

Factors Enhancing Employed Job Seekers Intentions to Use Social Networking Sites as a Job Search Tool

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the factors of enhancing employed job seekers intention to use social networking sites as a job search tool. 190 survey questionnaires were distributed to employed job seekers who have used social networking sites via the snowball sampling approach. The collected data were analysed using both linear and multiple regression analysis. The results showed that perceived usefulness and perceived enjoyment are positively and significantly related to the behavioural intention to use social networking sites as a job search tool, whereas perceived ease of use is not positively and significantly related. The study implies that the developers of social networking sites need to provide additional useful functionalities or tools in the social networking sites to help users of social networking sites with their job search. The paper provides an insight for employed jobseekers to find employment by using social networking sites as a job search tool.

Keywords: Adoption of Technologies, Behavioural Intention, Communities of Practice, Computer-Mediated Communication, Interactive Learning Environments, Job Search, Malaysia, Recruitment, Social Networking

INTRODUCTION

Social networking sites are a type of virtual community (Murray & Waller, 2007). Virtual community consists of a group of people who communicates via electronic means such as the

Internet. They share interest without physical contact or the need to be in the same place or belong to the same ethnic group (Kardaras, Karakostas, & Papatthanassiou, 2003). Users of social networking sites will create their own profile with their personal information and will usually add their friends, friends of friends or new friends. Social networking sites are usually

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used to keep in touch with friends and families by posting their updates, photos, blogs, and chatting, apart from enjoyment and relaxation. There are many consumer-networking sites available such as Facebook, MySpace, Friendster, Hi5, Bebo and Multiply. Facebook claims that it has 200 million active users who have returned to the site in the last 30 days (as of April 2009) (Facebook, 2009). According to Warr, 2008, as of March 2008, Facebook claimed that there were 66 million active users. Within a year, from 2008 to 2009, Facebook's active users increased by 134 million.

A study was conducted on passive job seekers (employed job seekers) adoption of e-recruitment technology in Malaysia by Tong (2009). The passive candidates are of higher quality when compared to the active candidates (Tong, 2009). For this empirical study, the questionnaire was distributed to employed job seekers with experience in using third parties' e-recruitment web sites. The author conducted a mini survey among the industries in Malaysia and India to understand how companies use social media technologies for sourcing of passive candidates. Out of the nine respondent companies in Malaysia and India, only one company uses social networking sites for recruitment. The social networking sites used for sourcing of candidates are LinkedIn and Facebook. The author's employer uses LinkedIn to source for candidates in the US (Kow, 2009). The author's employer with headquarters located in the U.S. had successfully hired some key positions via LinkedIn, which attracted a sizable pool of applicants. From the research conducted, the author recommended to the HR management team that LinkedIn and Facebook should be used as one of the sourcing methods. The recruiters of the author's company with plants and offices in Asia (Thailand, Singapore, China, and Malaysia), US and Europe have been using Facebook and LinkedIn to source for candidates since November 2008. However, the author did not conduct a research on the Employed Job Seekers' acceptance of the social networking sites as a Job Search tool. This research will cover this

gap since the author will obtain the employed job seekers' view, on their intentions to use of social networking sites as a job search tool. Since most of the researches were conducted on the third party e-recruitment web sites and corporate career web sites, the author seeks to examine this alternative recruitment source that is social networking sites.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Model and Hypotheses

The Technology Acceptance Model is a highly validated model and was tested by many researchers in their study (Figure 1). This research also bases its model on the extended TAM model by Tong (2009) but introduces an intrinsic motivation variable which is perceived enjoyment (Figure 2).

Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU)

Perceived ease of use is defined as "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free from effort" (Davis, 1989). All else being equal, an application perceived to be easier to use is more likely to be accepted by the users (Davis, 1989). In majority of the research conducted using the TAM model, perceived ease of use was found to have positively influenced the behavioural intention to use a system (Fagan, Wooldridge, & Neill, 2008; Guriting & Ndubisi, 2006; Hsu, Wang, & Chiu, 2009; Huang, 2008; Ramayah, Chin, Norazah, & Amlus, 2005). However, it is also found in other research that perceived ease of use is found to have not directly influenced the behavioural intention to use a system (Ruiz-Mafe', Sanz-Blas, & Aldas-Manzano, 2009). Generally, when a system is found to be easy to use, users will have the intention to use the system. In this research, the author will examine the relationship between perceived ease of use and the behavioural intention to use online social networking sites as a job search tool. The first hypothesis is therefore constructed as follows:

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