

# THE USAGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA NETWORKS AS A TOOL BY EMPLOYERS TO SCREEN JOB CANDIDATES



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## Abstract

Social Network Sites (SNS) have become an important tool in our daily lives and many organizations nowadays especially in the west are utilizing it as a business tool especially in the context of employers using these SNS to screen job candidates. This is because recruiting a candidate based on their resume and a 10-15 minutes interview does not paint a complete picture of the candidate's suitability for the job. This recruiting process is also slowly but surely catching up in local context in Malaysia. Thus, this study examines firstly, the usage of SNS as a possible tool by employers to screen job candidates during the recruitment process and secondly, the awareness of potential job candidates/employees on its impact. Utilizing a mixed-methodology approach using descriptive design and interviews, 70 companies and 120 final year students from universities in the Klang Valley in Malaysia participated in the study. The findings show that 61.5% of Malaysian companies view potential candidates' SNS profiles in order to gain greater knowledge of the candidates and 89.2% of final year students are aware of employers' ability to screen candidates based on their SNS profiles. The most common reasons for employers to reject candidates based on their SNS profiles are lying about qualifications, postings related to drug consumption and posting of negative remarks or comments against past employers. Prospective employees need to be aware that their behaviour is being monitored through their SNS profiles and the information extracted has a great influence on their job prospects.

*Keywords:* Social networking sites, screening job candidates, job recruiting, employers, employment

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## 1. Introduction

In today's world the phenomenon of social media has affected the way humans communicate; having evolved from merely listening to another person's voice to even seeing them live on video to knowing about every single detail of a friend or family member's life, in relation to the extent people share such details. It has become an integral part of life for a significant number of people, especially young people, particularly college students as a mode of communication, interaction and entertainment. It has now become a well-known information dissemination platform as it enables groups of people to develop, discuss, communicate and recommend information, as well as a great way to foster interactions (Hanna et al., 2011). Among the popular social networking sites (SNS) utilized by individual users especially college students include Facebook, MySpace, Instagram and Twitter. These SNS greatly improve the quality of one's life as it provides limitless opportunities to stay connected with family members and friends from different parts of the world (Parrack, 2017).

Over the last decade or so based on popular media studies in the US and UK, there has been a drastic increase in the usage of social media as a tool by employers to screen job candidates. Brown and Vaughn (2011) elucidated that social media sites are becoming an increasingly important factor for recruiters to decide whether to hire an individual. The study also said that according to peers of the target job applicants, social media is quite an accurate indicator of a person's characteristics. In a recent report in UK, Zlata Rodionova (2015) highlighted that approximately 33% of employers use SNS to hire candidates with Facebook as the preferred network (75%), followed by Twitter (57%) and LinkedIn (38%). A study by CareerBuilder (2017) in the US revealed that 70% of employers are now using social media to screen job applicants before recruiting them. Nearer home, Ramasamy and Raman (2014) found that SNS positively and directly impacted an employers' reaction towards job recruitment. These studies and reports suggest that "social media sites are no longer just a place to keep in touch with friends and family. They have entered the work-space and are influencing the way recruiting and hiring is implemented" (Blacksmith & Poepelman, 2013, p. 70).

Why do employers use SNS as a screening platform in hiring prospective candidates? Sullivan (2017) found research that stated that "interviews are a terrible predictor of performance" (n.p.) and they become predictable and ineffective. He indicated that the internet's advancement is the main reason for changing the conventional interview practice. Candidates now know exactly what questions to expect in any interviews, because there are now literally hundreds of sources that provide candidates with the most frequently asked interview questions. Furthermore, selecting a candidate based on their resume and a 10-15

minutes' interview does not paint a complete picture of the candidate's suitability for the job. Carpentier et al. (2016) similarly elucidated that employers have limited information when undertaking their first pick of vacancies. A written CV and a recommendation letter are often inadequate to gain insight into the candidates' personality and more information is needed to provide a holistic first impression of the applicants. The SNS is a possible source of obtaining a more holistic impression as it allows employers to have access to the more extensive information of the potential candidate that they would normally not attain during job interviews (Robles, 2017). SNS thus, offers a platform for an inexpensive and quick background information check for employers (Clark & Roberts, 2010). With this access to users' information through these SNSs, employers are able to make more informed decisions during the hiring process. Employers believe that it is their responsibility to undertake online reviews to avoid lax recruiting (Clark & Roberts, 2010). In other words, "Beware Job Seekers: Facebook, MySpace Could Harm Your Job Search" (Havenstein, 2008).

## **2. Purpose of the Study**

Screening information from users' profiles on these platforms can therefore, impact on candidates' potential in the recruitment process. This raises some concerns that are reflected in such questions as: What are the types of information gained from a user's profile that could jeopardize or enhance the prospect of employment? Is there a possibility that employers might misconstrue the candidate's information and inaccurately or unfairly pre-judge them? College students are constantly using SNS as a mode of communication, interaction and entertainment where they freely express their opinions and share their posts in these sites, without considering the repercussions at a professional level like job interviews. Thus, the aim of this study is to explore the use of SNS as a screening tool by employers for recruiting purposes.

## **3. Research Questions**

Therefore, the research questions this study aims to answer are:

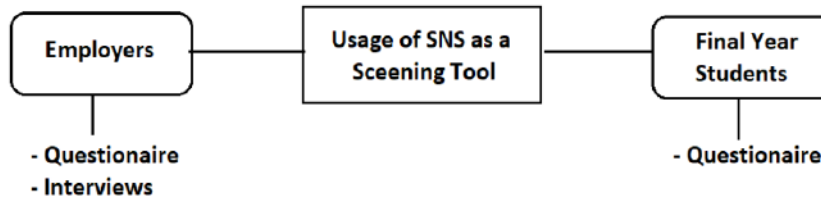
3.1. What is the extent of recruiting companies screening candidates based on the information available on their social media profile?

3.2. What are the types of social media postings that could stop someone from getting hired and why?

3.3. What is the extent of users' awareness on the recruiting companies screening candidates based on the information available on their social media profile?

#### 4. Research Methodology

The aim of this study is to assess the use of SNS as a screening tool by employers for recruiting purposes. The theoretical framework that guided the research process depicts the theory used for the study, direction of the study, variables involved and methodology employed.



**Figure 1.** Theoretical Framework of Study

This study utilised the Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT) in explaining the reason/s the employers sampled used SNS as a screening tool. According to Blumler and Katz (1974), UGT is a popular approach to understanding mass communication as it focuses on the consumer, or audience, instead of the actual message itself by asking how people interact with media rather than looking at the effects of media on people. According to Vinney (2019), the fundamental premise of this theory is the presumption that users are not passive recipients of media but play an active role in understanding and incorporating of media into their lives. The approach suggests that people use media to fulfil specific gratifications. This theory implies that media competes with information sources for viewers' gratification. Based on the assumptions and criteria explained, this theory guided the researchers in understanding and explaining the reasons supporting the usage of SNS usage among the selected respondents.

##### 4.1. Research Design

This study utilised a mixed-method approach; namely a descriptive design to elicit quantitative data and interviews to elicit qualitative data. The descriptive design used a questionnaire enabling a large number of respondents' views to be gauged simultaneously. The qualitative aspect was realised through interviews to provide narrative data allowing for an expression of in-depth views of the respondents. The variables included the usage of SNS by employers and final year students as a screening tool. Employing the mixed-method design would provide a holistic picture from the perspectives of both the employers and job candidates

comprising final year students on the usage of SNS as a tool to screen potential candidates during the hiring process.

#### 4.2. Sampling

The respondents for this research consisted of three groups of participants. The first group of respondents totalled 120 randomly selected final year students, as prospective job seekers, from both private and public universities in the Klang Valley (Kuala Lumpur and Selangor, Malaysia). The second group of participants comprised 70 employers (or hiring managers) from the private sector in the Klang Valley with experience in job screening across various fields. These respondents were directly in charge of hiring prospective candidates for their organization, comprising both local and multinational companies. The third set of respondents were four employers selected for the interviews. These four were part of the sample of 70 employers.

#### 4.3. Instruments

The instrument used to collect the quantitative data in this study is a questionnaire adapted from Broughton et al. (2013) and Reppler (2017). Both these instruments were adapted to produce two sets of questionnaires for this study; one set measured employers' perception of the usage of SNS in job screening while another set measured candidates' perceptions of the usage of SNS in job screening. The quantitative data from these questionnaires was analysed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The former comprised frequency counts and percentage scores while the latter utilised chi-square analysis.

The interview questions were used with selected employers to gather in-depth information regarding their views on the usage of SNS as a screening tool. These open-ended questions enabled the researchers to collect data to show how employers use information from SNS to screen job applicants during the recruitment process. The data obtained from interviews were audio-taped, transcribed and then analysed to cull data to support the quantitative findings.

### 5. Findings

For this section, the quantitative data is presented followed by the relevant qualitative data to support the quantitative findings.

For the interviews, the coding for the respondents were:

**Employer 1** - School Principal of International School; Gender: Female; Organization: Multinational; Coded as E1, Female, Multinational - E<sub>1FM</sub>

**Employer 2** - Lawyer; Gender: Female; Organization: Local Law Firm; Coded as E2, Female, Local - E<sub>2FL</sub>

**Employer 3** - Senior Management of International Hotel; Gender: Male; Organization: Multinational; Coded as E3, Male, Multinational - E<sub>3MM</sub>

**Employer 4** - Accountant; Gender: Male; Organization: Local; Coded as E4, Male, Local -E<sub>4ML</sub>

Tables 1 and 2 shows the distribution of employers and job candidates involved in the study.

**Table 1.** Scope of operation of employers

Scope	Frequency	Percent
Multinational	23	32.9
Local	47	67.1
Total	70	100.0

A total of 70 employers comprising multinational and local companies were involved in the study (see Table 1). In terms of gender distribution of the job candidates, a total of 40 males and 80 females were involved in the study. These respondents were final year students in colleges in the Klang valley majoring in various degree programs (see Table 2).

**Table 2.** Scope of operation of employers

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	40	33.3
Female	80	66.7
Total	120	100.0

### 5.1. Employers Using SNS as a Screening Tool

Table 3 shows that 61.5% (n= 43) of the employers viewed potential candidates' social media profiles in order to screen or gain greater knowledge of the candidates as compared to 38.5% (n=27) who did not do so.

**Table 3.** Distribution of employers using SNS as a tool in screening job candidates

Sectors	No	Sometimes	Often	Total
Multinational	12	7	4	23
Local	15	23	9	47
Total	27	30	13	70
	(38.5%)	(42.9%)	(18.6%)	

Based on the *question posed on the extent of Social Media Usage by companies during the interviews*, three of the four employers namely E<sub>1FM</sub>, E<sub>2FL</sub>, and E<sub>3MM</sub> used SNS as a screening tool. Facebook and LinkedIn were the popular social media platforms utilised for this purpose.

When asked for the *rationale of using these SNS as a screening tool*, all three opined that the traditional mode of selection does not provide a holistic and true picture of the candidates. The following were examples of their responses:

E<sub>1FM</sub>: *Well, during the interview, the candidate tends to put their best foot forward in every aspect, hence, it does not paint a true picture of the candidate's daily life, especially social behaviour.*

E<sub>2FL</sub>: *... We used to rely solely on resume and interviews for the selection process but we've noticed there were always issues with millennials.*

E<sub>3MM</sub>: *This provides an insight into the applicant's social life in terms of their characteristics, lifestyle and social activities based on their postings. This social resume portrays a picture of their outside life which isn't reflected in the actual resume. This social resume can be a good indicator of whether the applicant is a right fit for the organization.*

All three employers, E<sub>1FM</sub>, E<sub>2FL</sub> and E<sub>3MM</sub> had similar views in that screening the profiles of the applicants in SNS provided them with an in-depth social resume of the candidates in terms of verification checks and the *social behavioural* suitability of the applicant with their organization. They felt that the usage of SNS as a screening tool is an advantage for them as the information of the candidates on public profiles is free and easy to access. It also provides a social presence insight of what others feel about the applicant and helps to a certain extent, to get the “bad apples” out. In other words, the SNS works as a “shortlisting” function.

## 5.2. Candidates' Awareness of Being Screened by Employers

The following question was posed to candidates if they were aware of employers having the ability to screen their profiles. Table 4 shows 89.2% of them acknowledged the employers' ability to screen their SNS profiles.

**Table 4.** Distribution of employers using SNS as a tool in screening job candidates

Candidates Awareness	Frequency	Percent
Yes	107	89.2
No	13	10.8
Total	120	100.0

### 5.3. Candidates Approval of being Screened by Gender

Table 5 shows 54.2% (n=65) of the respondents approve of employers using candidates SNS as a screening tool as compared to 45.8% (n=55) who disagreed.

**Table 5.** Approval of using SNS as a screening tool by Gender

Gender	Approval		Total
	No	Yes	
Male	15 (37.5%)	25 (62.5%)	40 (33.3%)
Female	40 (50%)	40 (50.0%)	80 (67.7%)
Total	55 (45.8%)	65 (54.2%)	120 (100.0%)

Based on the question posed, a higher percentage of males (62.5%) approved of employers screening their candidates using information based on the SNS as compared to their female counterparts (50%). To investigate if there is a significant relationship between gender and approval of SNS screening by candidates, a chi square analysis was conducted using the following;

H<sub>0</sub>: there is no significant relationship between gender and approval of SNS screening by candidates

H<sub>1</sub>: there is a significant relationship between gender and approval of SNS screening by candidates

**Table 6.** Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Significance (2-sided)	Exact Significance (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.678 <sup>a</sup>	1	.195		
Continuity Correction <sup>b</sup>	1.213	1	.271		
Likelihood Ratio	1.692	1	.193		
Fisher's Exact Test				.245	.135
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.664	1	.197		
N of Valid Cases	120				

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 18.33.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table



The findings from table 6 shows no significant relationship [ $\chi^2(1) = 1.678, p = .195$ ] between gender and approval of SNS screening at the 0.05 level. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that although male students display a higher approval rate of their profiles to be screened as compared with their female counterparts, this relationship was not statistically significant.

#### 5.4. Posting of information on SNS

This section details posting of information by candidates, and the types of postings that support and negate the candidates' chances of getting hired. Candidates were asked if they post information on their SNS profiles that they would not want employers to see and their responses were based on a Likert scale ranging from 1. Never to 5. Always.

The data in table 7 shows 30.8% (n=37) of the candidates indicating 'Never' for posting of any information that they would not want employers to see. On the other hand, 30.8% (n=37) of the candidates responded with 'Sometimes'; 27.5% (n=33) with 'Seldom'; 6.7% (n=8) with 'Frequently' and 4.2% (n=5) with 'Always'. In other words, almost 70% (69.2%) of the candidates have posted information on their SNS profiles that they would not like the employers to see.

**Table 7.** Candidates posting information that they would not want employers to see

<b>Post Information that you don't want employers to see</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Never	37	30.8
Seldom	33	27.5
Sometimes	37	30.8
Frequently	8	6.7
Always	5	4.2
Total	120	100.0

The following open-ended question was posed in the questionnaire in investigating the opinion of respondents *towards the use of SNS as a screening tool by prospective employers*. The following were some of their views:

- *An invasion of privacy and a mix up between private and professional information.*
- *Employers should not prejudge the candidates through the social media viewing.*
- *I disagree because social media is like an album of our lives. Sometimes, it becomes a diary. I am not comfortable to share it with outsiders or strangers except my close friends and family.*

- *I completely disagree with the idea of job screening based on their SNS because people nowadays living an [unfaithful] life, they could possibly being pretentious/lie on SNS*
- *Good. But what's posted in social media doesn't give the whole pic about the candidate.*
- *I agree because I only post positives side of me on social media. I always use social media to promote myself and look for airtime job as an emcee and singer during events. I received a lot of offers since about 5 years ago through social media.*

### 5.5. Types of social media posting that reject candidates

The common posting of information (refer to Table 8) which causes employers to reject candidates based on their SNS profiles from the questionnaire findings were “*Lied about qualifications*” (97.7%), “*Posted content about them using drugs*” (90.7%) and “*Posted negative comments about a previous employer*” (83.7%).

**Table 8.** Common reasons which cause employers to reject particular candidates

Reasons	Yes	%	No	%	Rank
Posted inappropriate photos	28	65.1	15	34.9	6
Posted inappropriate comments	28	65.1	15	34.9	6
Posted content about them drinking	33	76.7	10	23.3	5
Posted content about them using drugs	39	90.7	4	9.3	2
Posted negative comments about a previous employer	36	83.7	7	16.3	3
Demonstrated poor communication skills	28	65.1	15	34.9	6
Made discriminatory comments	28	65.1	15	34.9	6
Lied about qualifications	42	97.7	1	2.3	1
Shared confidential information from a previous employer	36	83.7	7	16.7	3

### 5.6. Types of social media posting that enhances hiring of candidates

To the question posed to ascertain the reasons why employers hired candidates based on their SNS profiles, Table 9 reveals the breakdown of the reasons:

**Table 9.** Reasons for hiring candidates based on SNS profiles

<b>Reasons for Hiring</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Gave a positive impression of their personality and organizational fit.	18	41.9
Profile supported their professional qualifications.	5	11.6
Profile showed candidate was creative.	2	4.7
Showed solid communications skills.	2	4.7
Profile showed candidate was well-rounded.	3	7.0
Candidate had good references posted by others.	1	2.3
Candidates received awards and accolades.	1	2.3
Never hired a candidate because of information on a social networking site.	11	25.6
<b>Total</b>	43	100.0

The data shows 41.9% (n=18) of the employers hired candidates based on “*Gave a positive impression of their personality and organizational fit*” followed by 11.6% (n=5) with “*Profile supported their professional qualifications*” and 7.0% (n=3) with “*Profile showed candidate was well-rounded*”. Other reasons for hiring candidates include “*Profile showed candidate was creative*” and “*Showed solid communications skills*” with a percentage of 4.7% (n=2) respectively for each.

This quantitative data from the survey was also supported by the qualitative findings from the interviews depicting the common reasons for rejecting candidates especially namely “*posting of negative comments about a previous employer*”, “*posting inappropriate photos*”, “*demonstrating poor communication skills*” and “*making discriminatory comments*” respectively

During the interviews, the employers were then *asked about the types of social media posting that could stop someone from getting hired and why*. The findings indicated the variability of the requirements of the organization to a large extent affected their hiring decision. Three of the respondents viewed candidate’s language skills among the information they sought due to the necessity of these skills in their professional line of service.

For example, E<sub>IFM</sub> represents an international educational organization and they screened the candidates based on the social behavioural aspect of the applicant and the needed skills of the organization.

E<sub>IFM</sub>: *We will be able to gauge these candidates writing skills, reading habits and also their social skills. Please remember, these candidates will be educating our children and they must be exemplary to my students.*

The data from the interviews indicate that E<sub>IFM</sub>, representing an international school, placed emphasis on moral values and social skills as a requirement to be an educator to fit into

her organization. She specifically emphasized respect for others and the requirement of good language skills as required of an English language teacher.

Employer E<sub>2FL</sub> representing a law firm similarly echoed moral values as elucidated by E<sub>1FM</sub>.

E<sub>2FL</sub>: *...., to become a lawyer, one needs to be able to speak, communicate and write well. Hence, things like broken English and grammatical errors are a put off, ...*

E<sub>2FL</sub>: *... We strictly abhor any form of discrimination against race, religion and gender and hence, any posting to that effect convinces us that the employee would not gel well with our firm and what we stand for.*

She also viewed posting of inappropriate photos, provocative content and derogatory remarks on race, religion and gender as a professional put off. The screening of SNS also assesses an applicant's English language command as a fundamental skill requirement for her organization.

The fourth employer, E<sub>4MM</sub>, from an accounting firm did not use SNS as a screening tool. However, he did indicate the possibility of using it in the future. When asked on the types of social media posting that could stop someone from getting hired and why, he concurred with the other employers' views such as making derogatory remarks and posting provocative photographs as reasons for rejecting candidates. However, he viewed that spending too much time on SNS is a negative element for prospective employees in his firm

E<sub>4ML</sub>: *First of all, ... let me see....if they spend too much time on this media, it will be a no no.... we need employees who are diligent, hardworking and focused on their auditing job.*

For him, time management was an important criterion for an applicant in a financial auditors' department. If the applicant is found spending too much time on social media, he/she will not be a good candidate for a position in their organization. This criterion of time management is based on the required skill for E<sub>4ML</sub>'s organization requirement.

The overall analyses show that all four employers have looked or will look at SNS profiles of applicants for a variety of purposes with the end aim of ensuring that the selected applicant is a good fit for their organization. Two variables of screening, that could stop someone from getting hired based on the interviews conducted, were the skills required for their organization and their social behavioural outlook based on the postings. Applicants' language skills were an important requirement for certain organizations, while time management was the required skill for another organization. In terms of social behavioural postings, discriminatory comments related to race, gender, religion; provocative photographs,

badmouthing fellow colleagues and previous employers, were the types of social media posting that could stop an applicant from getting hired

When these employers were *asked if this emerging trend of using SNS as a screening tool would increasingly become the norm here in Malaysia*, all four employers concurred that this trend will be a norm for the future, here in Malaysia. Screening for the right candidates is a complex process, where organizations look for potential employees with the best qualities who suit their needs. This tool is an avenue to assess the holistic social behaviour of the applicant which is not possible with the traditional form of recruitment using resumes. This tool as a screening device is both cost and time efficient and yet effective. They believe that the utilisation of SNS for recruitment has shifted the emphasis away from mainstream recruitment and selection methods.

The final question posed to the employers were of *any issues related to SNS as a screening tool*. E<sub>2FL</sub>, being a lawyer, voiced her concern on the privacy law, namely that information obtained through SNS can be considered an infringement of the privacy of applicants, particularly if carried out without users' prior consent. This legality issue is one of concern in the UK and US; however, it is still at the infancy stage in Malaysia.

## **6. Discussion**

### *6.1. The usage of SNS as a screening tool to recruit candidates*

The high percentage (61.5%) of employers using SNS profiles of candidates for the recruitment process in this study is a growing trend due to its benefits as elucidated by previous studies (Brown & Vaughn, 2011; Sameen & Cornelius, 2013; CareerBuilder, 2017). This study's finding echoes that of Sameen and Cornelius (2013)'s study where, 33% of respondents stated that the positive impression of personality and organization fit is the most prominent factor that an employer would consider when hiring candidates through SNS. Similarly, Brown and Vaughn (2011) opined that the usage of SNS in screening job candidates has numerous benefits, one of which is targeting a specific group of candidates. This upward trend might continue in Malaysia because 40.7% of the employers in this study who do not use these SNS currently expressed their intention of using it in the future. Through SNS, the employers are able to specifically filter the candidates by separating those who are eligible or qualify with a certain skillset and those whose values are not aligned with that of the organization.

## 6.2. Type of Postings in SNS that might hamper candidates' selection

The common posts which cause employers to reject candidates based on their SNS profiles were “*Lied about qualifications*” (97.7%); “*Posted content about them using drugs*”; (90.7%) and “*Posted negative comments about a previous employer*” (83.7%). The qualitative findings included posting of derogatory posting and remarks based on race, colour of skin and sensitive remarks. These findings were consistent with previous research (Brown & Vaughn, 2011; Cears & Castelyns, 2011). According to Cears and Castelyns (2011), among the main contributing factors include the candidate's personality, qualification, skills, comments about and relation with previous employers and lies.

However, from the interviews conducted, this study also revealed a hitherto new aspect of employers' criteria for selection which was language skills based on the needs of the organization. Candidates' writing skills and language command also figured strongly for selection purposes.

*E<sub>1FM</sub>*: ... *Many can testify that at the current time the low standard of English command among students and even teachers.... is a great concern for us. We select the best teachers and if their language command is suspect, it will destroy our school credibility as an International school.*

*E<sub>2FL</sub>*: ... *to become a lawyer, one needs to be able to speak, communicate and write well. Hence, things like broken English and grammatical errors are a put off, but we are accommodative enough to give the person the benefit of the doubt, especially if his/her postings aren't problematic.*

The findings strongly suggest that employers in Malaysia are screening candidates' English language proficiency as an important criterion for job selection.

## 6.3. Candidates and employers' perspectives on the usage SNS

Findings show that while the majority (89.2%) of candidates are aware that employers do screen prospective job candidates based on their SNS profiles, yet a staggering two-thirds (70%) said they posted information on their SNS profiles that they would not want employers to see. They argued that whatever they posted on SNS was private and for the purview of their circle of friends only and that it is unethical for employers to judge them based on these. This outcome concurs with the Root and McKay (2014) who investigated college students' awareness of the usage of SNS by employers as a screening tool and found that students are aware that postings related to drugs usage, sexual behaviour, profanity would send a negative message to employers.

Furthermore, students in this study opined that the validity of the information posted, at times, might not be true and it is a stunt by them to gain visibility. Some of the respondents' views were that it was "an invasion of privacy and a mix up between private and professional information" and "... but what's posted in social media doesn't give the whole pic about the candidate", They felt that such screening procedures is a breach of privacy and also that these postings do not provide a holistic picture of the user. These findings were supported by Regts et al., (2016, cited in Villeda & McCamey, 2019) who posited that the screening of candidates via SNS can also be inaccurate, as applicants could post false information about themselves such as online extraversion or a lack of it in real life. Similarly, Minocha (2009) also claimed that while the use of SNS has improved the sense of community among students, the privacy of the content of their postings should also become an area of concern.

The findings of the study show that the shift of the recruitment process from conventional to contemporary using Social Networking Sites (SNS) is catching up in Malaysia. Melanthiou et al. (2015) elucidated that most of the studies regarding the use of SNS as a screening tool are conducted in strong economies and market sectors such as European countries and in the United States. The findings of this study do suggest that the usage of SNS is beginning to seep into Malaysian organisations as well.

Employers are using SNS to screen job candidates as it helps reduce cost and time for the hiring process of a candidate. SNS are one of the most inexpensive and quick avenues for a background check of job applicants (Clark & Robert, 2010). The findings show that most of the employers involved in this study do use SNS profiles of candidates for job screening due to its benefits in selecting the best candidates. This indicates that the usage of SNS as a tool by employers to screen job candidates is on the rise, and despite concerns about its legality, it needs to be taken seriously by prospective candidates.

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