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DIGITAL FOOTPRINT IN WEB 3.0: SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE IN RECRUITMENT

HUELLA EN INTERNET EN LA WEB 3.0: USO DE REDES SOCIALES EN EL RECLUTAMIENTO

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ABSTRACT

Social media plays important role in many aspects of organizational life, and have become increasingly important in recruitment decisions. The purpose of this study is to understand the key issues in the use of digital footprint in recruitment, by using theme analysis as the research method, 10 managers of human resource department at Iranian banks who were responsible for recruiting of employees were interviewed. Nine themes emerged from the analysis: (a) Digital footprint usage enhances the complexity of employment processes, (b) The use of digital footprint in employment processes leads to the optimization and acquiring visions with regard to job applicants, (c) The impact and significant positive role of social media on maintaining employees, (d) Connecting networks available on social media lead to detection of reciprocal opportunities and bridging among job applicants and employers, (e) The role and desired implication of social media in post-employment processes, (f) The need for updating the knowledge of HR managers with respect to the continuous changes in environmental conditions , (g) The necessity of offering an opportunity to job applicants in high level posts within an organization to explain the negative results of information collected from applicant's digital footprint on cyber space, (h) The need for measuring the accuracy of information collected from social media, (i) The necessity of educating, culture-building and creating the essential infrastructures for social media use in the society and among employees. The results of this study provide insight to effects of digital footprints on recruitment decisions, reduction of disciplinary actions and firing of employees.

KEYWORDS

RESUMEN

Los medios sociales desempeñan un papel importante en muchos aspectos de la vida organizacional y se han vuelto cada vez más importantes en las decisiones de reclutamiento de personal. El propósito de este estudio es comprender los asuntis clave en el uso de la huella en Internet en el proceso de reclutamiento, mediante el análisis del tema como método de investigación, se entrevistaron 10 gerentes del departamento de recursos humanos de bancos iraníes que fueron responsables del reclutamiento de

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empleados. Nueve temas surgieron del análisis: (a) el uso de la huella en Internet aumenta la complejidad de los procesos de empleo; (b) el uso de la huella en Internet en los procesos de empleo conduce a la optimización y la adquisición de visiones con respecto a los solicitantes de empleo; (c) el impacto y el importante papel positivo de las redes sociales en el mantenimiento de los empleados; (d) la conexión de las redes disponibles en las redes sociales conduce a la detección de oportunidades recíprocas y a la construcción de puentes entre los solicitantes de empleo y los empleadores; (e) la función y la implicación deseada de las redes sociales en los procesos posteriores al empleo; (f) la necesidad de actualizar el conocimiento de los gerentes de recursos humanos con respecto a los cambios continuos en las condiciones ambientales; (g) la necesidad de ofrecer una oportunidad a los solicitantes de empleo en puestos de alto nivel dentro de una organización para explicar los resultados negativos de la información recopilada a través de la huella en Internet del solicitante en el ciberespacio; (h) la necesidad de medir la precisión de la información recopilada de las redes sociales; (i) la necesidad de educar, construir cultura y crear las infraestructuras esenciales para el uso de las redes sociales en la sociedad y entre los empleados. Los resultados de este estudio proporcionan información sobre los efectos de las huellas en Internet en las decisiones de reclutamiento, la reducción de las medidas disciplinarias y el despido de empleados.

PALABRAS CLAVE
Huella en internet, redes sociales, reclutamiento, gestión de recursos humanos.

INTRODUCTION

Social media, as products of Web 2.0 (White, 2016; Brengarth and Mujkic, 2016) and Web 3,0 (Fuchs, 2017), are pervasively penetrated in our every-day lives. From health (Vaterlaus et al., 2015; Paul, et al., 2016; Naslund et al., 2016; De Angelis, et al., 2018; Khajeheian et al., 2018) and romance (Valkenburg and Petter, 2007; Reed et al., 2016; Van Ouytsel et al., 2016; Sumter et al., 2017) to Internal organizational communications (Khajeheian, 2018; Labafi et al., 2018), and marketing (Hajli, 2015; Hajli, et al., 2017; Alalwan et al., 2017; Ramanathan et al., 2017) and Customer relationship (Rodriguez et al., 2015; Hudson et al., 2016; Baumöl et al., 2016; Kamboj et al., 2018), are different types of social media use.

Currently, employers are increasingly using social media in human resource management (HRM) such as the recruitment process (Jacobs, 2009; Jobvite, 2012; McDonnell, 2012; Gibbs et al., 2015; Topolovec-Vranic and Natarajan, 2016; Rutter et al., 2016), not just for announcing the vacancies, but to access information about candidates, that is called digital footprint (Wang et al., 2016; Azucar et al., 2018). It can be said that digital footprint can provide information to achieve applicant's organizational fit (Grasz, 2012), the applicant's personality (Back et al., 2010), skills, and abilities (Black et al., 2012). With the increasing popularity of digital technology, evidence suggests that the growing use of online data affects practices related to recruitment of employees (Brown & Vaughn, 2011). Employers can use information obtained from employees and potential employees on the Internet to examine and manage these employees and job candidates (Miller, 2013; O'Shea, 2012). Nevertheless, accessing to digital footprint becomes more difficult, partly because users are becoming more aware of their digital footprint; 47% have searched

information about themselves online, Compared to 22% five years ago (Medden et. Al, 2007). Moreover, employee terminations resulting from the misuse of digital footprint either with improper digital profiles and inappropriate information have promoted the increase of tracking employee online activities by companies (Hidy & McDonald, 2013). Despite the fact that more than a decade passed after the boom of Internet access in the early 2000s and Internet resources has affected almost every aspect of sociality, still few studies directly focus on this issue. So far, in decisions related to recruitment, there is little knowledge of digital footprint. Use and misuse of digital footprint play an increasing role in decisions related to employment (Hidy & McDonald, 2013).

Digital footprint provides some consequence for organizations. These consequences include more frequent contact with current employees and future job applicants, more targeted advertising, more beneficial collaborative practices, and increased transparency (e.g., Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). As such, researchers are seeking to identify strategies of digital footprint implications for companies (Weidner et al., 2015). As a result, the issue addressed in this research is the use of digital footprint in decision-making processes by human resource managers and its impact on social capital for current and potential employees. Since digital footprint is not a valid tool for screening purposes, it's not clear whether its usage can lead to a proper identification of job-related characteristics that lead to recruitment of a better employee. The purpose of this research is to understand how social media such as digital footprint is used by HR managers. So, the first question of research is "what are the most important issues facing organizations with regard to the usage of digital footprint to make decisions about recruitment?" And second question of research is "what are the most important issues facing organizations with regard to the usage of digital footprint to make decisions about maintaining and evaluating employees?"

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social media are web-based services that allow users to create profiles, share connections with others, and view the profiles and connections of other individuals (Melanthiou et al., 2015). Social media are changing human interactions and the way in which people access personal information in the developing online environment (Gibbs et al., 2015).

Employers have acknowledged that the information available on social media sites had, at least, some effect on human resource decisions including recruitment, training, promotion, and termination (Brown & Vaughn, 2011). Furthermore, 70% of the surveyed recruitment managers have rejected job applicants because of an unreliable online reputation (McGrath, 2012). This finding clarifies the importance of a respectable online reputation. Nagendra (2014) explained how social media can impact various types of HR functions across the life cycle of an employee. In

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particular, social media impacts attraction and recruitment of employees (Colao, 2012), onboarding (Willyerd, 2012), collaboration (Byrne, 2015), and employee retention (Coy, 2013). Furthermore, the use of social media and digital footprint for recruitment is increasing greater than other areas of potential expansion concerning digital human resource practice (Pais & Gandini, 2015). However, an online job search is not an alternative practice, but a complement to traditional ones.

In a research titled as "What is a digital footprint?" (Hamles, 2014), it has been stated that digital footprint is the records and traces that we leave behind when using the Internet. Your digital footprint can be beneficial or harmful, but it's never irrelevant. The digital footprint can affect your online records and even your credibility. However, a digital footprint is visible to the organizations that you are not related to, their interests are in conflict with you, and you do not have any control over them. As studies have shown, the information we provide to others (even when considered to be private) are out of control. In short, the digital footprint is an income-generating asset, but the income is rarely presented to you. Davison et al. (2016) considered the most important issues related to digital footprint use in HRM to involve legality, standardization, reliability, and job-relevance (i.e., validity). However, it must be noted that the use of social media such as digital footprint in a human resource framework contains several weaknesses (Gibbs et al., 2015). Precisely, negative elements may include legal and ethical issues, lack of formal policies, and reliability of information obtained from social media (Gibbs et al., 2015). However, organizations should not abandon conventional recruitment channels, operations, and metrics without a careful analysis of their strategy (Dutta, 2014). Social media may not be practical for active recruitment at all levels and positions. It is essential to specify the appropriate goals related to social media implementation for talent acquisition before entering the social media realm.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study aimed to identify themes representing key issues in the use of digital footprint in recruitment. As a starting point, we conducted a content analysis to inductively identify themes that were present in the data (Neuendorf, 2002). Two Iranian banks that are located in cities of Tehran and Shiraz were selected as the cases and 10 managers of HRM who are in charge for the recruitment in these two banks were selected as the population of study. To verify the association of participants with knowledge of recruitment practices, they passed a pre-screening process (i.e., background data acquired from the organization's web pages).

In-depth interviews were used as the means of data collection. The interview guide assured that same questions were asked from each participant during the interview.

Interviews with open-ended items were appropriate for the exploratory purpose of this study (Farrell & Petersen, 2010; Graebner et al., 2012). The preliminary part of interviews consisted of three questions confirming the background of the research participants to obtain more demographic data which assure that participants are significantly involved in the recruitment process. Most of the participants had more than 10 years of work experience. The interviews duration was equal to 45 and 70 minutes, respectively. All of the interviews were conducted at settings preferred by participants. Participants' academic educations included Master's and Ph.D. degrees, and most of them were graduated in fields related to HRM. The next part included eight items focused on the use of digital footprint while making HRM decisions. Five of these questions were related to the use of digital footprint decision-makings regarding recruiting and sustaining employees. Two questions included the protocol of giving notice to current and future employees when beginning a digital search, also on the obtaining of negative information found from online searches. The final component was an open-ended question in order to collect supplementary opinions and points that the participants were possibly willing to share on the subject of relevant job traits. The interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed. When the interview process was completed, participants received a summary of their own responses to approve that responses are registered correctly. Another opportunity was given to the participants to review and provide feedback about their responses. This adds to the internal validity of the research.

To analyze the collected data, thematic analysis was used. Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data. The largest volume of analytical text was generated by participant 1 with a number of 1000 codes, and the lowest one was generated by participant 5 with a number of 280 codes. Also, in this section, 115 concepts were created, most of which were related to participant 1 with 17 concepts. Finally, 9 themes created. Bellow shown coding pattern.

RESULTS

The data coding pattern is shown in Table 1. In the first column on the left, the meaningful statements derived from research data is mentioned. The corresponding participant's code is specified in the second column. The code for each meaningful statement is mentioned in the third column. And in the fourth column, the concept derived from the corresponding meaningful statement is indicated. It should be noted that, derivation of meaningful statements and coding process were reviewed with an interval of 1 to 2 weeks during which the titles assigned to some of the codes have been modified.

Table 1. Data coding pattern.

Meaningful statement	Participant's code	Code	Concept
The use of social media can be exploited and deceitful at the same time, people might be presenting a different image of themselves so any information on social media should first be validated.	P1	P111	The need for validation of information obtained from social media in order to reduce the negative impact on decision-making process of job applicants
When using the Internet for employment, we must use a mixed method; the information and data should not be merely used for selection purposes, they should rather be integrated with face-to-face interviews and tests.	P2	P28	The need to integrate the results of interviews, tests and the Internet in order to obtain a fair and authentic view

Eventually, these initial concepts were reduced to 36 categories based on their semantic differences and similarities. The coders then combined these Categories into broader themes that accounted for conceptual overlap between topics. Next, nine themes shaped. The results are shown in Table 2:

Table 2. Major themes and constituent codes

No.	Nine major themes of the study and the subset concepts
1.	**Digital footprint usage enhances the complexity of employment processes.**
1.1	More complexity added to the recruitment processes with respect to multiple personalities of job applicants in cyberspace and in the real world
1.2	The need for simultaneous use of local research, interview and digital footprint due to more complexity of individuals
1.3	The possibility of exaggerating about abilities, skills, and knowledge by job applicants on social media
1.4	Provide help to make decisions based on social media
1.5	An increase in the risks of decision-making based on social media
2.	**The use of digital footprint in employment processes leads to the optimization (of time, work force, costs, etc.) and acquiring visions (better understanding of morals, manners, thoughts, etc.) with regard to job applicants.**
2.1	Facilitate the determination of target sample from a large number of job applicants by informing the employment advertisement…on social media
2.2	Provide help for initial screening of job applicants by reviewing the resumes available on social media prior to subsequent employment processes

No.	Nine major themes of the study and the subset concepts
2.3	Facilitate the identification of interests, thoughts, morals of job applicants based on their digital footprints found on social media
2.4	Assist in face-to-face purposive interviews with respect to the initial recognition of job applicants based on their digital footprints on social media
2.5	Reducing the duration of identifying skills and knowledge of job applicants in the target sample based on social media
2.6	Provide help to identify job applicants whom are aligned with ethical, political, social, and other values of the organizations based on their digital footprint founded on social media
3.	**The impact and significant positive role of social media on maintaining employees (e.g. to reward, punish, motivate, and etc.)**
3.1	Reduction in employees wish to quit their jobs
3.2	Provide help to make reward and punishment decisions based on the type and manner of social media usage by employees
3.3	Assist in motivating employees by using the capabilities of social media
3.4	Assist in making the necessary decisions to maintain employees by understanding employees' intellectual orientations on social media
4.	**Connecting networks available on social media lead to detection of reciprocal opportunities and bridging among job applicants and employers.**
4.1	Reduce in the gap between job applicants and employers using social media
4.2	Access to valuable resources of job applicants on social media
4.3	Access to extensive resources of online job opportunities available on social media
5.	**The role and desired implication of social media in post-employment processes**
5.1	Provide help for recruitment of job applicants who are more aligned with the considered norms of an organization
5.2	Provide help for security and governmental institutions to select job applicants subsequent to other employment processes
5.3	Provide help to attract more qualified job applicants
6.	**The need for updating the knowledge of HR managers with respect to the continuous changes in environmental conditions (particularly social media)**
6.1	The need to pay attention to social media in employment processes
6.2	The need to pay attention to social media in the discussion of maintaining employees
6.3	The need to pay attention to social media in other organizational issues
7.	**The necessity of offering an opportunity to job applicants in high level posts within an organization to explain the negative results of information collected from applicant's digital footprint on cyber space**
7.1	The need to provide opportunities for the job applicants who possess valuable abilities and knowledge

No.	Nine major themes of the study and the subset concepts
7.2	The need to provide opportunities for the job applicants who performed well on the test and interview
7.3	The need to provide opportunities for the job applicants who are candidates for high-level posts
7.4	Unnecessity of providing opportunities for the job applicants who are candidates for lower-level posts
8.	**The need for measuring the accuracy of information collected from social media**
8.1	Reducing the negative impact of using social media in employment processes
8.2	The possibility of finding hacked and faked social pages on social media
8.3	The possibility of changes in thoughts, tastes, knowledge, etc. of job applicants over time
8.4	Provide help to maintain a fair view with regard to job applicants
9.	**The necessity of educating, culture-building and creating the essential infrastructures for social media use in the society and among employees.**
9.1	The increased probability of success at work (even on lower-level posts) in case employees are familiar with the use of social media
9.2	The need for building culture in the society regarding social media use in order to reduce conflicts
9.3	The need for building culture and training employees regarding social media use in order to increase productivity
9.4	The need to create the essential infrastructure regarding the usage of social media in order to increase the penetration rate

Once the themes were counted, the narrations related to each of these themes were described. Three themes, for instance, will be explained in the following:

First theme: Enhance in the complexity of employment processes due to implication of digital footprint.

The first theme shows that use of digital footprint adds to the complexity of employment processes. This theme refers to the difficulties faced in employment processes due to the changes of various fields in the present era, such as social media. It also refers to the need for integrating all the tools available in this process for decision making, and points out the risks of decision making in employment processes which are merely based on either traditional or new tools. Moreover, considering two aspects of job applicants' personality - real-world personality and personality on social media-, decision making in the recruitment process requires careful consideration to tangibly figure out the actual personalities and abilities of job applicants. In this regard, participant 1 noted the following:

> "…The existence of cyberspace and social networks does not exonerate us from the virtual world's rules; on the contrary, it makes our job even harder. We often have to face

> multiple personalities of an individual while recruiting new applicants; therefore, the functions of human resource managers have become more complicated…"

As a result, it is necessary to use local research, interviews and digital footprint simultaneously. It means that in order to determine the true characteristics of job applicants (in terms of personality aspects, ability, knowledge, etc.), amalgamation of all selection tools is needed and HR managers must try to integrate the results of all tools so that to make an appropriate choice.

Furthermore, social media allow job applicants to exaggerate their abilities, skills, knowledge, and so on. In an attempt to minimize the negative effects related to recruitment decisions, one should refer to the other existing tools. Participant 7 noted that:

> "…One of the negative effects related to recruitment decisions that comes to my mind is the possibility of overstated expertise and knowledge by an individual…"

Examining social media of job applicants, a rough judgment can be made about the applicants but one cannot make a decision based on such judgments. The high risk of decision-making based on social media suggests that if we simply decide on the basis of information collected from job applicant's social media, the probability of making obvious mistakes is very high.

Second theme: the optimization (of time, work force, costs, etc.) and acquiring visions (better understanding of morals, manners, thoughts, etc.) with regard to job applicants.

The second theme in this study refers to the optimization and gaining of visibility In order to examine the existing codes, this was achieved by examining the applicants' digital footprint Employing in social media, jobseekers find an overview of the applicant It is very promising in other recruitment processes and can be optimized Recruitment processes. HR managers, by announcing job opportunities in online social media, provide resumes by job applicants who meet the needs of the organization (in terms of expertise, knowledge, ability, etc.) and send out a bunch of resumes that maybe They do not match their needs and save time for reviewing these resumes. It saves time to review these resumes. The primary screening of job applicants is another benefit of using social media in the recruitment process. For example, the participant with the P6 code points out that (online social media is one of the ways to inform Receive a resume of applicants and screening seekers only by studying the resumes before Recruitment interviews.) recruiting applicants is to study the traces of those people in the media Social is online, so that by reviewing the blog, the Telegram Channel, the Instagram, and … the applicant himself, and the sites and profiles he follows, can be considered as part of the fields of thinking, morale, Also, by examining the digital footprint of applicants for online social media recruitment and initial screening and target community assignment, more time is available to recruitment managers in future recruitment processes, which will require more time to identify skills, knowledge, and more. Applicants provide

employment. Employee managers by examining the digital footprint of recruiters in social media (by reviewing channels, blogs The networks and the networks they are members of or publish in their social media) stem from moral, political, social, etc. The slave invites those recruiting applicants to the next stages of the recruitment process. Which conforms to the norms and values of the organization or after other hand-hired processes.

Third theme: Social media have a significant role in maintaining employees (e.g. rewards, punishment, motivations, and etc.)

Reviewing the social media of other organizations (especially those of competitors), human resource managers can discover the reward processes provided for employees in those organizations and compare these processes with their own. If needed, HR managers can take actions to improve the conditions in their organizations and in doing so, they create a sense of loyalty among employees and reduce employee turnovers. In this regard, participant 1 stated the following:

> "…In cyberspace, an individual might acquire some information about the benefits, salaries, etc. that business competitors offer their personnel which might possibly increase employees' desire to quit their jobs because some might believe they are being treated unfairly…"

Checking employees' Internet surfing during work hours, human resource managers can make decisions about rewarding or punishing their employees. Employers use CCTV cameras, security networks, and other tools to control their employees, and if employees use social media during work hours in line with assigned duties, they will be rewarded; otherwise disciplinary actions will be made, that is in case of negligence and attending personal activities during work hours. In security or specialized organizations and agencies, release of confidential documents by employees will result in intensive disciplinary actions. In this regard, participant 2 indicated the following:

> "…about Internet surfing, we can track the timing of an employee's posts on the Internet. If the contents are posted during work hours, the employee should be punished accordingly…"

Through creation of organizational social media, organizations are able to engage in motivational actions such as selecting and encouraging well-performed employees or establishing various cultural, athletic, and scientific groups; therefore, some psychological needs of employees are met and they are motivated. Participant 8 stated the following:

> "…Currently, we have created different groups on social media such as cultural, athletic, etc., and we try to place employees in distinct groups based on their interests in order to motivate them…"

Through reviewing digital footprint of employees on social media, one can discover their intellectual orientations, interests, needs and political, cultural, and ethical orientations. If these orientations contradict the norms of an organization,

necessary decisions should be made for the recruitment of those employees in the organization. Participant 5 stated the following:

> "…The use of virtual spaces and social media is important for making decisions to keep current employees, but not fully, can be used as a helping tool to better understand the employees' morale and needs…"

DISCUSSION

Many researches have studied the role of digital profiles in HRM (Akdere, 2005; Kligiene, 2012; Lin & Lu, 2011; Sun & Shang, 2014) and considering the increasing use of social media, it is very possible that more personal information will be shared in social platforms and to be accessible for HR managers. This research conducted with the aim to identify the main issues that HR managers are faced with implication of digital footprint in recruitment of new employees. For this reason, two main research questions, answered. To answer the first research question, the following themes were identified:

The first theme showed that using digital footprint enhances the complexity of employment process. The second theme indicated that the use of digital footprint in employment processes leads to the optimization (of time, work force, costs, etc.) and acquiring visions (better understanding of morals, manners, thoughts, etc.) with regard to job applicants; the third theme showed that the role and impact of digital footprint on post-recruitment processes is important; the fourth theme reflected that use of digital footprint to recruit applicant for top-level positions of organizations may have negative results on cyberspace. Finally, it is required to update the knowledge of HR managers due to the rapid changes of environmental conditions (particularly social media).

It should be noted that understanding how employees use online information can contribute to personnel selection practices, and its outcomes may affect organizational productivity, employee satisfaction (Ployhart & Weekley, 2010) and the assessment of an applicant's fit (Berkelaar et al., 2015) in various roles (Narayan et al., 2012). Due to the growth of computer-mediated communication (CMC) and new media, screening of employees via social media prior to their recruitment has conveyed new methods of traditional approaches to the world (Ramirez et al., 2002).

The following themes might be noted to answer the research questions: **themes** indicate that social media have a significant role in maintaining employees (e.g. to reward, punish, motivate, and etc.). Thus, the necessity of educating, culture-building and creating the essential infrastructures for social media use in the society and among employees seems fairly essential. **also themes** involve the necessary to update the knowledge of HR managers with respect to the rapid changes of environmental conditions (particularly social media).

While use of new media and social networks is increasingly growing, accordingly the legal and ethical issues will continue to grow and develop (Cavico et al., 2013). While social media is the main source of talent hunting for companies and

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employment and is viewed as a powerful and positive aspect of employment-related decisions (Narayanan et al., 2012), improper use of social media by current employees leads to disciplinary actions (Hidy & McDonald, 2013).

CONCLUSION

The results revealed nine main themes, including:(a) Digital footprint usage enhances the complexity of employment processes, (b) The use of digital footprint in employment processes leads to the optimization and acquiring visions with regard to job applicants, (c) The impact and significant positive role of social media on maintaining employees, (d) Connecting networks available on social media lead to detection of reciprocal opportunities and bridging among job applicants and employers, (e) The role and desired implication of social media in post-employment processes, (f) The need for updating the knowledge of HR managers with respect to the continuous changes in environmental conditions , (g) The necessity of offering an opportunity to job applicants in high level posts within an organization to explain the negative results of information collected from applicant's digital footprint on cyber space, (h) The need for measuring the accuracy of information collected from social media, (i) The necessity of educating, culture-building and creating the essential infrastructures for social media use in the society and among employees.

The conclusion shows the notion that employers, using a mixture of growing information, including new technologies, make judgements about job candidates which in turn affects employment relations, career management, and communicative characteristics (Berkelaar, 2015). All of the above-mentioned matters affect evaluations and their subsequent recruitment decisions (Case, 2012). In fact, the power of the Internet and social media as a part of it, is increasingly enhanced by human resource functions for recruitment, selection, training, and interaction and engagement with current and potential employees (Dutta, 2014). A typical thread identified during interviews was that a professional digital profile might have positive and negative impacts on recruiting and maintaining employees. Particularly, sometimes hiring managers check social media searching for reasons not to hire a job applicant. Finally, it must be noted that employment-related decisions based on social media which are under compilation requires more academic and practical investigation and analysis.

Improper and irresponsible use of social capital convey significant risks for users, employees, and organizations (Nyangeni et al., 2015). In this case, negative perceptions and effects of these perceptions are avoided. These perceptions resolve which in turn minimizes damages to individuals' professional and career images (Peluchette et al., 2013). Recruitment managers monitor social media more than ever in order to screen job applicants with worrying online behavior (Hidy & McDonald, 2013). Hence, social media is pertinent to employment decisions Consequently, job candidates should be aware that sharing information across the Internet might have negative consequences on searching or sustaining employees (Bergeson, 2011; Kietzmann et al., 2012).

It should not be neglected that online data are usually available for free, easy to gather, and enormous in amount in comparison to the data accessible through traditional processes. In fact, the results of the current research will increase the awareness of digital footprint use by companies in the context of decision-making acts related to recruitment employees. Better awareness of employers and employees about the fact that social media data may be useful in recruitment and employment decisions can result in less disciplinary actions and terminations.

LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The main limitation of the present research is associated with the natural limitations of qualitative researches in generalizability of results and findings to other cases. Accordingly, results of the current study may not easily generalizable to other areas of study. The second limitation is the sample size, as well as the number of cases that are obtained from two banks only. It is suggested that future researches cover larger samples from different industries.

Future research should be conducted based on the classification whether companies use such media for recruitment purposes or they are more focused on contacting the customers through social media. In addition, if the organizational use of social media directly relates to the quality of results obtained from implications, this matter is worth examining. For instance, organizations with a more active media presence may gain a wider access to job applicants, as well as a wider range of applicants attracted to their organization.

Further research is needed to understand the conditions under which these findings were derived. By doing so, researchers can conclude whether the effects of screening practices examined in this study depend on factors such as appropriate or professional level of social media sites of job applicants or not, and what modifications should be made by users to adjust their privacy settings on social media.

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