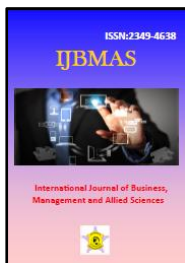

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Role of Social Media in HRM: A Perceptual Study

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ABSTRACT

Today, social media are headline-grabbing phenomenon. Social networking sites like Facebook and twitter are among the most visited websites by the internet users. Mainly, business organizations use Social Networking Sites (SNS) for marketing and human resource management activities. It is observed that the companies are using social networking sites as recruitment tool across globe. Increasing competition in recruiting right men and emergence of social media encourages companies to adopt new methods in their recruitment process. Most of the companies across globe have incorporated social networking sites in one or other level of recruitment process. A brief literature review on this area suggests various benefits of using social networking sites in recruitment process like increased ability to access a wide array of databases of candidates, increased efficiency and time saving. It is also found that there is no policy or framework of using SNSs in recruitment process. Most of the workforce/talents still don't see SNS as an important factor that influences their career path or growth. Employers, especially in India, are not fully aware of the benefits of SNS in hiring and hence their perception is uneven. It is also observed that there is a limited knowledge available regarding this topic in the India context where the number of SNS users is rapidly increasing. Hence, in this context, the study proposes to analyze the benefits and limitations of using SNS in recruitment. It also attempts to examine the perception of both employee and employer towards SNS in recruitment in India. The study reveals important implications for both employee and employer and concludes with further research problems in this area.

Key words: Recruitment, Social networking sites, perception

1. Introduction

A social media or social networking website is an online platform for people, which helps connect individuals who share a common interest. It often consists of a profile of the user, his or her social links and a variety of additional services (Wikipedia). These sites allow users to share ideas, activities and events amongst one another. Examples of social networking sites are Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter etc. Today, social networking sites are headline-grabbing phenomenon. Social

networking sites like Facebook and twitter are among the most visited websites by the internet users. Mainly, business organizations use social media for marketing and human resource management activities. It is observed that the companies are using social networking sites as recruitment tool across globe. Increasing competition in recruiting right men and emergence of social media encourages companies to adopt new methods in their recruitment process. Most of the companies across globe have incorporated social networking sites in one or other level of recruitment process. Talent acquisitions is always a big challenge before HR professionals and emergence of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) give way to modern techniques in recruitment process.

2. Literature Review

Jacob Stoller (2012) in a magazine writes that as more and more youth are becoming tech savvy and active on one or more social media like Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, Human Resource department of organizations may look positively at this trend and devise mechanism to gain benefit of it.

Yvetter Henry (2008) in their analytical study regarding online social networking discusses the advantages and disadvantages of using social networking sites in job search. The study conveys that since social networking is so accessible to anyone, job seekers gain much exposure to recruiters. The researcher finds that the use of social networking site in referral hiring would become common in coming days. The study also expresses some issues like invasion into job seekers' privacy, credibility and face increased discrimination.

In a report carried out by www.manpower.com/researchcenter (2010) finds interesting results pertaining to employer perspectives on social networking. The study collects data and analyses the responses from America, Asia Pacific and EMEA. The results drawn from Asia Pacific reveals that there is no significant presence of formal policy regarding employee use of external social network sites such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Nearly 67% of respondents from Asia Pacific region claim that social networking policies are effective in minimizing productivity loss. Asia Pacific respondents rate higher for fostering collaboration and communication with the help of external social networks. It is also interesting to know from the study that Asia Pacific respondents negatively relate organization reputation and employees' use of social networking sites.

Maria Plummer, Starr Roxanne Hiltz and Linda Plotnick (2011) in their study attempts to predict intentions to apply for jobs using social networking sites. Based on the factors derived from the literature such as, behavioral intentions, inside connections, privacy concerns etc. the researchers developed a scale in testing the model.

Poulami Banerjee (2012) studies recruiters' as well as job seekers' perspective about role of social networking sites in recruitment. The study finds out that the social networking sites are generally used by the recruiters in searching talents for the middle level positions. Most of jobseekers surveyed confirm that they have their resume uploaded in the social networking sites like LinkedIn.

In a report conducted by Nigel Wright (2011) evaluates the impact of social media on recruitment. The report raises number of limitations associated with use of Social media in recruitment process. Using this method alone could lead to miss out the relationship building and the vigorous selection and assessment of individuals which undermine the overall hiring process. The report concludes with a reasonable doubt that social media would replace the traditional method in near future.

In a Master Thesis conducted by Sandra Abel (2011) finds that recruitment supported by social networking sites is relatively new concept in Germany. The study classifies social networking sites into two categories-Business Oriented sites (Ex. XING) and Social Oriented sites (Ex.Facebook). German companies predict the scope of networking benefit recruitment.

In a research paper brought by Andrea Broughton, Tom Higgins, and Ben Hicks et al. of the Institute for Employment Studies (2009) reveals that use of social networking sites by employees has grown significantly. It is observed that some of the employers are prohibiting use of social

networking to avoid any negative consequences. The paper emphasizes the need for clear policy to draw a line of acceptability and unacceptability in usage of social media which will help both employee and employer.

Christopher Petropoulos (2009) in an academic study reveals that use of social networking in recruiting can help business organizations to compete in the global competitive scenario and also improve the recruitment effectiveness.

3. Research Methodology

Objective of the study

1. To find out the role of social networking sites in recruitment
2. To analyse the employee and employer perspective of social networking sites and its impact in recruitment.

The present study is basically based primary data as well as secondary data. Secondary data have also been collected from various sources including websites. It is found that most of the secondary data is widely available on this topic in different websites and published and unpublished reports by various agencies. Primary data is collected with a questionnaire to collect and analyse the responses of employee. Through secondary data and interview method, employer responses are studied.

Sampling Plan and Sample Size: Target population: Working professionals who have at least any one social networking site.

Sampling Technique: Convenience Sampling

Sample Size: 75 employee respondents

4. Data Analysis

A. Job Seekers' Perspectives

Table 4.1: Demographics of the respondents

Gender	N=121	%
Male	77	63.63
Female	44	36.36
Age (Years)		
20-25	20	16.52
26-30	33	27.27
31-35	40	33.05
36-40	19	15.70
More than 40	09	7.44
Level of Education		
Intermediate (10+2)	17	14.05
Bachelors	64	52.89
Masters	35	28.92
PhD	05	4.13

From the above table it is known that 63% of respondents are male and 36.36% are female. Most of the respondents fall in the age group of 26-40 years. Out of 121 respondents 64 of them have done their bachelors and 28.92% have completed their masters.

Table 4.2: Respondents' Position in their organization

Position	N=121	%
Entry Level	45	37.35
Middle Level	64	53.12
Top Level	12	09.96

More than half of the respondents are in Middle Level positions in their organizations. About 37% of respondents are in Entry Level positions and 9.96% are on Top Level positions in their organizations.

Table 4.3: Length of use of any one social networking site

Position	N=121	%
1 - 2 years	105	87.15
6 months - 1 year	11	9.13
Less than 6 months	05	4.15

About 87% respondents are using social networking sites for more than one year. This shows that the popularity and acceptance of social networking sites among working professionals.

Table 4.4: Respondent's Account with social networking site

Position	N=121	%
Facebook	111	92.13
LinkedIn	87	72.21
Orkut	56	46.48
Google+	47	39.01
Twitter	38	31.54
Other	18	14.94

From the analysis it is observed that respondents have accounts with multiple social networking sites. Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter are among the popular social networking sites.

Table 4.5: Frequency of use of social networking site

Position	N=121	%
Many times in a day	40	33.2
5-10 times in a week	68	56.44
Weekly once	07	5.81
Not regular	06	4.98

More than half of the respondents access social networking sites at least 5 times in week. It is generally found that working professionals access social networking sites regularly.

Table 4.6: The most important reason for using SNS

Position	N=121	%
Stay in touch	73	60.59
Find friends	35	29.05
Business contact	08	6.64
Recruitment	05	4.15

It is interesting to note that working professionals primarily use social networking sites for staying in touch with their peers. Only around 4% of the respondents use social networking sites for recruitment related purposes.

Table 4.7: Do SNSs influence your recruitment chance

Position	N=121	%
YES	97	80.51
NO	14	11.62
Can't Say	10	8.3

Around 80% of the respondents perceive that social networking sites influence recruitment.

Table 4.8: Do you like recruiters to access your SNS account

Position	N=121	%
Always	47	39.01
Sometimes	39	32.37
Never	35	29.05

Though majority of the respondents perceive that social networking sites influence recruitment, they have varied opinion when recruiters accessing social networking sites of the potential candidates for a job.

Table 4.9: Preference to upload resume on SNSs

Position	N=121	%
Prefer to upload	54	42.82
Not to prefer to upload	45	37.35
Neutral	22	18.26

Around 42% of the respondents are willing to upload or already uploaded their resume on social networking sites.

Other findings:

Based on further interaction with the population, the following important findings are revealed.

- a) Facebook is used mainly for socialization and being in touch with friends or to find friends.
- b) LinkedIn is regarded as best suited for influencing employer in their process of recruitment or selection.
- c) Respondents have privacy, confidentiality and discrimination issues with respect to use of social networking sites in the recruitment process.

B. Employer/ HR professionals' Perspectives

Based on limited interaction with HR professionals in IT industry and secondary resources following findings are revealed.

- a) Employer view use of social networking sites in recruitment as less expensive way as compared to other ways.
- b) Social networking sites help in targeting and contacting specific skill set or qualified potential employees. For instance, top executive positions to be filled.
- c) Employers or HR professionals perceive that social networking sites can play effective role in hiring higher level position than entry level positions.
- d) Trust is the major issue for the employer when it comes to hire through social networking sites.
- e) Employers feel the need for a regularization or Government intervention in policy matters which could help in streamlining the recruitment process through social networking sites.
- f) Employers also distinguishes social networking site into socializations oriented and Professional oriented.
- g) Recruiters feel that social networking like LinkedIn can be easily used in recruitment process.
- h) At present, most of the recruiters use social networking sites only for referrals and supplementary.

5. Conclusion

Popularity and wider acceptance by the jobseekers it can be predicted that in recruitment social networking sites could play an important role. In general social media will revolutionize the recruitment practices. Presently, social networking sites are helping in supplementing the current practices of recruitment. Job seekers issues in the context of using social networking sites for recruitment are needed to be addressed to reap the benefits of social media in recruitment process.

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