



AFRICAN JOURNAL OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Journal website: <https://journals.must.ac.ke>



A Publication of Meru University of Science and Technology

Social network recruitment technology adoption framework in higher educational institutions in Kenya

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ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

KEY WORDS

Social Networks

Recruitment

Optimization Frameworks

The success of the organization depends on effective recruitment and selection system. Looking at the Kenyan labour market, there are still unfilled vacancies and organisations have problems regarding their staffing. Recruitment by Social Networking Sites is an aspect of a new topic and there is a lack of studies about it. In this study, the main objective is to develop a framework for recruitment and selection process using social networking technologies with a case study on Kenyan universities. The study also focuses its attention to determine how the recruitment and selection practices affect the organizational outcomes. Specifically, it enriches literature by identifying the effect of various social networking sites as recruitment channels. Quantitative research will entail defining specific variables, research questions, as well as using measurements to determine causality. The analysis will be done through inductive methodology to discover the critical elements that emerge during online networking and personal touch, and analysis of factors that affect the selection and use of these technologies. Through this, human resource managers will be able to use the framework for achieving effective recruitment of potential employees through social networking technologies.

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<https://doi.org/10.58506/ajstss.v1i2.120>

AFRICAN JOURNAL OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL SCIENCES ISSN:2958-0560

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Introduction

How to source talent and hire the right people now, in our connected world, is the question Human Resources has been asking since the explosion of the internet. How many institutions of higher education are still recruiting for any talent? Deciding which recruitment source to tap each time there is an opening, can be challenging. Some organizations simply ignore the multitude of options and resort to using the same sources each time. This isn't a good idea (Arthur, 2016). Wayne Mondy's research indicates, "Factors external to the organization can significantly affect the firm's recruitment efforts (Mondy 2017).

Recruiting in a company should incorporate social networking tools in order to streamline the process. According to Sautter, "The recruiting business is always been and always will be a people business (Sautter 2016)." Companies that adopt Social Network Recruiting strategies tend to attract sophisticated, high-caliber technical candidates. Social Network Recruiting is a collection of technologies that allows anyone, including job seekers and employers, to interact online; meaning that interactions are no longer bound by the static experience of Social Network Recruiting. These new tools engage users by letting them participate in, control and guide their online visits to some of the most popular Social Network Recruiting applications, which include social networks, blogs, podcasts and online video. These types of discussions allow for job seekers to engage with their ideas and encourage them to share and relate to the company's culture. These are the type of companies that brand themselves as the place job seekers would like to work and tell their friends that they work there.

Recruitment involves activities and practices performed to identify and attract prospective employees. In this process, human resource managers must focus on finding and retaining quality human capital that reflects organizational needs while reducing expenditures associated with this process. Attracting and retention of quality employees provides an organization with competitive advantage. The process of recruiting employees is complex because it involves various characteristics, activities, and stages (Carlson et al., 2012). The advances in online communication technologies continue to transform recruitment environment for human resource professions and job seekers. Verhoeven and Williams (2016) predicted that recruitment via online channels would replace conventional approaches such as campus recruiting, adverts in newspapers, and job fairs. Research reveals that an estimated 93 percent of internet users have ages ranging from 18 to 29 years with utilization being positively linked to educational achievement (Rainie, 2017). This is of significance to employers because it represents the potential talent that can be found in the online environment. Considerably, it is essential to investigate whether organizations use social networking sites for recruitment of potential employees

Problem Statement

The current university recruiting process is based on structured recruitment process which is well elaborate. Several important challenges arise with the current system. Firstly, the university hiring process is lengthy and sometimes even takes years before the position is filled with the right candidate. Further, the current process is costly and if the right profile is not selected then the consequences can be calamitous for the university. The accuracy of the profile is also difficult to determine and decision making is slow.

Literature Review

Recruiting in a company should incorporate social networking tools in order to streamline the process. Sautter says "The recruiting business is always been and always will be a people business." Recruiters for the most part, are effective networkers off-line. But technology and the Internet have certainly changed the way that recruiters do business or should be doing business, and online networking is a big part of those changes.

Social Network Technology

Social media has emerged as a tool to reach out to referral candidates directly and as a method for potential candidates to share their work histories online. If done right, social recruiting taps into the cumulative company network through multiple forms of social media. This is a smart and cost-effective recruitment strategy that will yield high-quality hires that fit the company culture. Recruiting in a company should incorporate social networking tools in order to streamline the process. Many recruiters at a very large networks on LinkedIn, indicating that they see great value in this form of online networking and have chosen to invest time in building and maintaining the networks (Sautter 2016). Social networking will assist recruiting efforts by helping to source candidates and form partnerships with other recruiters.

Recruitment Methods and Strategy

Developing a recruiting strategy helps assess issues that are fundamental to the organization. Each organization must decide where they will use an open recruitment process and where they will use a targeted recruitment process. Heneman said "With an open recruitment approach, organizations cast a wide net to identify potential applicants for specific job opening. Very little effort is made in segmenting the market into applicants with the most desirable KSAO's. This approach is very passive and anyone can apply for any opening." (Heneman 2016). This open, passive approach is effective using Web applications because it allows for rapid dissemination of your organizations staffing needs.

Conversely, a targeted recruitment approach whereby the organization identifies a specific segment in the labor market where qualified candidates are likely to be. Often, this is done to find applicants with specific characteristics pertinent to the company. They often involve key skills shortages or workforce diversity gaps. Heneman said "In addition to tailoring messages to reach employees with specific Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, and Others (KSAO) profiles, some organizations also target specific underrepresented groups, especially women and racial/ethnic minorities. Such efforts are among the most effective and least controversial elements of affirmative-action plans" (Heneman 2016).

One of the most effective methods for increasing the diversity of applicant pools is to use social networking that specifically targets the diversity gap. Employee networks that are well-designed make use of your current employees as a full-fledged recruiting team. This opportunity allows a company to use both a social networking strategy and a team effort to find the best candidate. Heneman said "Many recruiters have turned to social networking sites such as LinkedIn and Facebook as resources for finding qualified job candidates." The number of individuals using these sites has increased dramatically in recent years, especially among younger workers, making it difficult to obtain reliable data on just how many individuals are using the site at any specific time.

Advantages of Social Network Recruiting

There are a number of advantages to using social networking sites. Because many of the connections between the users are based on professional background or shared work experience, networking sites often provide access to groups of potential employees with specific skill sets. Some social networking websites geared toward professionals encourage users to indicate the industry area in which they work" (Heneman 2016). Using the current staff can allow companies to recruit well in advance for job openings and provided this is due to growth and not the termination of current staff. Heneman goes on to say "by accessing the social network of those already employed in the organization, it is possible to locate passive candidates who are already employed and not necessarily looking for new jobs at the time. In fields where the unemployment rate is very low, such as engineering, healthcare, and information technology, these passive candidates tend to be the primary source of potential applicants. As with traditional referrals, a key advantage of using electronic networks is that the employers can use the current employees in the recruiting process. However, some recruiters find these networking sites are not very efficient, because of the large number of passive candidates who are not interested in alternative employment offers" (Heneman 2016).

Frameworks in social network recruitment

Rogers (2015) framework for adoption of technological innovation was used. This framework has five factors including observability, trialability, complexity, compatibility, and relative advantage. Using these frameworks, the researchers conducted a study to explore factors influencing use of online recruitment strategies via commercial employment boards and corporate websites (Parry & Wilson, 2016). It was found that four factors affected a human resource manager's decision to utilize corporate websites in recruitment. These comprised of internal compatibility, negative beliefs, relative advantage, and subjective norms with the last three demonstrating a significant effect. Similarly, the study revealed that relative advantage and compatibility influenced the use of commercial employment boards.

Concerning subjective norms, human resource professionals may be compelled to use social networking sites, if they perceive that other organizations are involved in this practice. This is based on organizational competition for quality human capital, which is an important asset for organizations.

The relative advantage factor is associated with costs and time savings found in using social media for recruitment purposes. Notably, social networking sites reduce costs linked to planning for the travel of applicants to an organization's location for screening purposes. In addition, use of social networking sites leads to a decrease in costs of advertising vacancies available in an organization. In this case, a firm needs to have webpage within a social networking site where it can communicate available vacancies to potential employees. Furthermore, organizations are able to attain time savings associated with immediate response from job applicants unlike when using other media such as newspaper adverts.

Negative beliefs are based on a human resource professional's perception about social networking sites. Hence, a manager with negative beliefs will not recruit prospective employees through social media. Such negative perceptions arise from excess applications that are unsuitable (Parry & Wilson, 2016).

Compatibility also determines a firm's decision to utilize social media in recruitment purposes. Concerning this, technological advancements have made it possible for organizations to conduct their procedures electronically. For instance, companies have corporate websites that provides relevant information about policies and operational processes. Hence, deciding to use social networking sites in recruitment is compatible to organizational practices conducted in the online environment.

Conceptual framework: Technology Acceptance Model

The acceptance and eventual use of technology is best described using the technology acceptance model (TAM) within information systems. The actual system use is the final product in the use of technology by people. Behav-

ioral intention as a factor leads people to use the technology that is by attitude (A) which represents general impression of the technology.

The decision on how and when to use the technology as proposed by the model is based on

Perceived usefulness (PU) – This was defined by Fred Davis as "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance". It means whether or not someone perceives that technology to be useful for what they want to do.

Perceived ease-of-use (PEOU) – Davis defined this as "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free from effort" (Davis 1989). The barriers will be conquered if the technology is easy to use. If it's not easy to use and the interface is complicated, no one has a positive attitude towards it.

External variables such as social influence are an important factor to determine the attitude. When these things (TAM) are in place, people will have the attitude and intention to use the technology. However, the perception may change depending on age and gender because everyone is different.

The proposed Social network recruitment technology adoption framework is presented in Figure 2.

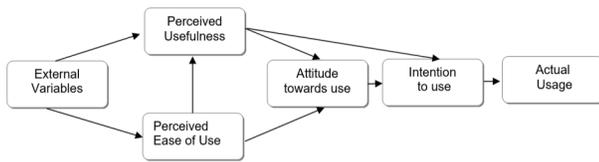


Figure 1: Technology Acceptance Model (7541)

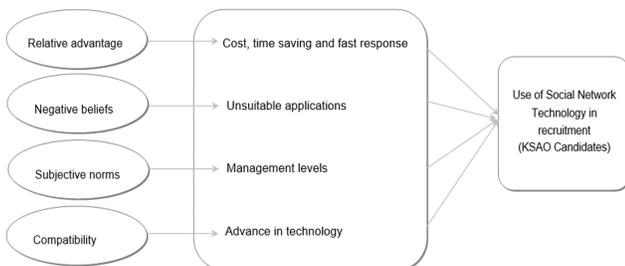


Figure 2: Proposed Social network recruitment technology adoption framework

Findings and Results

The regression is aimed at finding out the relationship between using social network technology to recruit and explain the relationship between the dependent variables and the independent variables as listed in the table 1.

Dependent Variable	Independent Variables
Subjective norms	Quality human capital
Relative advantage	Costs, time saving and immediate response
Negative beliefs	Age of Employees
Compatibility	Advance in technology, weekly searches

Table 1: Relationship between independent and dependent variables

Relative Advantage

Table 2 shows there is a fast response given to those who are on social media. The R value is 0.897 with an R square of 0.804. The ANOVA table shows that recruitment via social networking sites influence hiring decisions made by organizational recruiters. The significant level is 0.05 the table has a value of 0.00 which shows that there is statistical significance between the variables. Looking at each variable, search of social media sites weekly in search of the potential employees is highly significant with the use of media as a recruitment platform. Where p< 0.05. Fast response was another variable it is however, not statistically significant. This shows that all applicants are given fast response regardless if they are on social media or not without any preferences.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.897a	.804	.797	.37945

a. Predictors: (Constant), Fastresponse, Use_SM_source_of_Job

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	33.726	2	16.863	117.122	.000b
	Residual	8.207	57	.144		
	Total	41.933	59			

a. Dependent Variable: Relative advantage
 b. Predictors: (Constant), Fast response.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
	(Constant)	.449	.202	2.220	.030	
1	Use_SM_source_of_Job	.838	.056	.887	14.864	.000
	Fastresponse	.048	.061	.047	.784	.436

a. Dependent Variable: Relative advantage
 b. Independent variable: Time

Table 2: Relative advantage of Social Media recruitment Negative beliefs.

Table 3 shows information about recruiters who search for the profile of applicants. There was high number of those who indicated that they do not search profile of the applicants. 21 respondents said they disagree, 12 respondents strongly disagree, there was 23 respondents said they agree while 4 respondents said they

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Sig.
		Coefficients				
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	.449	.202		2.220	.030
1	Use_SM_source_of_Job	.838	.056	.887	14.864	.000
	Fastresponse	.048	.061	.047	.784	.436

a. Dependent Variable: Use_SM_to_recruit

Table 3: Negative beliefs

strongly agree. 38.3% was the highest respondents who agreed that they search for the profile of the respondents.

The model further examines the influence decision on hiring based on social media, although many indicated that they use social network, the above table shows that there is no statistical significant between recruitment and fast response to applicants who are on social media.

Subjective Norms

The dependent variable is subjective norms. This is presented in Table 4. The regression analysis is testing if there is any significant differences recruitment based on management levels. The ANOVA table above shows that there is no statistical significant between different management level and recruitment. The significant level is 0.05 the above table has a significant value P as 0.326 where P> 0.05 hence not significant. Management levels are therefore, not predictors of whether an applicant is going to be recruited via social media.

Table 5 further assures us that no individual management level is significant. This shows that the level of appointment whether entry, middle or senior does not influence prospects of the applicant.

ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	2.492	3	.831	1.179	.326b
1	Residual	39.441	56	.704		
	Total	41.933	59			

a. Dependent Variable: Subjective norms

b. Predictors: (Constant),SM_R_EFFCTV_SeM, SM_R_EFFCTV_ML, SM_R_EFFCTV_EL

Table 4: Subjective Norms

Compatibility

Table 5 shows those who use social network in the recruiting process. There was high number of recruiters indicating that they use social networking in their process of hiring new employees in the organization. The total number of respondent was 60. There were 27 respondents which is 45% and 17 respondents of about

28.3% indicating that they agree and strongly agree that they use social network in their recruitment process. On the other hand, 21.7% disagree that they do not use social media in the recruitment process while 5% strongly disagreed with social media as a recruitment tool in their organization

Coefficients a

Model		Unstandardized		Standardize	t	Sig.
		Coefficients				
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	2.741	.550		4.982	.000
	SM_R_EFFCTV_EL	-.196	.126	-.210	-1.549	.127
1	SM_R_EFFCTV_ML	.048	.126	.049	.378	.707
	SM_R_EFFCTV_SeM	.212	.163	.177	1.300	.199

a. Dependent Variable: Use_SM_to_recruit

Table 5: Social network in recruitment process

Conclusion

The adoption of social network technologies for recruitment is not a panacea, it will result in a trade-off within Universities. Social network recruitment can save time and costs in searching for candidates; however it may also result in more work and frustrations for the HR department and the organization as a whole, and the view of social network recruitment can easily swing in a positive or negative direction in just a short time. Furthermore, while there are still universities with specialized recruitment needs that are not being filled via social websites.

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