subscription charges are high hence all organizations are not willing to invest in LinkedIn subscription.

Recruiter (P1) affirmed that they were using the highest level of subscription available in LinkedIn; although procurement of the LinkedIn subscription was happening in the US however considering the features available to her she gathered it would be the highest level of subscription available. 3 recruiters stated they were using the basic subscription available which allowed them a recruiter's seat. 2 recruiters were not using any LinkedIn subscription due to the high costs attached to it. However they were using LinkedIn innovatively which allowed them to advertise to their first contacts about vacancies available. When asked to recruiter (P1) of a big firm what level of subscription she was using she quoted

"Decisions are made in America and I'm not involved in that. I would assume it is the highest. I'm sure". She further quoted "We don't only have recruiters license we also have recruiters insight. Such feature shows how many candidates are available in the country with a specific skill set. For instance if you want to know German speaking candidates with SAP qualification, it would show for example 5060 in Dublin".

P4 stated that they have the recruiter seat license and she used the license for filtering candidates as per the search criteria.

4.2.3.4 Reviewing profiles on social media:

Table 4.2.3.4- Important factors while considering profiles

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7
Completeness of profile							
Profile picture							
Background Photo							
Connections							

The recruiters specifically mentioned that they were not viewing applicant’s personal social media profiles like Facebook and Twitter. While reviewing profiles of candidates on LinkedIn, all recruiters suggested that completeness of profile was very important factor for consideration. A recruiter commented “ I would love to see the most recent job, its similar to what I would look on a CV, like the background of the person, the flow of career for example if they have jumped I would like to see some kind of explanation “.

Another recruiter stated that “I would look at the information being written well and the person is talking about their experience in an informed way”.

Thus recruiters asserted that they would like to see explanation and sufficient information provided in candidates social profiles on LinkedIn. When cross examined if the recruiter would give emphasis to other features of LinkedIn like profile photo, number of connections, background photo etc, the opinions of recruiters varied with one recruiter commenting

“So if you are hiring an executive or some higher level positions, a good photo goes better. Or if you are hiring an enterprise sales guy who needs to be in front of millions of dollar of business and represent your company. Yes, it would make sense how they present themselves in a picture. If hiring for someone in data or software guy. You don’t care about the picture.”

Thus in summary 2 recruiters stated that having a good quality profile photo would be an advantage to the candidate. When inquired about background photo and quality or number of

connections- none of the recruiters stated it as an important factor for making decisions regarding hiring. In summary self presentation surfaced as imperative criteria for decision making.

4.2.4 Drawbacks of using social media: This question was asked to understand from the participants what elements in recruitment have been impacted with a switch to social media. Two recruiters specified that the negative impact of social media is that there is a lot less face to face interaction as compared to earlier times, quoted as

“The negative thing about social media is that it takes away the person approach. When you worked in recruitment earlier, you met them all and you got to know them face to face. But sometimes with social everything is done online”.

Another recruiter (P6) cites that a possible negative impact of social media could be forming perceptions about people and stereotyping them, she explained quoting

“For example if recruiter had an adverse experience with similar kind of profile before they might place that experience again and never contact the candidate”.

Two participants stated that those candidates who were highly eligible but did not mention search words in their profiles- those contenders cannot be traced.

4.2.5 Addressing GDPR issues:

In reference to GDPR issues, although all recruiters agreed that with recruitment moving to social media there is possibility of discrimination on basis of gender, age, race etc. Also there is a possibility of getting an insight into the candidate’s personal life through Facebook, Twitter and other such sites. A recruiter specified stating that

“I have not seen anybody’s age or origin, but it is right that one can speculate if you have a look into candidates profile but in my opinion it is good as well; as I am hiring from a diversity point of view, as we need more diversity to or culture in our organization”

Another recruiter stated that nowadays candidates have a lot of power in terms of privacy, further emphasizing that it is dependent on the candidates as to how much information they want to display. A candidate might also prefer not to display their profile photos. However everything is very subjective, as people are visual and with professional sites like LinkedIn, an attempt to hide information might adversely impact the ability of an individual from getting hired.

Two recruiters mentioned that with GDPR coming into pictures nowadays recruiters are asking job seekers access to their LinkedIn and Facebook profiles in the applications. Most applicants would oblige to provide such information as they would dread the consequence of not being considered for a job in case they hide such information.

Nonetheless, all the 7 recruiters stated that the information is publically available hence individuals are accountable for everything they are posting online.

4.3 Social media use by Job seeking post graduate students:

Interviews of fifteen post graduate students were taken with different ethnicity. All students were seeking full time jobs. Job seekers were a mix of Irish and international students, based in Ireland, pursuing studies either in Business or computing background.

Themes	Sub Themes
Different channels for seeking jobs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Traditional media 2. Social Media
Different social media platforms in recruitment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use of different social media platform 2. Choice of most effective social media site
Job seekers perspective on use of SM by recruiters	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. While Analyzing profiles 2. In the Recruitment process
Addressing GDPR issues	

4.3.1 Different channels for seeking Job: Participants were asked questions regarding their preferred method of applying and finding jobs as this would help understand the prominence given to social media while applying for jobs. All participants stated job boards like Indeed, Monster, Jobs.ie, Irishjobs.ie as a preferred method for looking and applying for jobs, when inquired about social media everyone mentioned having accounts on social media and utilizing it along with job boards for searching and applying for vacancies. One participant mentioned job fairs as a prominent medium.

4.3.2 Different social media platforms in recruitment:

With penetration of social media into recruitment, candidates are now exploring social media sights to discover various options available. Candidates mentioned majorly three social media sites being utilized by them while searching for jobs which are LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook. Candidates utilize these platforms either to apply for jobs directly or to check information about organizations they are interested to work.

4.3.2.1 Use of different social media platform:

With a maneuver towards social media by recruiters, presently a lot of recruiters are posting jobs on social media and updating their taglines on hiring. Candidates were asked a few questions based on how they are utilizing their social media while searching for jobs. All candidates stated that they had their professional profiles on LinkedIn. All candidates had their personal profiles on Facebook; however only four participants had utilized this platform to search or apply for a job. Only one participant stated having used twitter as a platform while applying for a job.

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11	P12	P13	P14	P15
LinkedIn															
Facebook															
Twitter															

Although all candidates had their profiles on LinkedIn however only six candidates were actively using this platform for finding and applying for jobs. Three participants had only created a profile and were not applying for jobs through it. Four participants were infrequent with utilizing it.

Facebook had been utilized by four participants as a medium of searching and applying jobs. With two participants (P3 & P4) testifying that they used Facebook only while applying for a position in Facebook. While understanding how Facebook was being utilized by participant P6, he mentioned that there are pop ups of advertisement which help him in discovering openings in organizations. Other participants (P2 & P11) mentioned that he gets to know about vacancies after he starts following the organization's Facebook page.

Only one contributor suggested that he was using twitter for searching jobs. On investigating the participant affirmed that on twitter organizations shared link to their websites which advertized job openings.

4.3.2.2 Choice of most effective social media site: All participants confirmed LinkedIn as most effective social media site for searching and applying for employment since it is meant for professional connections and enhancement. Six candidates mentioned that they had applied for jobs through LinkedIn and the process for application is simple, as LinkedIn allows to directly applying through its site or it redirects to the website of the recruiter. Thus this platform is effective for these candidates as it has a different section specifically for jobs. Also through the interview questions it was found that LinkedIn also was effective in ways that the candidates received some kind of acknowledgement or response after applying through the site.

4.3.3 Job seekers perspective on use of SM by recruiters:

As getting an employment is critical for all applicants, hence it was established from students that they often speculate usage of SM by recruiters. Hence applicants also seek career councilors to suggest them on ways to influence a recruiter. Through the interview questions it was found that job seekers speculated about how recruiters analyzed their SM profiles and utilized it in recruitment process.

4.3.3.1 While Analyzing profiles: By asking questions it was tried to analyze what according to post graduate students recruiters view while analyzing information. Most students asserted that completeness of profiles was vital for profiles to be shortlisted. While most students mentioned that incomplete information and lack of detail could also bring down the profile of a candidate.

4.3.3.2 Recruitment process: Through the questionnaire an attempt was made to understand when job seekers believe that a recruiter might visit the social media. Six participants stated that the recruiter visits their social media account before interview. Four participants testified that a recruiter might visit their social profile first time during screening. Two participants affirmed that a recruiter visits their social media page only for background checks. Whereas two participants reasoned that a recruiter can visit the social media site at any stage in the recruitment process. This finding contradicts discovery by Vicknair et al. (2010) which found that 45.3% students believed that employer looks at social networking profile of candidate all the time.

4.4. Addressing GDPR issue: Most students mentioned that although they considered Facebook and Twitter profiles as personal, and would not desire for the recruiters to visit their personal social media; however the information on these mediums are publically available and it was the candidates responsibility to have privacy settings in place and take responsibility of any posts that are publically available to view.

4.5 Discussion of results

4.4 1 Discussion from first sub objective

The purpose of first sub objective is to find which recruitment method majorly is being preferred by recruiters to advertise, search and fill vacancies- Social or Traditional.

Even though both traditional and social recruitment technique was being utilized by recruiters equally almost 100% of the recruiters interviewed affirmed social media as their principal recruitment tools supplemented with various traditional methods like job boards, referrals, recruitment agencies and company website.

Recruiters were quizzed as to what would be their preferred method for searching and recruiting candidates, almost 100% of the recruiting managers who were interviewed stated LinkedIn as their preferred method for searching and short listing candidates, they also supplemented other channels of recruitment along with LinkedIn, with 85% of interviewed Human resource managers found referrals as their most reliable source of hiring. Only 57% affirmed advertising and promoting vacancies on different job boards like Monster.com, jobs.ie, indeed.

While job seekers chose methods which were outside the space of social media platforms- with almost 100% participants stating job boards as their preferred method for applying jobs. Astonishingly, although all participants had profiles on LinkedIn however were not utilizing the platform to most of its potential.

Social media as a recruitment tool

Surveys of recruiters have shown that social media sites have widespread use in recruitment (Nagendra, 2014). In order to understand function of social media as a recruitment tool, recruiters were investigated on their use of top three social media sites- Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

Through the study it was found that Facebook as a platform is not being utilized widely by recruiters for hiring. Most participants stated that their Marketing and communication teams were using Facebook for communicating about their organization, posting about work culture and advertising job roles. However two participants P2 and P4 advised that organization Facebook pages were being utilized for advertising vacancies, however candidates were being redirected to the website for applying for those positions.

When the partakers were quizzed about utilizing Facebook to understand candidate's personality traits and identifying whether candidate is fit for organization most recruiters refused screening through candidate's Facebook profile as they defined Facebook as personal social media. With participant P2 affirming that she relied on CV, LinkedIn and her personal judgment while screening and short-listing applicants; at the same time vouching that she has

not been proven wrong on her decisions. Participant P1 specified that it is not possible for all human resource managers to analyze Facebook profiles as assessment of such platforms requires experienced raters. This is supported by corresponding findings of Rosen et al.(2014) and Zide, Elman & Shahani (2014) who suggested that experienced raters had an ability to deduce the personality of an applicant accurately. However conclusions of Batenburg & Bartels (2017) could not be confirmed as most of the recruiters refused having experience in checking and assessing personality of candidates based on the posts and status updates on Facebook. Only one recruiter P7 admitted to have utilized Facebook and review candidates posts and updates to understand their personality and organization fit in her previous organization situated outside of Ireland.

Twitter:

Twitter having only a word limit of 160 characters is mostly being used for expressing sentiments. However with news of job seekers finding jobs after an influential tweet had created hype amongst recruiters and job seekers alike. Kumar and Srivastava (2016) described a campaign launched by HCL in 31 countries for hiring five consultants as they discovered that their weak brand image was a disadvantage for them as students from premier institutes preferred FMCG, Banking and consulting organizations.

Thus through this study researcher found that most of the recruiters interviewed for this research were not utilizing twitter as a platform for communicating about job vacancies. However P4 proposed that in one of their previous organizations they had used twitter for driving the leads back to their website for applying for job postings. Hence in this study it was found that Twitter was not being used as a significant medium for hiring.

Linkedin:

Through the study it was found that almost 100% of participants interviewed for the research utilized LinkedIn as their primary tool for recruitment. In a post on LinkedIn by the LinkedIn territory manager of Ireland - Orcun Fistik has written

“Over 95% of fortune 500 companies in 2018 using LinkedIn Talent solution. 300,000+ companies use LinkedIn talent solutions to find source and hire talent. More than 35M job seekers visit LinkedIn Jobs every month. We have helped more than 4M people get hired this year”.

Through this post it can be speculated that LinkedIn is promoting its “talent management solutions “as explained in LR to companies and organizations based in Ireland (LinkedIn.com). Also findings of Han (2016) were confirmed which specified use of LinkedIn in searching for colleagues, job seekers, companies and for networking.

Through this research it was found that most recruiters interviewed used the basic subscription of LinkedIn for talent hunt which provided them single recruiter seat. Career consultants (P5 & P6) confirmed that a lot of recruiters were using subscriptions for searching for talent and targeting passive candidates. Senior recruiter of a large software firm P1 confirmed using the highest level of subscription available for LinkedIn, nonetheless she also verbalized that although LinkedIn marketed itself for targeting the audience; but for those candidates who were not mentioning search words or skill sets in their profile, those contenders were not being found through LinkedIn search - even to recruiters who had access to extensive search functionality obtained as a result of purchasing subscription from LinkedIn. This discovery follows suggestion by Proulx(2016); that for self promotion and branding on LinkedIn it is vital to add works, experience and skills using keywords. Koch et al. (2018) elaborate by mentioning that LinkedIn provides functionality of entering keywords in such a way that individual is searchable through job searches.

LinkedIn For Screening

For researcher a very important finding was use of LinkedIn as a screening tool. Blacksmith & poepleman (2014) revealed that technical recruiters were employing keyword search to search prospective employees. Research conducted by Rosen et al. (2018) showed that SM sites were used as a tool for screening by recruiters and was confirmed by 85% of research participants interviewed that they were using LinkedIn for screening candidates. The author noted that those recruiters having a recruiter license were provided advanced features which

allowed the hiring managers to pre record the basic qualification criteria for qualifying candidates; hence this formed the first level of screening for the applicants. In the next level LinkedIn also permitted to view applications online without downloading it which would comply with the GDPR regulations. This discovery confirms findings of Sameen (2013) which indicated that LinkedIn is used by hiring professionals for screening. The author henceforth documented that LinkedIn as a recruitment tool provided highly advanced features and integrated their platform with new government rules and regulations being implemented. When quizzed participant P1 about job boards she expressed that those platforms were not comprehensible to her as they were not providing very advanced features which were easy to use. She also communicated that their company also subscribed to LinkedIn training for its Human resource managers. For the recruiters who did not have LinkedIn subscription still could screen the candidates through changing their taglines to “We are Hiring!” and advertising to their first contacts on the platform and screening candidates who are messaging them the CV or directing the candidates to their website. Furthermore recruiter P3 communicated that an organization who did not want to invest in a LinkedIn subscription could advertise about its vacancy through its LinkedIn page.

4.4.2 Discussion of second sub objective:

To investigate use of social media as a part of recruitment process: How job seekers perceive social media is being utilized by recruiters and what recruiters are doing differently.

The author noticed that there was a gap in use of social media by post graduate students and recruiters. In numerous occasions job seekers attempt to speculate how social media is being utilized by a recruiter or hiring manager so that they would be able to influence the recruiter to consider their candidature.

Most preferred channel of recruitment

The author observed that while almost 100% of recruiters who participated in research assert LinkedIn as their preferred method for screening and broadcasting jobs. Job seeking post graduate students affirmed job boards like Indeed, monster.com, jobs.ie as their preferred

method for finding jobs. Even though 100% of job seeking post graduates students interviewed for this research confirmed having profile on LinkedIn, 70% of research participants confirmed utilizing LinkedIn for finding jobs or organization information however not all were actively utilizing the platform. It was found by author that only 30% of job seeking participants were actively looking on LinkedIn for jobs and had a five star profile on LinkedIn. According to LinkedIn a five star profile would increase the visibility of a candidate by 3X times. Basically as classified by LinkedIn a five star profile basically confirms the completeness of the profile with all information up to date.

Profile Analysis

Through the research; author found that there was a consensus between most recruiters and most students when it was inquired what kind of a profile on LinkedIn would be considered influential while recruiting. Almost all recruiters stated they would prefer a complete and up to date profile while assessing and short listing a candidate as shows a candidates eagerness to search for a job. Results derived by Sameen (2013) confirm that hiring professionals consider communication skill, professional experience and organization fit as important determinants while selecting or rejecting candidates on LinkedIn. Similarly most of the job seeking post graduate students mentioned that a profile which was informative and complete would influence a recruiter positively. Astonishingly, even though job seekers realize the importance of accuracy and completeness of profile for influencing recruiters; only 30% of job seeking research participants confirmed having complete profile.

Recruitment stage at which recruiters visit social media of candidate:

It was found by author that most job seeking post graduate research participants consider that a recruiter could visit their social profile at any stage in the recruitment process. This is in accordance with survey conducted by Vicknair (2010) which found that 50.7% students were aware that recruiters visited their social media sites. Majority research participants in this study believe that recruiters visit their profiles only before interview. Only 4 participants out of all thought that a recruiter would first screen their social profiles even though it was established by most of the research participants who were recruiters that they utilize social media most

while screening. This discrepancy in understanding of job seeking post graduate students would prevent them from focusing on building their social media image specifically on LinkedIn which even if they possess requisite skills might cost them the opportunity of being considered by the employers. Hence through this the author surmises that for a candidate to be found and considered through screening the participant should list down all the skill set and search words that would enable him to be found on social media.

4.4.3 Discussion on third sub objective

The third objective is to understand advantages and limitations to using social media from perspective of both recruiters and job seeking post graduate students. The predominant advantage mentioned by the majority research participant recruiters is the access to the large pool of candidates also termed by one recruiter as database of applicants. They also mentioned the ability to globally reach potential candidates by utilizing social media which is identical to results found by Maharani (2018). For instance as mentioned by a respondent who works as a senior recruiter for Autodesk is their ability to bring in diversity into the organization by recruiting through social media platforms. She also mentioned that instead seeing social media as a disadvantage for presenting personal information it could be looked upon as a benefit because she utilized it to increase diversity in her company. A few also mentioned the speed provided by social media platforms for completing the recruitment process. Indicated by few others; that these platforms have helped in reducing the cost of recruitment as organizations are using fewer recruitment agencies; this result is identical to findings by Dery, Transley & hafermalz (2014).

Further recruiters also stated that organizations considerable benefits could also act as disadvantage as one recruiter mentioned that with depth of information available it could lead to discrimination or human bias that even human resource managers might subconsciously follow. Segal (2014), raised apprehension about discrimination on basis of gender and ethnicity.

Another recruiter specified that although cost has been avoided however it has increased the time of recruitment process for her as earlier all the work and short listing of candidates done by recruitment agencies has now been transferred to her.

For job seeking post graduate students, they mentioned that the greatest advantage to them for using social media is their access to information on upcoming jobs and vacancies. However when quizzed as to why students were not utilizing these mediums to most of its potential, they responded affirming that they did not receive a response or acknowledgement most of the times after applying through these platforms.

4.5 GDPR Regulation

Information overflow has resulted in rules and regulations like GDPR regulation coming into place. Most participant recruiters in research agreed that considering the depth of information available including profile photos, it could lead to discrimination on the basis of Gender, ethnicity, age etc. However they also emphasized that they do not visit the profiles of candidates as according to them it would be considered as breach of privacy. One participant mentioned that they would not look at anyone's Facebook profile until the applicant has granted permission in the application. Investigating SNW of a candidate would violate their privacy and would raise numerous legal and ethical issues (Slovensky and Ross, 2011). However all participant recruiters did mention that overall organizations or industry doesn't have any rules in place to prevent occurrence of incidents like discrimination. Although participant P3 did mention that they are not discriminating against candidates who do not have a profile photo in their LinkedIn profiles even though it is expected of applicants to attach a profile picture as that increases their reliability.

Chapter 6- Conclusion and Recommendation

Overall conclusion:

The research attempted to establish how job seeking post graduate students could utilize social media in an influential manner for searching and finding jobs. Hence it was imperative to understand from recruiters how they were using social media and how job seeking post graduate students were using this platform differently. For achieving this outcome some objectives were set and addressed. The research used the qualitative approach with an interpretivist paradigm, using semi structure interview for gathering data from participants. Through qualitative approach the author could adequately understand and record different views of participants. Moreover, technique allowed researcher to document new themes and generate more knowledge about the subject as the research progressed. Therefore, methodology assisted the researcher to convene research aims and objective.

It is clear from the study conducted that there is disparity between use of social media by the students and employers. Human resource managers have adapted and integrated social media in the recruitment process on a sizable scale; particularly LinkedIn as a platform for recruitment is presently unmatched by any other traditional and online channels. This platform has grown to such an extent that LinkedIn subscription has become a big part of investment for some organizations. It is considered as a supplement to CV thus enabling access to multiple features and functionality. Self representation came as chief selection or rejection criteria in a profile for influencing recruiter's decisions. The study established use of Facebook and Twitter as a medium for advertisement, promotion and feedback obtaining platform from followers.

Correspondingly, job seeking post graduate students are using traditional mediums particularly job boards to find jobs as their preferred method together with SM platforms. Although they are familiar with widespread use of social media by hiring managers; yet they have to discover innovative ways of utilizing this channel to their benefit.

In summary, although use of social media has seeped into lives of most post graduate students when it comes to sharing personal experiences and day to day activities in form of photos, blogs and posts on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and other such sites; however when it comes to job seeking through these channels, post graduate students could benefit from more guidance by career councilors and universities in terms of SM usage by recruiters and what

hiring managers expect from profiles that would create an impact on them. Also understanding technique used by hiring managers throughout the hiring process would equip students to adequately and accurately promote them-selves.

As was found in literature that SNS are using advanced data mining techniques, like crawlers for screening profiles which are programmed to auto-detect skills and pre determined criteria set by programmers. Further filters on these sites enable HR manager to pr specify and tag all requirements to the applications, those applicants who fail to understand technique used by these websites might miss the opportunity of being screened and displayed in search result of recruiter. With new technologies like machine learning and deep learning getting important; it has now become imperative for everyone to understand how these technologies are programmed to function.

Although organizations have not developed any particular policy to align with GDPR regulations like stripping out a photo or hiding specific details that might lead to discriminatory treatment, nonetheless it is noticed that organizations are asking for permission to access the social media profile of an applicant on their applications.

Implication of research

This research is valuable to lot of people. For job seeking post graduate students, this study would provide insights into what channels recruiters are utilizing, how they are reviewing profiles, which is the most important stage when recruiter is most likely to visit their SM profile. Also this research provides a brief understanding to functioning of technology on which SNS sites are programmed. It is important for all students to have an idea of how these sites are encoded to function. The author noted that the students, who suggested use of screening as a major factor for recruiters while visiting SNS sites, all belonged to computing background speculating that these students have knowledge about programming of SNS websites; however there is no sufficient data to back it up in this research. This could be taken up as a research topic in future. This research would help career councilors in understanding areas of focus for guiding and counseling students. For Hiring managers this research provides evidence of not overlooking students who are discovering innovative ways of using SM.

Recommendation for future research:

- It is recommended that similar studies are carried out based on qualitative or quantitative research. However bigger sample size would be recommended.
- It is recommended to target human resource personnel specific to one industry or sector like IT, software, manufacturing, pharmaceuticals etc.
- It would be worth to look into recruitment strategy of an organization on a whole, where both Human resource manager and territory managers are involved in hiring candidates. Also LinkedIn provides such features where human resource managers and hiring managers could coordinate while making decisions.
- It is advised to find out how recruitment strategy differs based on the size of organizations. Although it was observed that as size of organization changed there would be some difference in the recruitment process however this could be taken as a research topic in itself and would require considerable sample size based on the size of organization.

Limitations

The author was limited based on specified time for carrying out the research. Given the area of research is vast various techniques could be implemented like mixed methodology which might produce different results.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Consent Form.

ACADEMIC RESEARCH CONSENT FORM

Title of the Study

“Influence of social media on job seeking behavior of post graduate students- understanding recruiter’s perspective”.

Introduction and Purpose

As part of my curriculum in final year of MSc in Management, I am undertaking at National College of Ireland in Dublin I am required to perform a Dissertation.

The participants of this study are requested to participate in a semi-structured interview that would take not more than an hour.

The purpose of this study is to investigate use of social media by recruiters and job seeking PG students which would help PG students to use SM platforms innovatively.

Confidentiality

The data would be gathered through semi structured interviews and would be recorded for transcribing later. Confidentiality and anonymity of participant and organization would be maintained as organization name or participant name will not be recorded. Also no confidential information related to organization or individual is required in the study. This research would ask generic industry trends on recruitment through online mediums.

Rights

Participation is completely voluntary. You have the right to withdraw from the interview anytime also you may prefer not to answer certain questions. You may also decide to withdraw your participation seven days prior to the submission date which is on 21st of August 2019. Any question asked by participant will be answered till found by you satisfactory.

You can request a copy of this consent form to keep for your own records. If you desire you can also ask the copy of questions from interview and the recording which will be provided to you within reasonable period of time. The research data will be securely stored for five years from the submission date. The latest date that you may request this information is the 31st August 2024, as after this date all the data will be destroyed.

Participant's Agreement

By signing this document of consent I agree to take part in the research study voluntarily and I acknowledge that I have read, understand and agree to the above information.

Participant's Signature Date

Appendix B

Interview questions to students

Q1) which is your preferred method for finding and applying for jobs?

Q2) Do you check information on recruiters while applying for vacancies? Which social media sites do you use for viewing information on organizations?

Q3) which social media sites is more effective while applying for vacancies? Do you receive any acknowledgement or response via these platforms?

Q4) which sites do you use for viewing information on recruiters?

Q5) Have you applied jobs through LinkedIn? Please explain the application process through LinkedIn.

Q6) Have you experienced while applying for jobs that most applications ask link to your LinkedIn account or Facebook account?

Q7) Should Facebook be regarded as personal or professional?

Q8) According to you which social media do recruiters visit to view your profile for the first time after you have applied for a job?

Q9) What kind of a profile do you believe would influence a recruiter to consider a candidate as a potential applicant? Also what do you believe would put down your profile on LinkedIn?

Q10) At what stage in the recruitment process do you suppose employers use social media? (for eg screening, before interviews, after interview, background check or any other)

Q11) Do you believe recruiters view your personal social media sites? Have you ever applied jobs through Facebook or Twitter?