Social HR: The Impact of Using Social Networks on Effective Recruitment and Talent Management

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Abstract

The present study has made a comprehensive assessment on sources of recruitment effectiveness, as well as how effective recruitment will lead to effective talent management. The study is based on how social networks affect Human Resource functions, in specific recruitment and Talent Management. Recruitment source effects were assessed through organizations and human resource practitioners' perspective. The relationship between social networks and applicants was explored in terms of key job and organizational communicated to attract quality applicants, and their subsequent intention to pursue the job, which will lead to an effective talent management. The research was designed with perspective of practitioners as they were assessed through the distribution of a survey, in well-known companies in Jordan. Results indicated that the surveyed sample used social networks for many reasons, and recruitment in particular is one of those reasons. In addition, effective recruitment was considered important in attracting quality applicants. Overall, the research has provided evidence to support the need for organizations to develop and maintain a recruitment strategy that incorporates a diverse range of sources to reach a quality of applicants to fill the desired positions.

Key Words: Social HR, Social Networks, Effective Recruitment, Talent Management
1. Introduction

This study aims at exploring the phenomena of social networking sites in effective recruitment and accordingly, effective talent management. Information was acquired by the use of a survey conducted in Jordanian companies. Therefore, the following research questions were considered worthy of investigation, with the broader primary research objective, addressed in the study, being: to examine the impact of the usage of social networks on effective recruitment, and in return, effective recruitment on talent management.

To examine the abovementioned research objective and study the degree to which the use of social networking sites leads to effective recruitment and talent management, the existing literature was examined and is discussed in the following section, and accordingly, a research model was built to find the relationships between the qualities of social networking sites and effective recruitment, as well as effective recruitment and effective talent management. The selected characteristics of social networks are ease of use, usefulness and quality of information.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

For this research, a model was developed consisting of five variables to build relationships between three aspects of social networks, and effective recruitment and talent management. To construct this model, the extent literature on each variable was reviewed in aim to studying factors influencing each one. The model consists of two characteristics of social networks; perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness, and two HR functions being effective recruitment and effective talent management.

2.1 Ease of Use

A wide range of previous research has indicated that perceived ease of use is a big deciding factor of attitude towards a technology (Burton-Jones & Hubona, 2005; Childers, Carr, Peck & Carson, 2001; Davis, 1989, Davis, Bagozzi & Warshaw, 1989; Lim & Ting, 2012; Selamat, Jaffar & Ong, 2009; Teo, 2001; Yulihasri & Daud, 2011). Perceived ease of use refers to the degree to which something is seen as easy to understand, learn and function (Rogers, 1962). A more recent definition viewed ease of use as how direct and understandable is it to interact with the system, ease of getting it to do what is needed, the mental effort required to interact with the system and its actual ease of use (Ndubisi et al., 2003).

Moving to the context of social networks, Baruah (2012) argued that the perceived ease of use of social media networks has stemmed from several perceived aspects, two of which are: cost-effective and time-effective. It is of lower cost to use social networking for personal as well as business usage as most of it is normally free of charge (Baruah, 2012). In contrast with traditional forms of media such as print or electronic where they are generally more
expensive as you need to pay for development, space and time; social media allows for low-cost and time real-time methods making it much more convenient (Edmunds, n.d).

The most commonly perceived advantage of the usage of social networks in recruitment is that people can quickly and easily reach information on a broad scale of job opportunities, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, minimizing the need for employees to look for a job whilst on task duties at work (Feldman et al., 2002; Galanaki, 2002; Smith et al., 2004).

Based on the previous discussion, it is proposed that:

\[ H_1: \text{Perceived ease of use of social networks has a significant positive influence on effective recruitment.} \]

2.2 Usefulness

Perceived usefulness is the degree that a person believes using a particular system would enhance their job performance (Al-Gahtani, 2001; Davis, 1993; Mathwick et al., 2001). Viewing it from another perspective, a research was made by Tan and Teo (2000), who regarded perceived usefulness as an essential aspect to the adaptation of innovations. Likewise, Bhattacherjee (2002) observed; one’s willingness to use a certain system is by itself considered perceived usefulness.

Equally important Davis, Bagozzi and Warshaw (1992) found that perceived usefulness is a determinant of adoption and acceptance, therefore, if a technology is rejected by users, it can be due to their lack of perceived usefulness for it, even if it was easy to use. Similarly, Adams et al. (1992) found that perceived usefulness is an antecedent of user satisfaction of a particular platform. In a study by Deloitte University Press (2014), General Motors stated that they incorporated social media in the recruitment process because of its usefulness in building a talent network, and communicating and sharing data and information among a wider mass of people, resulting in a ripple effect and a stronger talent network. This approach helped General Motors in attracting the needed talent for their demands and objectives (Deloitte, 2014). Based on the previous discussion, the following hypothesis is developed:

\[ H_2: \text{Perceived usefulness of social networks has a significant influence on effective recruitment.} \]

2.3 Recruitment

Previous literature provides numerous definitions for recruitment and most definitions of recruitment emphasize on the organization’s collective efforts to identify, attract, and influence the job choices of competent applicants (Ployhart, 2006). In addition, Novit (1979) referred to recruitment as “the phase of personnel management that involves reaching out and attracting a supply of people from which to select qualified candidates for job vacancies.” (p. 94). Most recently in 2006, Costello described recruitment as "the set of activities and processes used to legally obtain a sufficient number of qualified people at the right place and
time so that the people in the organization can select each other in their own best short and long term interests” (p. 48).

2.4 Talent Management

Ever since the phrase “War for Talent” was used by consultancy group McKinsey in 1997, the topic gained a large amount of interest from researchers as well as practitioners (Michaels et al., 2001). This fairly recent emphasis on talent management shows a shift from more traditional HR to the management of talent that is especially fits the dynamic competitive business environment we live in today (Hambrick & Mason, 1984). The process of talent management is being increasingly adopted, as more organizations realize that their staff’s skills and talents drive their overall company success (Khatri, Gupta, Gulati and Chauhan, 2010).

Although there is a significant amount of academic and practitioner interest existing on the topic of talent management, it is still underdeveloped (Collings & Mellahi, 2009). As noted by Aston and Morton (2005, p. 30), “there isn’t a single consistent or concise definition” of talent management. Nonetheless, as demonstrated below, most existing definitions of talent management revolve around identifying, developing and retaining key people for key positions in organizations. In 2004, Rothwell and Kazanas defined talent management as “the systematic effort to recruit, develop and retain highly productive and promotable people” (p. 43). In another definition by Collings & Mellahi (2009, p. 5), talent management is “activities and processes that involve the systematic identification of key positions which differentially contribute to the organization’s sustainable competitive advantage, the development of a talent pool of high potential and high performing incumbents to fill these roles, and the development of a differentiated human resource architecture to facilitate filling these positions with competent incumbents and to ensure their continued commitment to the organization”.

Research has shown that organizations that excel at talent management have put in action a system that is internally consistent, and emphasize the practices used for attracting, selecting, developing, evaluating and retaining talent; and align them with organization strategy, culture and targets (Beechler & Woodward, 2009). In support of that, according to a report by the Boston Consulting Group in 2012, companies that have the best economic performance always outperform their competitors in three main areas: talent management, performance management and rewards, and leadership development. Additionally, they concluded that these firms use incentive to involve managers in employee development, nurturing potentials talents and attracting others. Based on the previous discussion, it is suggested that:

\[ H_3: \text{Effective recruitment has a significant positive influence on effective Talent Management.} \]
3. Methodology

For this study, quantitative methodology was used to gain insights into the HR department’s perception and usage of social networks as a tool for enhancing the effectiveness of the recruitment process, as well as how that effective recruitment plays a part in creating effective talent management. For this research, the use of a survey was chosen because of its ability to collect quantitative data for further statistical analysis (Zikmund & Babin, 2007) in an easy and understandable manner that is quick, inexpensive, accurate and efficient (Burns and Bush, 2003; Kumar, Aaker, and Day, 2002; Neuman, 2003; Zikmund and Babin, 2007).

For these reasons, the survey method was chosen for this research as the best fit for testing the hypotheses developed for this research. Following this section is the method used to design and develop the survey in order to reach accurate and complete information about the study on hand (Hair et al., 2008; Malhotra, 1999; Malhotra et al., 2004). Based on extensive research and reviewing of the existing literature on the topic, a questionnaire of a total of 37 items was developed to measure that several variables created for this research. Five additional items were used for attaining demographic information to help in the analysis of the findings.

Selection and scaling techniques were taken into consideration and a five-point Likert scale was chosen as a suitable method measuring the relationships presented in the proposed model (scores ranged from 1 = “strongly agree” to 5 = “strongly disagree”). The Likert scale was chosen as it is known to be simple to use, understandable, easy to construct, and its administration via self-completion questionnaires (Hair et al., 2008; Malhotra et al., 2002). For the empirical testing of the hypothesis developed in this research, data was collected via survey distribution both online and offline. The sample surveyed was chosen to be people working in the Human Resources field of a Jordanian company. A total of 108 participants took part in responding to the survey, out of which 100 surveys were fully completed and usable, and 8 were discarded.

4. Data Analysis

To examine the hypotheses developed for this research, a linear regression test was conducted with the use of the statistical program SPSS Statistics 21 to find the t-value. The linear regression analysis is an approach for modeling relationships between a scalar dependent variable, and one or multiple explanatory variables (Freedman, 2009). As stated by Chin (1998), path coefficients with an absolute t-value bigger than 1.96 denotes a level of significance of 0.05, and those with an absolute t-value over 2.58 presents a 0.01 significance level, whereas t-values greater than 3.26 present a significance level of 0.001. In order to test the validity of the survey questions, Cronbach’s Alpha Reliability Analysis was conducted on
the survey

4.1 Data Preparation

The transformation of data collected into a suitable form for analysis is essential to reaching good and meaningful analysis. Table (2) demonstrates the reliability analysis results for domains of the social networks, effective recruitment and talent management using Cronbach alpha.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Domains</th>
<th>Number of items</th>
<th>Reliability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Ease of Use</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.845</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Usefulness</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Effective recruitment</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Effective talent managemnt</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.817</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Developed for this research

The values provided in Table (2) demonstrate that the domains of the social networks, effective recruitment and talent management reflect a satisfactory reliability.

5. Data Results

To test the hypotheses developed in this research, the linear regression analysis was conducted.

\( H_1: \) Perceived ease of use of social networks has a significant positive influence on effective recruitment.

According to the results of simple linear regressions, the beta coefficient reflects the impact value on the dependent variable (effective recruitment). It was (0.385) with a probability of (0.000). This value is considered to be significantly contributing to the effective recruitment, as the probability of t statistics was less than 0.05. The t statistics tests the linearity importance of the beta coefficient obtained to the independent variable. As a result the hypothesis is supported concluding an impact of the independent variable on the dependent variable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variable</th>
<th>( \beta )</th>
<th>( t )</th>
<th>Sig(t)</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ease of Use</td>
<td>0.385</td>
<td>5.69</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Developed for this research

\( H_2: \) Perceived usefulness of social networks has a significant influence on effective recruitment.
According to the results of simple linear regressions the beta coefficient reflects the impact value on the dependent variable (effective recruitment). It was (0.381) with a probability of (0.000). This value is considered to be significantly contributing to the effective recruitment, as the probability of t statistics was less than 0.05. The t statistics tests the linearity importance of the beta coefficient obtained to the independent variable.

As a result the hypothesis is supported concluding an impact of the independent variable on the dependent variable.

Table 4: Simple Linear Regression for Testing the Impact of Usefulness on the Effective Recruitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variable</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig(t)</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Usefulness</td>
<td>0.381</td>
<td>5.82</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Developed for this research

Hypothesis 3

H₄: Effective recruitment has a significant positive influence on effective talent management.

According to the results of simple linear regressions the beta coefficient reflects the impact value on the dependent variable (effective talent management). It was (0.572) with a probability of (0.000). This value is considered to be significantly contributing to the effective talent management, as the probability of t statistics was less than 0.05. The t statistics tests the linearity importance of the beta coefficient obtained to the independent variable. As a result the hypothesis is supported concluding an impact of the independent variable on the dependent variable.

Table 6: Simple Linear Regression for testing the Impact Effective Recruitment on Effective Talent Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variable</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig(t)</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effective Recruitment</td>
<td>0.572</td>
<td>4.96</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Developed for this research

6. Discussion and Conclusion

Perceived ease of use was hypothesized to have a positive influence on effective recruitment. This finding is consistent with previous research in various contexts; as people tend to use new technologies if they believe that it would be free of a clear-cut effort leading to ease of use (Zhang, Zhao, & Tan 2008; Malhora, Heine & Grover, 2001; Saade, 2007; Venkatesh & Bala, 2008). Furthermore, it was found that the more easy to use a certain system is, the more it influences ones’ own behavior to use it (Succi, 1999). In addition, Guriting and Ndubisi (2006, p.18) found that "perceived ease of use had a significant positive effect of behavioral intention to use online services". Several previous studies support this hypothesis in theory as Farris and Dumas (1999) found that ease of use...
of social networks in their flexibility makes them an appealing tool for recruitment (Farris and Dumas, 1999). Moreover, Radcliff (2000) stated that social recruitment is much easier and quicker than traditional tools.

Perceived usefulness of social media was hypothesized to positively influence recruitment. This finding was consistent with previous researches, which provide evidence of the significant effect of the perceived usefulness in recruitment. As stated by Kumar and Priyanka (2014), there is a significant relationship between perceived usefulness, attitude towards usage and behavioral intention to use e-recruitment networks. Furthermore, (Broughton, Foley, Ledermaier and Cox, 2013) found out that the use of social media benefits the recruitment process (Broughton, Foley, Ledermaier and Cox, 2013). Additionally, Deloitte University Press (2014) concluded in their study that companies incorporate social media networks in their recruitment because of its usefulness in making the process more efficient and effective.

Effective Recruitment was hypothesized to positively influence effective talent management. This finding was consistent with previous researches that support the significant effect of effective recruitment on effective talent management. For example, according to Breaugh (2009), any good talent management program is based upon effective recruitment. In support of that, according to a statement by Oladapo (2014) on the scope of effective talent management, recruitment is believed to play a significant role in talent management; in order to hire the most talented, you must first recruit them (Breaugh, 2009).

As the research sample was solely limited to Jordanian companies, it cannot be generalized that other countries would come up with similar findings, that being due to certain cultural influences that can affect results and constrain them. In addition, the amount of companies that are making use of social networking sites is small proportionally. This may limit the generalizability of the study. That being said, it may be difficult to draw a certain conclusion about social-oriented networking sites, recruitment and talent management. Moreover, the study is only a representative in the current time however; the field of social networking sites undergoes rapid and frequent changes and advancements making it imperative to monitor it over longer time periods in order to gain solid and more accurate results. The propositions and ideas presented in this paper need further empirical testing. The limitations noted above could provide a basis for forthcoming studies. Due to very little previous literature on the topic, future research needs to address how recruitment practices impact talent management on a profounder and more detailed level. On the relatively new topic of social networks, further research is recommended on its relationship with effective recruitment in order to study the long-term changes in impact and factors over the course of time.
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