Personal Branding Competencies as critical success factors forE-Recruitment

Jude Ashmi E[1], Jeevananda S[2]

[1]Research Scholar, School of Business Studies, Christ (Deemed to be university), Bangalore

[2]Associate Professor, School of Business Studies, Christ (Deemed to be university), Bangalore

ABSTRACT

The current trend in recruitment is e-recruitment. The digital recruitment process of viewing a job seeker's profile and recruiting through the cyber world is known as e-recruitment. This article is an empirical study on information sharing for the purpose of social media recruitment. The study explores the competencies of personal branding to be shared by jobseekers on their social media profile, from a recruiter's perspective. 209 recruiters from MNCs in and around Bangalore city, are surveyed and their responses were used for the empirical analysis. The survey instrument was constructed from the inputs of an expert interview with 34 recruiters on a purposive sample basis. The research identified 28 competencies of personal branding under three factors – Professional competencies, Managerial competencies and personal competencies. The effect of these competencies on the success of e-recruitment process was assessed through the recruiter's perception on the satisfaction of the respective hiring managers who generated the need for the recruitment. The research also found that the educational qualification of the recruiters had an effect on the expectation of personal brand competencies in concurrence with earlier research studies.

Introduction

Potential Hiring is the goal of every recruiter in the corporate world. The increasing social media recruitment trend around the world has proven cost efficient and comfortable for recruiters to bring in talented workforce to map the required competence within the organisation. This prevailing status of social media usage around the world is comparatively at its lowest in India when compared to the world's other most populated countries.

This research focuses on the expectation of the Bangalore based recruiters on a Jobseeker's social media profile. The end result offers personal brand critical success competencies for a jobseeker to face the cyber-job market. This makes the entire process of social media recruitment useful for both ends increasing the use of social media productively and ethically, thereby reducing the cost of recruitment for the organisations.

This is beneficial for a jobseeker as employability and self-promotion could be highlighted on their profiles as per the expectation of the recruiter in the highly competitive artificial intelligence era, were algorithms help in identifying relevant profiles. This research paper explores the recruiter's expectation of a social media job seeker's profile. Based on the identified elements, three factors of personal branding competencies are identified. Impact of these constructs on the success of the e-recruitment process is assessed. The assessment is done based on the satisfaction of the hiring managers in the recruiter's perception in social media recruitment cases. The population under study are recruiters from multi-national companies in the Bangalore zone.

Literature review

Recruitment is a process of attracting capable people towards vacancy in an organisation (Bratton & Gold, 2000).The right choice of candidates leads to the advantage of reduction in cost, lesser effort to retention and effective processes within the organisation (Piotrowski & Armstrong, 2006). The competent recruitment needs, has led to the evolving recruitment culture of electronic recruitment. E-recruitment has been trending in the recruitment research arena from the 1990s (Holm, 2009). Social media recruitment in the recruitment process perspective is identified under the zone of e-recruitment paradigm (Yadav et al., 2019) in the research history. ICT studies (Interest aided communication technology) classify social media recruitment under the Web 2.0 paradigm (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). E-recruitment is a broad spectrum which covers recruitment option including corporate websites, job boards, social media platforms and consultancies (Afshar & Fayyazi, 2014). E-recruitments have saved up to 87% of the costs in organisations (Maurer & Liu, 2007). The advantage of time, cost, wide spectrum coverage, better match and screening ease has proven economical in case of e-recruitment in corporate companies (Hosain et al., 2016; Kapse et al., 2012). E-recruitments of candidates is emerging as an advantageous tool bringing efficiency in the competent recruitment scenario (Holm, 2009; Hosain et al., 2016).

Social media recruitment dates back to 2011 from the execution of monster.com's hiring strategies (Clifford, 2009), the research executed an internet search for "Social media manager" on monster.com and the search yielded more than 1000 matches. From then, there has been elevation in the graph of social media hiring (Jon, 2011).

Traditional recruitment frameworks include psychological contracts which is a set of unwritten expectations that

employers and individuals have for each other and it is essential for the organisation's survival (George, J. 2013). E-recruitment with expectations from both ends can be eased by an information sharing system. A common platform where the job seeker shares the knowledge, skills and personal information and the recruiter is capable of viewing it. This is feasible on a social media platform.

The intention to use social media in current research is to highlight the knowledge, skills, ability, network, and dominant personal attributes of a job seeker to communicate to the recruiter, in a perfect order in the virtual scenario.

The contribution of success towards social media recruitment through the critical factors were identified in concurrence with the research sources (Ghazzawi & Accoumeh, 2014; Vaishali Punia, 2018).

The context of information sharing in social media is transmission of information as a shared orientation between two or more people (Wok,1997). Information sharing basically takes place in three levels, the individual level, the program level and the institutional level (Aiken et al., 1975; Wok, 1997). In social media, information sharing is ambiguous due to the virtual world. Hence information sharing takes place from all sides and all levels (Wok et al., 2012).This highlights the requirement for organised information sharing process for a job seeker to benefit the social media information sharing platform.

Personal branding is an organised process through which people market themselves through a three phased strategy - brand identity, brand positioning and brand image (Khedher, 2014). Research studies also identify personal branding as a three-step process of identifying the self, communicating the self efficiently and achieving the career objective (Zarkada, 2012). The framework of personal branding includes trustworthiness, integrity, goodwill, authenticity, specialization, consistency and performance as its basic criteria (Rampersad, 2008). Sharing this specialised personal information in a balanced form on social media with intention to achieve career goals and objectives is known as online personal branding.

Within personal branding movement, job seekers market their careers and brands with promises of specialisations and tag-lines for success (Kinsky & Bruce, 2016; Prestridge, 2014). The uniqueness or brand identity is the base of branding. Researchers have started offering strategy models to help social media users to build their brand identity on various social media platforms (Karaduman, 2013). But there is very less light on personal branding for job seekers. This study discusses an organised information sharing list of essentials for a social media job seeker apart from the automated algorithms on the social media platforms. From a human intelligence perspective based on the recruiter's expectations, a personal branding strategy with a generic list of competencies for information sharing is the purpose of the study.

This research study considers the population (social media-based job seekers) who could use social media recruitment to benefit from the results. The intention to use social media for recruitment purpose could be recommended by insisting on an online personal brand image.

Research Gap

There are limited number of frameworks and researches identified on the concept of social media personal branding. Hence the key competencies of personal branding has not been identified for application purpose through researches in social media. The computer mediated environment with social media information sharing from employer perspective is observed as cost effective and beneficial (Ghazawi & Accoumeh, 2014; Punia, 2018; Hosain et al., 2016). On the contrary, jobseekers have not sensed the information sharing on network as a resource for recruitment verification and hiring. Personal brand identity is created by self-presentation on social media networks through social media platforms, blogs and web pages (Aaker et al., 2000; Labrecque et al., 2011). It is the responsibility of the job seeker to self-brand in order to promote the uniqueness and strengths to a target market (Labrecque et al., 2011). Researchers suggest examining the effectiveness of social media strategy in building personal brands with reference to different categories of users (Nanayakkara & Dissanayake, 2020). Based on the gap identified, this research focusses on highlighting the role of social media in personal branding with reference to e-recruitment

Rationale of the Study

The research essentially contributes to the job seeking social media population. An organised information sharing activity on social media platforms is enabled in a controlled fashion. This would enable the job seeker to convey ethical and useful information. This prevents the job seeker from sharing non-beneficial, privacy violating and un-authentic information sharing which is sheer waste of time. The study also improves the perception of young job seekers towards social media as a boon to personal branding.

Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study is to contribute an understanding of personal branding based information sharing on social media platforms to enable and ease the e-recruitment process. Based on the above, the following objectives are framed:
1.   To identify the personal branding competencies of a job seeker on social media.
2.   To identify the impact of personal branding competencies on the satisfaction of hiring managers based on the recruiter's perception.

Variables of the Study

The variables under the study include the personal brand competencies identified through the expert interviews and the satisfaction of hiring managers in the recruiter's perspective. The context of the research revolves around the cyber job market were social media based assessment of job seekers is essential. Social media recruitment has been opted by recruiters who constituted the sample of the study by engaging recruitment consultancies, accessing existing professional networks, posting on job boards and through social media verification of job seekers. Hence we assume

the satisfaction of hiring managers is dependent on the personal brand competencies of a social media job seeker. Therefore, the dependent variable considered is the satisfaction of hiring managers. The independent variables are the factors of personal brand competencies.

Research Design

Instruments to measure social media personal brands and efficient social media profiles with recruitment prospect has not been identified through research resources. This research aims at identifying the competencies to be shared on a social media profile. This is to strategically enable a jobseeker to create a brand image and to propose his unique value to get recruited. To accomplish the task of identifying the list of competencies under personal branding, the research seeks the employer's perception. Recruiters are the representatives of the employers who directly deal with e-recruitment in social media sites. Hence the recruiter's perception towards the required personal brand competencies are sorted through an expert interview based on which a survey questionnaire with 28 items along with demographic enquiries was built (Overall 36 items).A quantitative survey was conducted to reveal the relationship between the factors identified and results are discussed.

Research Methodology

The research process was carried out in two phases - Expert interview to build a scale, Quantitative survey. A purposive sample of 34 recruiters from MNCs were identified to respond to a semi structured interview with 15 questions. A stipulated time limit of 30 minutes was strictly observed to complete the interview process. The transcripts of the interview underwent a summative content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) based on the use of vocabulary by the recruiters. Based on a coding process, 28 key themes which were the generic expectation of the recruiters, were identified. The recruiters identified the success of recruitment through the feedback from the hiring manager based on his satisfaction of the recruited candidate.

A survey questionnaire was built with a five-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly agree" and "Strongly disagree". The demographics of the recruiters were enquired and anonymity was ensured on the validated off their responses. All the recruiters were employed in multi-national companies. A sample of 209 recruiters after a data clearing process, was arrived at.

A judgemental sampling procedure based on the social media hiring experience of the recruiters was fixed as a criteria. 240 questionnaires were distributed resulting in 225 responses out of which 209 responses were valid for analysis. The response rate was 94%. The data was analysed for further inference.

Data Analysis

The data was distributed normally. The univariate normality assumptions was satisfied making the data eligible for parametric tests. The value of reliability expressed by Cronbach alpha(0.86) was checked. The instrument was found reliable for data collection and the validity was ensured after a factor analysis.

The factors were named as "Professional competencies", "Managerial Competencies" and "Personal Competencies".An exploratory factor analysis of the identified items yielded three factors as presented in the Appendix A.

Professional Competencies

Under the "Professional Competencies" factor, the item with highest loading was "Communication Skills" at 0.819. Obvious proof of the same has been experienced throughout the expert interview process and through various virtual environment-based studies (Martha, Maznevski and Chudoba, 2000; Jarvenpaa and Leidener, 1999). Communication skill is the base behind conveying one's personal brand (Rampersad, 2008, Kheder, 2014).

The factors "Ability to apply knowledge, Logical thinking, Computer proficiency, Research skills, Critical analysis" fell under the loading range of 0.76 to 0.72. Among these, "Computer proficiency" is an additional skill included based on the observation of respondent recruiters. The other skills were thoroughly supported by research studies on personal branding context (Tarnovskaya, 2017; Figurska, 20 Petruca, 2016). "Adapting to change, Ability to handle pressure, Work experience and Academic excellence" had loadings ranging from 0.66 to 0.58 which is acceptable. Though the value of these 4 factors range lesser than the goodness value expected from the loadings, these items had significant mentions by the respondents of the qualitative interview. Especially the item "Ability to handle pressure" has been mentioned by every single respondent. Though work experience and adapting to change are research supported features in employer branding perspective (Uebbing, 2015), personal branding studies have mentioned these features as personal attributes in their qualitative observation (Arruda, 2015).

Managerial Competencies

Under the "Managerial Competencies" factor, the item with the highest loading was "Problem solving skills" at 0.806. The qualitative inputs have had a detailed mention of "Problem solving" and "Time management skills" along with "Entrepreneurial spirit". The main idea behind "Entrepreneurial spirit" is willingness to take risk within the job arena. Team working skill was one among the main skills according to every respondent of the interview. Though problem solving skills show a very high loading, critically speaking literatures have emphasised "Leadership skills". "Team working skills", "taking initiative to address problems" and "planning and organising" had been highly ranked interms of responses in the survey.

The factors "Leadership skills, Planning and organizing, Teamwork, Presentation skills" fell under the loading range of 0.785 to 0.706. Research studies have discussed the importance of the above skills in social media presence though not in the context of recruitment (Johnson, 2017, Lindahl Ohlund, 2003, Ganda, 2014). "Overall quality of work, Entrepreneurial spirit, Initiative, Time management" had loadings ranging from 0.669 to 0.622 which is

acceptable. These skills had been identified as business competencies in various studies not pertaining to social media recruitment limits (Ganda, 2014; Holm, 2010). Though the values of these 4 factors range lesser than the goodness value expected from the loadings, these items had significant mentions by the respondents of the qualitative interview.

Personal Competencies

Under the "Personal Competencies" factor, the item with the highest loading was "Enthusiasm" at 0.792. The factors "Self-confidence, Self-reliance/independence, Creativity, Self-motivation, Maturity" fell under the loading range of 0.788 to 0.734.
"Flexibility and adaptability, Willingness to learn, Attendance/Punctuality" had loadings ranging from 0.681 to 0.551 which is acceptable. Though the values of these 3 factors range lesser than the goodness value expected from the loadings, these items had significant mentions by the respondents of the qualitative interview. Especially the item "Willingness to learn" and "flexibility and adaptability" were mentioned by all the respondents with respect to their expectation to be highlighted in a personal branding.
A prominent statement in the expert interview that specified the importance of flexibility and willingness to learn was, "It is not mandatory to proclaim the flexibility and the learning skills but their transformation through years will certainly highlight their skills". This particular response shows the requirement to express an individual's learning skills in an explicit consistent fashion on the profile.

The effect of personal brand competency dimensions

The personal brand competency dimensions from the factor analysis were the expected outcomes of a job seeker's profile. Hence the effect of these dimensions on the success of the recruitment process was verified through multiple linear regresion. Personal brand competency dimension's effect on the satisfaction of the concerned hiring manager was checked. The satisfaction feedback of the hiring managers was the success assessment factor, as agreed by the recruiters via the survey questionnaire. The results are presented in Table 1. To check the effect of personal branding dimensions on the satisfaction of the hiring managers, the following hypothesis was proposed.
H_0- Personal branding dimensions does not influence the satisfaction of hiring managers.
The R^2 value explains the percentage of variance of the satisfaction of the hiring managers. The R^2 value explains the goodness of fit at 78% with the regression line. Professional key competencies, managerial competencies and personal competencies significantly predicted the satisfaction of the hiring managers (p<0.05). Significant effort towards personal brand competencies can increase the satisfaction of the hiring managers. Hence the hypothesis is rejected. The personal branding competencies had an impact on the satisfaction level of the hiring managers according to the recruiters.

Discussion

The factors – professional competencies, managerial competencies and personal competencies that were identified from a factor rotation matrix had Eigen values above 0.7. Hence without dimension reduction, all three rotated factor matrix loadings were retained. The regression of the three factors towards the satisfaction of hiring managers shows a positive influence of the personal brand competencies on the satisfaction of the hiring managers in the perception of the recruiter. This ensures the relationship as expected by social media information sharing research studies. The impact of personal branding on social media recruitment has been confirmed. The research also identified that professional competencies and personal competencies predicted the satisfaction of hiring managers better than the managerial competencies. The educational qualification of the recruiter has impacted the social media job seekers through the expectation of all three personal brand competencies significantly. This was verified through an one-way ANOVA and their results were consistent with the earlier researches (Ghazawi & Accoumeh, 2014).

Table 1
Relationship between Personal Branding and Satisfaction of the Hiring Manager

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | |
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	79.51	8.49		9.36	.000
Professional competencies	.23	.07	.27	3.33	.000
Managerial competencies	.73	.20	.31	3.81	.020
Personal competencies	1.3	.31	.34	4.21	.000

Notes. $R^2 = .02$ (ps < .05)

Source: Primary data

Conclusion

This research identifies the personal branding competencies of a job seeker on social media professional networks. The competencies are identified from the recruiter's perspective to enable the social media job seeker to create a competent profile. The purpose of competent profiles ensures communication of ethical and useful information without privacy violation and unauthentic facts. Preventing waste of time and increasing potentiality of job seeker's profile on social media, eases the process of e-recruitment for the employer thereby increasing efficient recruitment through social media. The impact of personal branding competencies on the satisfaction of hiring managers enables a job seeker to positively interpret the essentials for personal branding from a practical context. The entire research under the perception of the recruiter makes the study applicable for both ends of recruitment (job seeker and employer).
The research identifies a gap in success assessment factors of the e-recruitment process. Technically identifying the critical success factors contributed to assess the e-recruitment process. The gap in identifying the factors for

assessing the success status of e-recruitment should further be researched as the paradigm shift from traditional recruitment to e-recruitment could be a long lasting trend in the social media era.

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Appendix

Appendix A		
Rotated Component Matrix of Personal Branding		

Factor names	Items	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3
Professional Competencies dimensions	Communication skills	.819		
	Ability to apply knowledge	.762		
	Logical thinking	.757		
	Computer proficiency	.752		
	Research skills	.746		
	Critical analysis	.728		
	Adapt to change	.663		
	Ability to handle pressure	.655		
	Work experience	.638		
	Academic excellence	.589		
Managerial Competencies Dimensions	Problem solving skills		.806	
	Leadership skills		.785	
	Planning and organizing		.781	
	Teamwork		.742	
	Presentation skills		.706	
	Overall quality of work		.669	
	Entrepreneurial spirit		.655	
	Initiative		.635	
	Time management		.622	
Personal Competencies Dimensions	Enthusiasm			.792
	Self-confidence			.788
	Self-reliance/independence			.774
	Creativity			.751
	Self-motivation			.736
	Maturity			.734
	Flexibility and adaptability			.681
	Willingness to learn			.622
	Attendance/Punctuality			.551

Source: Primary data