# THE ROLE OF SOCIAL NETWORKS AS A TOOL FOR AN EFFECTIVE RECRUITMENT PROCESS IN THE ENTERPRISES IN KOSOVO

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## ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the determinants of the impact of social networks on the recruitment process in Kosovar enterprises, concluding that the main factor of that impact is the quality of information, cost benefits and timeliness. Another factor of particular importance are the competitive advantages social networks provide with respect to efficiently attracting suitable candidates to recruit through their unified data processing speed.

The managers interviewed in this study provided evidence that recruitment using social networks is faster than with traditional methods. Social networks enable firms to quickly and easily access applicants from all over the world easily at a low cost. Social networks provide in-depth discussions to understand the views and opinions of both parties in the recruitment process. The information provided by social networks on the personal and professional life of the potential job candidate makes social networks an important tool for recruitment.

**Keywords:** social networks, eRecruitment, Human Resource Management, ICTs, Kosovar enterprises

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## INTRODUCTION

The recruitment process in Kosovar enterprises is conducted according to traditional recruitment methods, but they are not enough to attract qualified and talented potential candidates. Therefore, the use of information from social networks in the recruitment process before employment is of particular importance.

Our findings in this research show that only 14.8% of Kosovo enterprises recruit using social networks, the content of which provides special opportunities for this process, especially as an important source of information for applicants and employers.

Social networks are considered as essential for the success of a company; they are powerful

tools for the company because they provide competitive advantages as they can reach a larger group of potential candidates (Deshati, E., 2017).

But to use this information in this research, Davidson et al. (2011) provided preliminary guidance for companies on how to use social networks by managers in the recruitment process, using multiple information verification and accuracy rates. This study's premise is that standardization is a crucial issue for how content can be prepared on social networks, as it should be consistent for all candidates.

This research clearly demonstrates the sustainable advancement of the recruitment process in Kosovar enterprises by evaluating the contribution provided by information from social networks.

An important factor in this research is the quality of the recruiter, which depends on the level of competence and the ability to understand and use information from social networks, but also on the independence and integrity of the recruiter in the process.

During the recruitment process in Kosovar enterprises, the first reliable and valuable is obtained from social networks. Although this information is not an official source, it creates the first impression of the candidate in the eyes of the recruiter.

## REVIEW OF THEORY AND LITERATURE

Although they are not an official part of the recruitment process, most enterprises in Kosovo that use social network information for recruitment use different recruitment strategies to find applicants that will strengthen their workforce.

While social networks have entered the world of recruitment in Kosovo enterprises, they are in the formulation and adaptation phase. They provide an in-depth dynamic to understand the views and opportunities of both parties in the recruitment process and also provide a dynamic environment and sustainable competitive advantages, but they still cannot completely replace traditional recruitment methods.

Advances in information technology and the use of social networks have dramatically changed the recruitment process. They help people find work because they facilitate personal communication between people by providing additional job information (Fountain 2005).

In this research, we elaborated on the data from a questionnaire and obtained concrete results on the power of the influence of social networks in the recruitment process, exploring the nature of the influence of social networks described by prestigious authors in the world who provided us with very valuable data on this topic. Such research is rare in Kosovo.

The study also pays special attention to the circumstances in which the use of social networks in recruitment is allowed and whether their content can be supported by law. However, the performance of recruitment and self-perception procedures also play a role in recruitment success (Hausknecht et al. 2004).

The scientific literature on social networks has helped us to present them and their role in the recruitment process as close to reality as possible. The specifics of Kosovar enterprises have been elaborated with data obtained from surveys and the results of the research.

There is a strong link between the quality of information on social networks and effective recruitment. The higher the quality of information, the higher the number of social network users (Lee & Kozar 2006).

The effect of this influence on social networks is the main strategic factor which is strengthened in the environment of competitive advantages (Lengnick and Lengnick 1988).

Reiners (2013), however, says that the real success of social media recruitment is achieved only when countries recognize, understand and respect social rules that affect the content and use of their posting profiles.

The main reasons for rejecting applicants are inappropriate content, poor communication of the applicant, and discriminatory comments.

Recruiters cannot recruit without an application on social networks such as LinkedIn. They have created opportunities and perspectives because they offer fast responses, unified data processing, and timeliness for efficient work and the ability to attract special candidates that is suitable for the recruitment process (Sultana and Sultana, 2017).

Social networks transform rapidly, therefore

human resource management is able to understand when social networks are useful and when they are ineffective (Miller-Meller, 2012).

One of the important advantages of using social networks is that national and international recruiters can access them quickly and easily at low cost (Jacobs, 2010).

## The evolution of electronic recruitment

Maurer et al. (1992) defined E-recruitment, also known as online recruitment, as the way human resources manage the external development and internal resources of qualified applicants.

E-recruitment includes those practices and activities carried out by the organization through the Internet with the primary purpose of identifying and attracting potential employees (Lee, I. 2011).

E-recruitment is a relatively new phenomenon in the modern recruitment process, and it changes the nature of the traditional recruitment process Dragusha, B. et al. (2019).

The digital world has brought a new dimension to recruitment. Internet innovation in Web 2.0 has changed the current recruitment process. This phenomenon is known as "electronic recruitment" Dragusha, B. et al. (2019).

Research into the evolution of electronic recruitment systems has clarified many dilemmas that have emerged during its implementation.

E-recruitment has essentially changed the recruitment process since traditional recruitment has higher costs, a prolonged recruitment cycle and low geographical coverage.

Additionally, recruitment by using professional social networks like LinkedIn enables the company to place ads directly and have instant access to candidate data.

Companies can leverage their profiles on websites/social networks to attract potential candidates. This is a strategy to preserve the perceptions of current and potential employees (Sullivan, 2004). These types of recruitment have no direct impact on cost.

Recruitment can be done by utilizing job boards on external websites or platforms containing candidate data, and at the same time allowing job ads for a specific remuneration like they are Kosovars.

There are three different types of E-recruitment: first, enterprise websites; second, job portals; and third, one which comes with the advancement of information and communication technologies, or social networks recruitment.

## Advancement of social networks and their contribution to the recruitment process

Social networks have been defined as websites which allow profile creation and visibility of relationships between users (Boyd & Ellison, 2008), and web-based applications which provide functionality for sharing, relationships, group conversation and profiles (Kietzmann et al., 2011).

The use of social networks in the recruitment process prior to employment has become commonplace because it is an important source of information for applicants but has potential legal and ethical risks, and there are conflicting views around the use of social networks in recruitment. Kilpatrick (2013) said that social networks do not help recruiters develop their judgment or improve their ratings. They provide the means to manage a greater number of relationships with candidates.

Falcone (2009) and Smith-Butler (2009) claim that nowadays, prospects and managers face ethical dilemmas about whether or not to conduct an online search on social networks.

Technological advances and the use of the Internet have dramatically changed the recruitment and selection process (Davison et al. 2012). Networking is considered a cost-effective job search activity by providing detailed and private information of applicants (Van Hoye, G., & Lievens, F. 2009). Human resources use social networking sites and the Internet for disciplinary recruitment (Davison et al. 2011).

With the rapid development of technology, storage and access to information about people is much easier and cheaper (Miller & Weckert, 2000). The estimations used in the selection have good predictive values, but problems can arise at the decision-making stage due to factors such as time pressure and information overload (Born

and Scholarios, 2005).

According to Riinvest Institute's research in the Republic of Kosovo, organizational managers stated that the most commonly used method, 33%, for employment is the recommendation, while social networks account for only 12%. Other used methods for employment are public announcements (24%), employee referral programs (8%), and family networks (23%) (Riinvest 2017).

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Primary data in this research are provided by questionnaires and direct interviews with managers at various levels and owners who are directly involved in recruitment decisions. Secondary data are provided from prestigious worldwide scientific journals.

These data were processed in accordance with the methods of statistical analysis using the algebraic mean method of magnitude and indicators of absolute change (Nuhiu, 1995), and the data also were processed in accordance with the methods of statistical analysis using the values for asymmetry of kurtosis and skewness which Hair *et al.* (2010) and Bryne (2010) considered that for the data to be normally distributed skewness should be between -2 to +2 and kurtosis between -7 to +7.

The research questions served the function of fulfilling the purpose of the study. According to Gliem, R.R., & Gliem, J.A. (2003) Likert scales of 1 – 5 points (where 5 represents 'strongly agree' and 1 represents 'strongly disagree) should be used.

The average of the answers is divided by 5 and then multiplied by 100 to get the percentage which shows us how close we are to the full approximation of the average statement (Ismajli, Hysen & Perjuci, Edona & Prenaj, Vlora & Braha, Medina 2019).

The scale is calculated using: s = (Σwixi / n) * 100/5

where:

wi = xi; s is the degree of agreement with the statement

w is the weight of the weighting

x is the level given by each respondent,

and i = 1,2 ,, n represents the respondent.

The data is analyzed and tested for normality and to calculate values of skewness and kurtosis for a normal distribution (West SG, Finch JF, Curran PJ. 1995).

The scale is calculated using:

$$\tilde{\mu}_3 = \frac{\sum_i^N (X_i - \bar{X})^3}{(N-1) * \sigma^3} \qquad \text{Kurt} = \frac{\mu_4}{\sigma^4}$$

where:

$\tilde{\mu}_3$ = skewness

Kurt = kurtosis

N = number of variables in the distribution

μ4 = fourth central moment

$X_i$ = random variable

σ4 = standard deviation

$\bar{X}$ = mean of the distribution

σ = standard deviation

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The achievement of the main objectives of this study are based on research of the literature and primary and secondary data analysis. Recommendations on the improvement of the recruitment process by use social networking sites within enterprises in Kosovo are then provided.

- Analyze the use of social networks in the recruitment process in Kosovo enterprises and their impact on this process.
- The quality of information about applicants from Social Networks affects the process of recruitment.
- There is a direct link between cost per hire and reduced time on using social networking sites for recruitment process.
- Consideration of the use of social networking sites for recruitment by managers is related to an effective and efficient recruitment process.

## Characteristics of Respondents and Research Results

Table 1 presents characteristics of respondents profiled in demographic distribution such as education level, occupation and recruitment experience of respondents, furnish the basis for socio-demographics analyses on use of social networks for recruitment.

**Table 1.** The demographic distribution of the respondents.

| Variables | Categories | Frequency in % |
|---|---|---|
| Education level | High School | 5.8% |
| | Bachelors | 51.3% |
| | Masters | 42.1% |
| | PhD/Doctorate | 0.8% |
| Occupation | Low-level Manager | 14.1% |
| | Middle-level Manager | 49.2% |
| | Top-level manager | 11.9% |
| | Owner | 24.8% |
| Recruitment experience | Less than 5 years | 4% |
| | 5 to 10 years | 69 % |
| | 10 to 15 years | 26 % |
| | More than 15 years | 1 % |

Source: author's work.

## Information quality about applicants

Table 2 presents the results on information quality about candidates, which includes part one of the questionnaire. Relevant statements of this questionnaire carry the following responses: Information about candidates on social networks is reliable; Information about candidates on social networks contains all necessary data; The use of social networks in the recruitment process is relevant to our recruitment; Information about candidates on social networks is updated; Information on social networks about candidates is accurate; Information on the social networks about candidates required is adequate.

**Table 2.** Information quality about applicants

| Questionnaire Part 1 | Mean | Standard deviation | Kurtosis | Skewness |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Information about candidates on social networks are reliable | 3.67 | 1.08 | 0.43 | -1.01 |
| Information about candidates on social networks contains all necessary data | 3.44 | 1.11 | -0.10 | -0.83 |
| Social networks use in the recruitment process is relevant to our recruitment | 3.76 | 0.90 | 1.60 | -1.23 |
| Information about candidates on social networks is updated | 4.05 | 0.93 | 1.72 | -1.24 |
| Information on social networks about candidates is accurate | 3.62 | 0.68 | 0.56 | -0.20 |
| The information on the social networks about required candidates is adequate | 3.76 | 0.99 | 1.45 | -1.27 |
| Total | 3.71 | 0.94 | 0.94 | -0.96 |

Source: author's work

Therefore, social networks offer reliable information about candidates and may reach a larger group of potential applicants. The overall mean of the answers in this part of the questionnaire is 3.71 points, which is close to the alternative 'Agree', with a standard deviation of 0.94. The overall kurtosis is 0.94 and overall skewness is -0.96; the data set is in the acceptable range of skewness and kurtosis for a normal distribution.

## Cost benefit and timeliness

The results from Table 3 include the second part of the questionnaire, which shows the responses from the parts about cost benefit and timeliness that address how the use of social networks in the recruitment process decreases cost and time. This part of the questionnaire carries the following responses: Social networks use in the recruitment process decreased the cost of vacancy announcement; Costs have decreased after our enterprise started to use social networks for the recruitment process; Social networks use in the recruitment process decreased the cost of hiring; Social networks use in the recruitment process has decreased the time needed for recruiting candidates; Social networks use in the recruitment process decreased administrative time; Social networks use in the recruitment process decreased advertisement time. For this part of the responses, the overall mean is 4.01, near the alternative 'agree', while the standard deviation is 0.90. The overall kurtosis is 2.56 and overall skewness is -1.29; the distribution of the data set can be considered normal.

**Table 3.** Cost benefit and Timeliness

| Questionnaire Part 2 | Mean | Standard deviation | Kurtosis | Skewness |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Social networks use in the recruitment process decreased the cost of vacancy announcement | 4.08 | 0.71 | 5.57 | -1.64 |
| Costs have decreased after our enterprise started to use social networks for the recruitment process | 3.98 | 0.76 | 1.64 | -0.79 |
| Social networks use in the recruitment process decreased the cost of hiring | 3.80 | 1.02 | 1.21 | -1.17 |
| Social networks use in the recruitment process has decreased the time needed for recruiting candidates | 4.15 | 1.23 | 0.30 | -1.26 |
| Social Networks use in the recruitment process decreased the administrative time | 3.97 | 1.00 | 1.42 | -1.25 |
| Social networks use in the recruitment process decreased advertisement time | 4.10 | 0.73 | 5.24 | -1.65 |
| Total | 4.01 | 0.90 | 2.56 | -1.29 |

Source: author's work

## The impact of social networks in the recruitment process

Table 4 presents the results from the third part of the questionnaire, summarizing the impact of social networks on the recruitment process. Statements in this part are: Our enterprise uses information from social networks for recruitment purposes; The daily use of social networks for recruitment is more accurate than traditional recruitment methods; Our enterprise uses business-oriented (Professional) networking web sites for recruitment; Social networks enable potential candidates to have information about vacancy announcements; Our enterprise uses. social-oriented networking web sites (Virtual Communities e.g.) for recruitment; Social networks use for recruitment is related to an effective and efficient recruitment process.

The overall mean for these responses is 3.87, or close to the alternative 'agree', while the standard deviation is 0.83. The overall kurtosis is 3.54 and overall skewness is -1.50, so the data is considered to be normally distribution.

**Table 4**. The impact of Social Networks on Recruitment Process.

| Questionnaire Part 3 | Mean | Standard deviation | Kurtosis | Skewness |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Our enterprise uses information from social networks for recruitment purposes | 3.87 | 0.94 | 1.98 | -1.36 |
| The daily use of social networks for recruitment is more accurate than traditional recruitment methods. | 3.76 | 1.00 | 1.18 | -1.10 |
| Our enterprise uses business-oriented (Professional) networking web sites for recruitment. | 3.89 | 0.75 | 4.30 | -1.60 |
| Social networks enable potential candidates to have information about vacancy announcements | 3.85 | 0.79 | 4.52 | -1.84 |
| Our enterprise uses social-oriented networking web sites (Virtual Communities e.g.) for recruitment. | 3.87 | 0.89 | 2.33 | -1.39 |
| Social networks use for recruitment is related to an effective and efficient recruitment process. | 4.02 | 0.62 | 6.98 | -1.73 |
| Total | 3.87 | 0.83 | 3.54 | -1.50 |

Source: author's work

Table 5 presents sample size data which shows overall survey respondents on exact number of agreement or disagreement on use social networks for recruitment purposes.

**Table 5**. Respondent responses.

| Respondents | Completely disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Completely agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mean | 7 | 11 | 22 | 107 | 39 |

Source: author's work

## RESEARCH RESULTS

The results of the research in this study were reported using the average algebraic method and indicators of absolute change (Nuhiu 1995) by means of SUMIF and COUNTIF. The purpose of this study is to prove empirically that the above mentioned factors affect the recruitment process in enterprises of the Republic of Kosovo and determine an evident impact which enabled the recruitment process to make effective decisions.

We found the percentage of use of social networks in the recruitment process in Kosovar enterprises is 14.8%. This result is supported by the research of the Riinvest Institute from a few

years ago, which found the percentage use to be 12% (Riinvest 2017).

Analyzing the quality of information, cost benefit which brings social networks in the process of recruitment and decrease of time during administration process of recruitment effectiveness, we found social networks impact on the recruitment process, where the overall mean is 3.87, following to the alternative Agree, which argues the power of influence in the recruitment process and with a standard deviation of 0.83.

Table 2 analyzes the quality of information of social networks which provide qualified candidates in the recruitment process; their impact is evidenced by the average response of f 3.71 and a standard deviation of 0.94.

Table 3 which analyzes the cost benefit and timeliness provided by social networking information to the recruitment process, enabling the company to reduce costs and shorten the recruitment process time. The average of total respondents' responses is 4.01 and the standard deviation is 0.90.

The results show that kurtosis ranges between 0.94 and 3.54, and the values of skewness range between −1.50 and -0.96. Considering kurtosis and skewness together, the results indicate that the data are considered to be normally distributed.

Finally, from the results of this research and the achievement of the main objectives, we can conclude that the factors received by the respondents in using information from social networking web sites for recruitment purposes are acceptable; the daily use of social networking web sites for recruitment is more accurate than traditional recruitment methods; potential candidates are able to receive information about vacancy announcements; using social networks for recruiting is related to an effective and efficient recruitment process; business-oriented (Professional) networking sites are used for recruitment; and companies also use social-oriented networking web sites during the recruitment process.

## RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

The biggest limitation in conducting the research was the global pandemic, which limited contact with respondents and extended the time it took to conduct the research. Contacts with enterprises were made by email and through social networks as a first phase. After that, to make research more reliable in the second phase, direct interviews were conducted, sometimes by using different communication platforms. In addition, because so little research has been done on the use of social networks in recruiting, it is difficult to do any comparative analysis. But despite these limitations, the respondent responses made it possible to reach research results on the role of social networks as a tool for an effective recruitment process in Kosovar enterprises.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There is a great lack of research on the use of social networks in the field of human resource management, especially in the recruitment process. This makes it difficult to directly compare the results of this study with those conducted in other countries. Nevertheless, the results are presented below.

Based on the results of the conducted surveys, it was found that only 14.80% of responding enterprises use information from social networks for the recruitment process, meaning that 85.20% of the respondents use it either partially or do not use it at all. These results are similar to the research done by the Riinvest Institute on methods used for hiring new staff, where the result of the research was that 12% of the respondents declared that they were using social networks as a method for recruitment. (Riinvest Institute, 2017).

Based on the results of the surveys, it was found that only 12.42% of the responding enterprises evaluate the social networks recruitment process as a long-term employee recruitment strategy, and 87.58% evaluate it either partially or do not evaluate it at all. Failure to apply the human resource management process to Kosovar enterprises is not a positive aspect, as many studies have shown that the success of an enterprise depends heavily on strategic human resource management, and failure to apply it causes failure in the functioning cycle of an enterprise (Smith and Smith, 2007; Berry, 1998; Greenley, 1994).

We conclude from the results that social networks have an impact on the recruitment process however many norms of verification and accuracy of information must be respected in order for the impact to be as strong as possible. Therefore, we recommend that the platforms for employment in social networks should be prepared by the professionals from their respective fields because the content of the information determines the final decision.

We recommend to companies that recruiters who are directly involved in the recruitment process have skills with using social networks so that the content of information from them are understood and interpreted professionally, as this is crucial for the success of the company.

We recommend to recruiters that the competitive advantages offered by using information from social networks be used as much as possible, not only for recruitment but also for advancing the recruitment strategy, which is one of the most important challenges for companies that want to have the sufficient contingent of candidates and work envisaged in the recruitment strategy.

The use of social networks in the recruitment process prior to employment has become commonplace because it is an important source of information for applicants, but has potential legal and ethical risks, and there also are conflicting views around the use of social networks in recruitment. Our study focuses mainly on the need to explore the use of social networks in Kosovar enterprises and their impact on the recruitment process by carefully managing the high ethical and professional challenges that this process faces.

Ultimately the purpose of this study is to build a reasonable scientific basis that will enable effective predictions and recommendations for the recruitment process. We recommend that Kosovar enterprises consider using social networks recruitment more as a part of the official recruitment process. Social networks speed up the time that it takes to recruit, enables human resource managers to filter out a large number of applicants, and thus simplifies the selection process. Social networks decrease the cost per hire, which makes using social networks in recruitment logical for companies.

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