

THE ROLE THAT SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLS SUCH AS LINKEDIN AND FACEBOOK CAN HAVE IN THE RECRUITMENT OF STAFF.

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Introduction

Traditional recruitment is being faded away, as employers adopt modern methods in attempts to source the most qualified candidates. LinkedIn and Facebook are avenues that provide them with vast information and access to the talent pool. Some of the advantages of sourcing through these platforms is that it is cost and time effective, reaches a wider audience and helps recruiters predict the performance of tentative employees. However, Social Media (SM) also poses risks like breach of privacy, exposure to inaccurate information and ethical concerns that could be disadvantageous. This report will focus on how SM like LinkedIn and Facebook affects the recruitment of staff.

Main Body

Overview of social media

Social media is in the 21st Century an integral part of human connection. It allows people to share personal information, their art, professional experience, events happening in real time and even advertisements. In recent years, it is also being popularized by employers globally to harness and recruit new talents.

Recruitment

Recruitment is the process through which recruiters attract potential candidate to a Company (**Lussier, 2015**). This is usually followed up by the selection process, whereby employers pick the most suited candidate amongst those that they have recruited (**Hosain et al, 2020**). In the 1950's to 1980's, the recruitment process involved traditional attraction models like Newspaper announcements and bulletins, while the 20th Century and ending of the 19th Century saw a rise in web-based recruiting sites like hotjob.com and careerbuilder.com as a pathway for online jobseekers (**Hosain et al, 2020**). By 2012, recruitment had become modern, with the leading source of hirers being the internet (**Hosain et al, 2020**).

LinkedIn and Facebook

Today, there is a major shift away from traditional methods, to modern ones with Social media platforms like LinkedIn and Facebook being considered effective tools for recruitment. Facebook primarily allows for connection between individuals and gives them the platform to share personal information (**Hosain et al, 2020**). Vacancies are posted on Facebook Business page, so potential candidates can see them through job bookmarks or market place (**Hosain and**

Liu, 2020). According to **(Zide et al, 2014)**, LinkedIn is designed specifically to aid professionals to connect with each other and also allows employers to search for candidates on the basis of specific criteria. Currently, most employers have established social media presence through their business social accounts, which are purposed for advertising job opportunities and conducting background checks on potential candidates among other things. A study conducted by the SHRM revealed that 95% of the Human Resources Specialists interviewed had used LinkedIn as a talent acquisition tool, while 58% admitted to having used Facebook **(Hosain and Liu, 2020)**.

Advantages

An advantage of recruitment of staff through socials is that it is **cost and time effective**. Opponents of the traditional recruitment system often emphasize that it causes the recruiters to incur such high administrative costs, at every step, ranging from advertising, to processing the applications and conducting the interviews **(Puja and Milli, 2024)**. Contrastingly, posting an advertisement for a vacancy on social media can be cost free, and faster to implement, yet very effective.

Secondly, social media tools are beneficial in the **identification and attraction of passive and semi passive job seekers (Koch, Gerber and De Klerk, 2018)**. These people are attractive to organizations because they are usually experienced and in possession of the skill sets that a recruiter may be seeking for, although they may not be actively job hunting at the time. This is unlike traditional recruitment methods that are deemed insufficient as they tend to draw attention to a small and active pool of talents, but fail to give the organizations access to highly sought after passive and semi passive pools of candidates that may exist **(Koch, Gerber and De Klerk, 2018)**.

Furthermore, social media helps employers **avoid negligent hiring**. Essentially, employers insist that as agents of the organizations, it is their responsibility to harness ample information about potential candidates from social media platforms **(Hosain et al, 2020)**. This prior social media background checks thus protect the organization from accusations of negligent hiring if the applicant is discovered to be incompetent or unfit for the job beforehand.

Similarly, social media acts as a predictor of the candidate's character and person-job fitness. By utilizing social media, some employers are able to evaluate

a candidate's behaviour from the content they post or endorse (**Hosain et al, 2020**).

Disadvantages

Ethical dilemmas are some of the concerns raised about these recruitment forum choices. It is strongly argued that platforms, created primarily for social connection, such as Facebook, should not be used for purposes beyond personal communication (**Hosain et al, 2020**). This is because their application in the determination of the employability of a person **creates biases**, rather than focus on their professional merits. In the UK for instance, a survey found that 53% of the recruiters admitted that social media content like inappropriate photos or information influenced them not to hire a candidate (**Hosain et al, 2020**). Thus access to potential candidate's personal data, poses ethical issues to recruiters. Of course, this problem is with the exception of platforms like LinkedIn, which is intended to be a job searching avenue.

It has been argued that utilization of SM in the hiring process raises a number of legal concerns. According to (**Hosain and Liu, 2020**), a major issue, is the possibility of breach of privacy of the candidates during the recruiter's attempt to source job relevant information. The other is the violation of the right to freedom from discrimination, because some candidates may be discriminated against based off of the information regarding their gender, race, religion or sexual orientation, all which could be ascertained through social media (**Hosain et al, 2020**).

Another risk that is fatal to SM recruitment, is the inaccuracy of information that is presented on applicant's profiles. (**Hosain et al, 2020**) states that recruiters may receive forged information from screening these profiles, as they can easily be falsified to make the owner appear either better or worse than they actually are. The possibility of reliance on misleading information thus calls for recruiters to be cautious.

Conclusion

Therefore, Social Media indeed plays a significant role in the hiring process today. The modern strategy reaches wider pools of people, is cost effective and helps employers avoid negligent hiring. However attached to it is risks of legal and ethical issues. Based off of these findings, a befitting recommendation is that recruiters should focus on social media as a complementary avenue for talent sourcing rather than the only means. They should also be able to focus on the job-related information of their candidates, like that provided on LinkedIn rather than screening their personal content that could lead to unfair judgment.

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