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LinkedIn for Searching Better Job Opportunity: Passive Jobseekers' Perceived Experience

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Abstract

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Keywords

LinkedIn, Job Seekers, Social Networking Site, Passive Candidates, Focus Group Discussion, Participants

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LinkedIn for Searching Better Job Opportunity: Passive Jobseekers' Perceived Experience

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LinkedIn is a famous online social networking platform for the jobholders, jobseekers and employers although their purposes vary. Passive jobseekers are those who already have jobs but are searching for better alternatives. In this paper, we tried to identify the passive jobseekers' perceived experience towards LinkedIn as a job searching platform. We used Focused Group Discussion (FGD) method to unmask the perception of 150 respondents from Bangladesh and India who use LinkedIn as professional social networking site frequently. After summarizing the FGD results, it was revealed that LinkedIn is the most preferred source of job search tool among the passive job candidates in terms of all aspects such as information availability, accuracy, relevance, reliability, timeliness and cost effectiveness. In addition, the authors revealed that the participants did not care much about privacy, fairness and ethics on LinkedIn as a professional social networking site (SNS). We expect that the results of this qualitative study will be helpful as a groundwork for further research. We also hope that the results will aid the recruiters to efficiently attract competent passive candidates as well as the job seekers to utilize LinkedIn in finding better job opportunity. Keywords: LinkedIn, Job Seekers, Social Networking Site, Passive Candidates, Focus Group Discussion, Participants

Introduction

The optimum success and competence of an organization do not merely depend on its financial resources or using the best strategy, rather it is determined by the extent to which and how it is using its competent human resources (Hosain, 2017). In an intense competitive job market such as India and Bangladesh where labor supply is abundant, it is highly difficult for job seekers to search and attain good job opportunities through traditional media such as paper advertisements, job circulars, company websites etc. Fortunately, the internet technology has brought some tremendous invention such as social networking sites (SNSs).

LinkedIn is such a professional online SNS where both the employers and potential employees can share the same platform. For instance, companies can do their branding, promotion and talent search by having a professional LinkedIn account whereas the existing employees or even unemployed graduates can have accounts and look for job opportunities by becoming connected; and grabbing and exchanging the information necessary. It is a social networking site that is entirely objected to build professional relationships among the uses. Since its launch in 2003, LinkedIn has become a major job related sharing platform recognized by the users of about 200 countries worldwide (Zide, Elman, & Shahani-Denning, 2014). According to LinkedIn Press Center (n.d.), it has a representation of all Fortune 500 companies since its origin. In a survey conducted by the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM), 95% of the 541 HRM professionals indicated that they used LinkedIn to recruit passive candidates who might not otherwise apply (SHRM, 2016).

After LinkedIn, 58% reported that they looked at Facebook and 42% cited Twitter as a site they frequented for recruitment purposes (Karl & Peluchette, 2013) whereas Ollington, Gibb, and Harcourt (2013) interviewed 25 recruitment specialists in New Zealand and found that the most popular site used to search and attract job candidates was LinkedIn (90 %; Zide et al., 2014). It has some features like “Apply” and “Easy Apply” that is very unique (Kutlu, Rabea, & Udeozor, 2018). It also offers users a number of features that conventional resume/CV cannot offer such as connection with other users, join interest groups, publish news, posts or comments on others’ posts and follow organizations (Roulin & Levashina, 2018). Furthermore, users’ listed skills can also be endorsed by members of their network and such endorsements become observable on the users’ profiles. Connections can even generate extra skills that users have not listed themselves (Carr, 2016). Therefore, LinkedIn is not only a platform for the pure (first time) jobseekers, but also it is a sharing platform for the job holders (passive job seekers) and employers who can show, advertise, interact, exchange, comment and search job related information among each other if they are connected.

Hence, the aim of this study is to identify the passive job seekers’ user perception regarding LinkedIn as a source of searching better job opportunity. For the same purpose, in this study, the authors want to highlight the following research questions:

- Q1: To what extent, LinkedIn is perceived as source of job search for passive candidates?
- Q2: How LinkedIn differ from other traditional job search media for passive candidates?

Literature Review

More recently, social networking sites (SNSs) have become inevitable partners in our everyday lives from recreation to job search activities. Particularly after inception, some new SNSs are ever increasing in terms of user number. Some most notable SNSs as of 2017 are Facebook (2.13 billion active users), Instagram (800 million active users), Twitter (330 million active users), Snapchat (187 million active users) and LinkedIn (546 million users) (Statistics Portal, n. d.; Elder & Gallagher, 2017) and is still counting. Such a large number of users have successfully attracted many companies and businesses to advertise, promote and disseminate their products, services and related information through this mass online media. The use has not been limited to market and promote the products and services, rather these online sites are being utilized in job advertising, job searching and corporate recruitment (and selection) platform as well.

LinkedIn and employability

LinkedIn, as the world’s largest professional online job platform has near-about 546 million users in around 200 countries (LinkedIn Press Center, n. d.). As the job related social platform, it contains the accountholders who are not only graduates, but also presently employed and most importantly, the organizations who constantly seek better candidates for created and vacant positions. As the connected users are constantly interacted with each other, it is very easy for the job seekers and job providers to exchange their resumes, CVs, other job information such as job postings, internship, training and so many more.

Although appropriate research on LinkedIn and recruitment is still rare, a few researches have been conducted on Facebook in recent years. For example, the study conducted by Peluchette and Karl (2010) indicated that students nearer to graduation were more conscious of the need for a professional online personality suggesting that SNSs are used as a

form of impression management and identity formation (Zide et al., 2014). But as a natural argument, employers are ethically and legally questioned for searching and gathering information from the social networking site like Facebook which is mainly introduced as a personal social online site, not as a professional online platform like LinkedIn. While some studies highlighted ethical and legal implications in searching online profiles, recruiters consistently use sites like LinkedIn to identify qualified applicants for a job (Karl & Peluchette, 2013). It is especially justifiable because LinkedIn was primarily developed to purposefully allow the potential candidates to be identified by the companies. Furthermore, some information in other SNSs might be coded as classified because of “Privacy” settings meaning that the owner(s) of those contents do not want those to be publicly discoverable even the profiles are connected to each other; while in case of LinkedIn, it never happens as the profile holders’ intention is to show them rather than hiding. While the other online SNSs like Facebook and Twitter mainly produces job irrelevant information, LinkedIn provides more concise and relevant information about the candidates such as education, experience, skills, training etc. In addition, the information provided on LinkedIn may be more accurate than other SNSs since peers and former work colleagues can verify one’s entries (Davison, Maraist, & Bing, 2011). Therefore, it is crucial that we start to methodically examine LinkedIn as the most popular professional site used by applicants and employees.

LinkedIn and passive job candidates

As already noted before, passive job candidates are those who are already employed but still looking for better opportunity to switch. Such candidates are not in a hurry to make any decision neither they make any job application. As the largest job related social network, LinkedIn is the platform for such professionals where they publish their job related information like experience, training, skills that can be supported and endorsed by others. Unlike Facebook, all the information posted on LinkedIn is open and easily searchable if the profiles are connected. While users of other SNSs try to hide some behavioral information even they are posted online, uses of LinkedIn do the opposite, they want that information to be shared and reached to the appropriate person.

Many organizations use SNSs such as LinkedIn to recognize passive jobseekers who use their profiles to indicate that they are interested in and available for certain organizations, positions and occupations. HR professionals now-a-days recognize that business oriented SNSs offer a fruitful supply of information relating to passive job seekers (Wolk, 2004). Such passive job seekers are particularly desirable as they symbolize an unexploited pool of human resources who are not connected with placement agencies or other recruiting professionals. Further, many of these candidates are considered to be stable (DeKay, 2009) as a majority of LinkedIn members are using their profiles to be contacted by the new employers to start a new career or upgrade positions. Such individuals often include detail job description of their present and past experiences, summaries expertise and references of their present and former supervisors and co-workers. Because of all the mentioned causes, LinkedIn is very popular to the employers, employees and unemployed although they have varied and diversified purposes. While employers look for competent employees, current employees look for better alternatives and unemployed users in LinkedIn look for their first jobs. According to the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM, 2016), a rising number of employers are looking for candidates who are currently employed and not actively looking for a new job but who may be open to a good career opportunity if one arises termed as “passive job candidates” or “passive job seekers”. These candidates are tempting because many employers believe that inactive job candidates possess more competencies and higher positive employment records than active job candidates looking for work (Suen, 2018). As such candidates will not jump into another job

without severe consideration, attracting such candidates is more difficult than engaging active candidates because it requires detailed persuasion and an understanding of their feelings and responses towards the employers (Suen, 2018). Therefore, in this study, we suggest that LinkedIn is the best place for these passive job candidates for searching better job alternatives and showcasing themselves. They are the participants of this empirical qualitative study.

LinkedIn in India and Bangladesh

India is a big country with abundant supply of employable people. It is the second largest country in the world regarding the population size. According to Business Statistics (2018), there are 25 million LinkedIn users in India who are business owners or employed at higher positions of different manufacturing or service sectors. Social media recruitment is the most popular recruiting trend in India with a rise of 20% in its popularity in the last 3 years (Dinesh & Kumar, 2015). A huge number of Indian organizations have implemented social media recruiting due to the growing use of SNSs by the jobseekers during their job search process (Kumar & Suneja, 2015). According to a survey conducted by Ma FoiRanstad, one of the biggest placement agencies in India in 2011, 82% job seekers are particularly focused on social media to reach their employment goals quickly and more efficiently, 87% use social media to uncover information about an organization's culture, 75% job seekers track movements and events of their favorite companies to update themselves and prepare for job interviews while 75% would hesitate joining a company if their current employees have provided negative reviews about the company (Priyadarshini, Kumar, & Jha, 2017). Another survey conducted by Dinesh and Kumar (2015) revealed that 40% of candidates use LinkedIn to search better job opportunities and it is popular among 65% job candidates who participated at the survey.

On the other hand, In Bangladesh, the scenario is a bit different. While Facebook is still the leading SNS, LinkedIn is slowly carving its position as a leading professional networking platform. Bangladeshi individuals and businesses, young and old, have been using LinkedIn for jobs, recruitment and building networks; and the number is growing every day. According to Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) Bangladesh had 4 million active LinkedIn users in 2018 as students, service personnel, businessmen and corporate & business owners.

It should be noted that so far, there is no survey conducted on the perception of passive job seekers regarding the use of LinkedIn to search for opportunity in India and Bangladesh, in fact whole South Asia. As a result, there is a lack of research evidence in this area.

Authors' background and motivation towards this study

Among us, the first author is working at Business School of Sichuan University as a research assistant as well as a PhD candidate under the second author who is a professor at Business School, Sichuan University. Both of us have a deep interest in discovering the influence of social networking sites on various HRM activities such as recruitment & selection, pre-employment background check and in-organizational working relationships. We have a number of published papers regarding the SNSs and different HR practices.

We were looking for conducting a qualitative study based on the role of LinkedIn and passive jobseekers' employment. In this regard, we have two motivations in general. The first one was to endeavor the passive jobseekers' interests in using LinkedIn as the job searching tool while the second one was to ascertain the factors that influence in using LinkedIn as the job searching platform. The study was conducted with the assistance of a university project from where we got the financial support.

We selected India and Bangladesh as those two countries are very populated with a huge young population. Most of the young people in these two countries use social networking sites for looking job opportunities.

Implications of the Study

Theoretical implication

Although a good number of studies have been conducted regarding SNSs and hiring, only a handful of them focused on LinkedIn. Especially, the perception of passive job candidates regarding LinkedIn as a job searching platform is very limited. Moreover, such studies were conducted mostly on developed countries. As the second and eighth largest countries (India and Bangladesh) in terms of population, there is an acute necessity of research on the SNSs' role of recruitment and selection on these two labor abundant countries. This paper is one of the initial attempts to fill such gap.

Practical implication:

As authors, we expect that this study will help the employers to understand the opinions and views of the passive jobseekers regarding LinkedIn. Accordingly, they can formulate and implement some of the effective policies and procedures to attract competent and promising job candidates who otherwise would not (or cannot) apply directly for the open positions.

Research Method

Justification for selecting qualitative approach and study technique

As noted earlier, we selected the qualitative approach for conducting this study. Qualitative approach is suitable when the researchers want to reveal the viewpoints of specific target groups or small parts of the whole population (Porter & Bhattacharya, 2005). In this study, we tried to identify the passive jobseekers' perceived experience regarding LinkedIn as the job searching platform. Since the passive jobseekers are a small portion of the overall employee base, we adopted qualitative approach.

As a sound qualitative technique, we preferred Focus Group Discussion (FGD). The strength of FGD relies on allowing the participants to agree or disagree with each other so that it provides an insight into how a group thinks about an issue, about the range of opinion and ideas, and the inconsistencies and variation that exists in a particular community in terms of their beliefs, experiences and practices (Krueger, 1988; Morgan, 1988; Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990). The authors, due to the suitability of getting the detail viewpoints of the small number of participants, selected FGD as the research technique in this study.

Sample size and selection of the participants

For selecting the participants, we utilized purposive convenience sampling (Willing, 2013) method who best match the research objective. According to Smith and Osborn (2007), purposive sampling is the best way to find participants to whom research questions closely match. The target sample in this study was the professionals who had LinkedIn accounts and are looking for better job opportunity. We selected the participants from two cities of India (Mumbai and Chennai) and two cities of Bangladesh (Dhaka and Chittagong). Selection of the research areas (4 cities) was assumed to be representative in two countries according to the job

opportunities and use of LinkedIn professionally. We selected 100 respondents from India and 50 respondents from Bangladesh. Out of the participants, 39% were female and the rest were male. All participants selected had an active LinkedIn account and they spend at least 30 minutes in searching job and exchanging job related information. The demographic information has been presented in Table-1:

Table-1: (Demographic profile of the respondents; N=150)

No. of respondents		India		Bangladesh	
		100		50	
Age Level (%)	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-30	40 and above
	39	22	17	13	9
Gender (%)		Male		Female	
		61		39	
Educational Level (%)		Undergraduate	Graduate	PhD	
		25	65	10	
Length of Service (%)		2-5 Years	6-10 Years	11-15 Years	16 Years and more
		46	31	18	5

Source: Authors' selection

As the researchers, we took written consents from the participants. Further, in order to ensure participants' safety, privacy, and confidentiality, their real identities have been kept secret and they were ensured that their details will only be used for this study and at any cost will not be transferred to any third party nor such identities will be disclosed to anyone.

Collection of data

After selecting the respondents, we divided them into 15 groups having 10 members in each group. 10 groups were formed in India and 5 groups in Bangladesh to better represent the ratio of users in each country. After forming the groups, we provided some topics related to the research questions, instructed to discuss those topics and recorded their discussions. Each group was allotted 30 minutes to discuss among themselves regarding the topics provided. After that, we summarized the mostly used keywords & sentences; and prepared the results on the basis of those keywords & sentences. Table-2 and Table-3 highlight the data collection procedure and the allocation of topics for discussion respectively.

Table-2: Stepwise data collection procedure

Step	Detailed description
1. Formation of groups	15 groups formed having 10 members in each group
2. Instruction	Group members were instructed about the time limits, topics of discussion and recording procedure
3. Themes/topics	Topics or themes of discussion were given to the groups
4. Collection of most used keywords and sentences	After discussion, most used keywords and sentences have been collected through the audio and written records
5. Summarization	The results were gathered and summarized.

Source: Authors' elaboration

Table-3: Topics provided to the respondents for discussion

Number	Topic	Literature source(s)
1	The acceptability of LinkedIn as the medium of searching job	Candidates are highly aware of how they have to present themselves in a LinkedIn profile in order to attract the attention of selection professionals (del Cerro, Rodríguez, Vidal, Escabrós, & Oberst, 2017). LinkedIn has a major impact on recruitment in South Africa (Koch, Gerber, & De Klerk, 2018). Using information gained from a LinkedIn profile allowed for better inferences of extraversion and self-presentation of the profile owner (de Ven, Bogaert, Serlie, Brandt, & Denissen, 2017)
2	Ease of use and user friendliness	Members perceived the LinkedIn community as user-friendly and easy to use. It does not require significant technical knowledge (Cheema, Dujeeva, & Vaikunthan, 2015)
3	Availability of information	LinkedIn profiles provide more job related information than the traditional CVs/resumes (Hosain, & Liu, 2020a).
4	Accuracy of information	Most of the job related information in LinkedIn profiles are correct as such information are or can be endorsed by others (Hosain & Liu, 2020b).
5	Relevance of information	Information posted in LinkedIn profiles are more job/organization related (Hosain, Hossin, Xiaohua, Aktaruzzaman, & Mustafi, 2020)
6	Reliability and timeliness of information	LinkedIn provides more real time and reliable information than any other job related SNSs (Hosain & Liu, 2020c)
7	Cost effectiveness	LinkedIn accounts are free to open and operate. Therefore, such information are cost effective for both the jobseekers and employers (Hosain & Liu, 2020a)
8	Privacy, fairness and ethical issues	As LinkedIn is a real job related SNS, all the information posted here are public. Therefore, the users do not have to worry about privacy, fairness and ethical concerns (Hosain & Liu, 2020a)

Source: Literature survey

Findings of the Focus Group Discussions

After summarizing the focus group discussion (FGD) results in two countries, the highlights have been reported emerged at the following manner.

Topic-1: Acceptability of LinkedIn

Majority of the participants viewed LinkedIn as the best acceptable platform that passive job seekers like them can utilize. As most of them had no time and intention to apply formally for the better alternative, they just surf LinkedIn where they can connect, interact, exchange and get all necessary job related information they need. Therefore, to the group members, LinkedIn is almost the only medium on which they can rely on for searching better alternative.

LinkedIn has made it very easy to search job especially for passive candidates. It is the best medium to connect prospective employers and job related information [feeling confident]. We are more than satisfied with such a professional social platform [laugh] (Participant from India, male, 33 years of age).

Further, as the candidates are familiar with how to present themselves in order to get the attention of the recruiters, they mostly preferred LinkedIn as job searching platform (del Cerro et al., 2017). Furthermore, some participants argued that they can directly contact the recruiters through this site which is not possible otherwise.

LinkedIn has enabled us to contact directly with the employers through becoming linked with their accounts. This is such a good opportunity and we can utilize it best if we want to [laugh] (Participant from Bangladesh, male, 39 years of age).

Topic-2: Ease of use and user friendliness

According to almost all the participants, LinkedIn is the easiest way to use and navigate for the job and related information without any complicatedness. Some participants further reported that the posts and videos are particularly made their requirements easy and timely manner.

LinkedIn has made it easy for the passive candidates like us to make accurate decision to switch the job after getting to know each other (employer and employee). As there are no complicated functions or restrictions in using the site, we can easily utilize it [laugh] (Participant from India, female, 33 years of age).

Further, the participants reported that the contents and features are very easy to navigate even for those who are not very good at IT. Anyone can open an account and use it without facing very much complicity. Some participants further affirmed that this site has enabled them to compare one employer with another just by browsing through the profiles available on the other sites like LinkedIn, Facebook, Jobster etc. Additionally, a small number of participants also reported that availability of videos and images on LinkedIn reduces the boredom and makes the job search process interesting for them.

The site is very easy to operate and anyone with a basic knowledge of IT can surf it while uploading the contents and updating the information [own] as well as get the necessary information such as contacts, videos and images [others'] (Participant from Bangladesh, female, 41 years of age).

Topic-3: Availability of information

A large number (about two-thirds) of participants viewed that LinkedIn helps them to gather relevant information about the prospective employers within no time through the contents posted about them [employers]. Many of the participants further opined that information they need are easily available in LinkedIn. Such information may not be otherwise available. It has been possible only because the personal connections between the employers and employees.

Most of the information we need are there on LinkedIn [confident laugh]. Indeed, we need to find them out on our own way. But the site made it easy for us through a common platform [laugh] (Participant from Bangladesh, male, 44 years of age).

Most importantly, such information is real time information and very important for the jobseekers [such as company contact, number of employees, company strategy]. Most of such information are not easily available through any other sources.

The information we need as the passive job seekers are mostly available in LinkedIn. Therefore, we can confidently affirm that it is the best source of information for the young people like us (Participant from Bangladesh, male, 30 years of age).

Topic-4: Information accuracy

The participants (about 60%) reported that the information they get are mostly accurate, not all although. In rare cases, there are inaccurate or inappropriate information published in LinkedIn.

We will not say that all the information published in LinkedIn are very accurate [laugh]. But at least two-thirds of them we found similar to our experience when we investigated later on. Also, we can challenge the publishers who post inaccurate information (Participant from India, male, 35 years of age).

Further, the ease of long term conversation, constant connectivity and instant feedback by the employers enable the potential applicants to gather all the desired information about the organization and the job as well as they can cross check the information with the employer if connected to.

Through LinkedIn, it has become very easy for us to interact with the prospective employers from India and abroad and unlike the company's website, it's more of a two-way communication between the employers and job seekers [laugh]. We do not have to wait to get our query satisfied [...] and fetch

the [required] details at any point in time (Participant from India, female, 26 years of age).

Topic-5: Information relevance:

According to the participants, as LinkedIn is a job related platform, the information are mostly relevant what they sought for. Further, they extract only the information that they consider relevant for them.

We can say 90% information posted in LinkedIn are relevant to our usage [laugh]. As the only professional SNS, LinkedIn information are mostly job centric rather than social and personal information posted in Facebook and Twitter (Participant from Bangladesh, male 34 years of age).

Topic-6: Information reliability and timeliness

Many participants viewed that the site [LinkedIn] facilitates in quick and timely communication and provide a platform to the job seekers to share reliable, accurate, and timely information with the forthcoming employees. The chances of any delays in sending or receiving the information are ruled out as the company needs not to communicate with each applicant individually. Furthermore, the job seekers are no longer dependent on company's respective website to obtain information, which mostly provides positive insights only.

We believe that major published information in this site are reliable and timely according to our experience. If we doubt some, we normally cross-check and validate with our personal connection via the contact we have in LinkedIn (Participant from India, female, 32 years of age).

Furthermore, the job seekers reported to have trust in the information provided by the current employees or acquaintance in the sites like LinkedIn that enables them in making an informed decision about job pursuit in a particular organization. Most of the participants viewed that information posted in LinkedIn are reliable and timely in fashion. Some participants added that they can get the general information and after that they can cross-check such information with their personal contacts connected via LinkedIn.

If we do not believe or are confused regarding any information posted by any company, we can cross-check such information with our other contacts who already know that company or work for that company [laugh]. This is indeed a very good opportunity provided by LinkedIn (Participant from Bangladesh, female, 33 years of age).

Topic-7: Cost effectiveness

The participants opined that joining and operating social media accounts such as LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter are free of cost for the general users. In this regard, particularly, LinkedIn provides quality job related information that are very useful for the job seekers and the employers in searching jobs and employees.

LinkedIn provides free access and quality job oriented information that are of great use for the new and passive job seekers like us. Indeed, it is a great opportunity (Participant from India, female, 37 years of age).

Topic-8: Privacy, fairness and ethical issues

Participants viewed that LinkedIn is a social networking platform that deals with professional and job related issues. Therefore, according to them, issues like privacy and fairness are less likely to count in this case. A few participants told that they are a little bit concerned regarding the ethical issue when wrong information is posted and they are misguided by those information.

Since there is nothing private in this site and we take our own decision whether to apply for a job or not based on the information, fairness to a less likely concern for us. Regarding ethics [according to 65% participants], it is most likely in our hands to cross check the information before taking any real decision (Participant from Bangladesh, male, 44 years of age).

LinkedIn just store and share the information. There is nothing private or related to ethics [regarding the information]. It is the responsibility of the users on how to use that information. If is someone really negatively affected by [regarding ethics or fairness issues] such misuse, he/she can take necessary actions [legal] (Participants from India, female, 35 years of age).

Discussions of Results

Most of the participants expressed their views favoring LinkedIn based on the discussion topics we gave them. Such results are well-consistent with the previous literature (Cheema et al., 2015; del Cerro et al., 2017; Koch et al., 2018; Hosain & Liu, 2020a, 2020b, 2020c; Hosain et al., 2020). We strongly believe that the results of this qualitative research will be of great help for all the stakeholders involved regarding the job sector (academicians, recruitment specialists, policymakers, employers and employees). Further, as the two most overpopulated countries, the research outcomes are expected to represent the guiding lights for the upcoming research initiatives in other areas of the world.

Further, we strongly encourage the researchers to conduct more and more empirical studies (both qualitative and quantitative) based on SNSs and employability as the utilization of SNSs for various HRM practices is growing around the globe and is expected to continue over the coming years.

Limitations and further scope of study

The study has a number of limitations to be noted. First, it was conducted only in two countries. A wider research boundary and more participants might produce some more representative results. Second, the study considered only passive candidates already having a job. It would be more interesting to see the results conducted on the SNSs' role on both employed and unemployed. Third, an elaborate study conducted through field level survey with larger participants might have provided more interesting results. The authors expect that such gaps would be fulfilled in further studies to be conducted.

Concluding comments

Social networking sites are the gifts of science and technology. We cannot avoid these but we can make the best of them. It can be expected that there will be more to come according to our needs and tastes. A job platform such as LinkedIn can be better utilized by the job seekers with utmost care and attention.

Particularly passive job seekers who cannot afford to apply for a better job through formal way due to time limitations and work stress, LinkedIn may be the best alternative for them. In addition, the site provides many job related information that are very helpful for the professional and career development. To conclude, LinkedIn can be considered as a valuable gift for the passive job seekers in their career ladder.

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