Social Media Recruitment: A Study of Its Role in the Recruitment Process

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ABSTRACT: In the 21st century, it would be hard to imagine individuals not active in social media. In today's digital landscape, social media has become an influential way for both small and large scale enterprises to reach their prospects, inform them, educate them, and recruit the right candidate. With more and more people engaging in social media, it is worth knowing the impact it has or might have in the recruitment process of a company. This paper focuses on the job seekers and to examine the effectiveness of various social media networks as a job finding tool. The study analyzes the reliability of each site based on the ratings given by respondents. The paper also examines how factors such as age, qualification and gender impact the use of social media sites used for job search.
Keywords: Social Media, Job Seekers, Recruitment, Human Resource

I.   INTRODUCTION

Perhaps no method has ever had as revolutionary an effect on recruitment practices as the Internet.Merriam-Webster defined social media as forms of electronic communication (such as websites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (such as videos).

Recruitment refers to finding and attracting eligible applicants for employment. Employing the right person, in the right place at the right time is crucial to an organization's performance. For any organization, the most important key to growth is acquiring the right talent as bad hiring decisions can hurt your company. The companies can save both money and time when choosing employees through the smart use of social networking sites where the recruiter is able to get more information than what the candidate might reveal during job interviews.

Research shows that traditional recruitment methods are no longer sufficient in attracting talented employees to an organization as these methods focus on a limited active pool of potential candidates. Over the last few years, there has been a significant increase in social media recruitment as companies begin targeting millennials. It involves the use of social media platforms to post and share about job postings, identify talent through networking with potential candidates, advertise themselves, offer their products and also stay in touch with the customers.

With rapid growth in social media users,social networking sites have taken over almost every sphere of life. It is a great platform which connects the recruiter and the job seekers who share similar career interests. LinkedIn, Facebook, naukri.com, monster.com, twitter are popular recruiting sites. Such sites are highly useful for online recruiters to identify candidates,assess them for experience and skills, get to know how they work with others, the way they handle clients, conflicts, and a lot more.

Social networking sites have become an inevitable and indispensable part of the recruiting process. There are tools which allow recruiters to post openings, tap into employees' social networks, and track which social channels generate the best candidates. However before choosing any specific tool, we have to think about what we want to achieve.

If the aim is to find the best people, this choice might be different than if the goal is to track where the best candidates come from, or shortening

the time to hire. When you are clear with what you want to accomplish, you are more likely to choose the best system for your needs. The objective of this article is to understand the impact of digital platforms on recruitment and how organizations carry out their recruitment process through social media sites.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In Human recourse management, recruitment is a vital function which is the process of searching the right talent and stimulating them to apply for jobs in the organization. It involves discovering the sources of personnel to meet the requirements of the staffing and attract adequate number of employees, to make the effective selection among the applicants (Vinita Sinha, 2013). One cannot imagine a world without social media! It has become increasingly important as it provides a platform which brings together the supply and demand in recruitment and selection. Studies show that companies are currently using social media in recruitment, but perhaps not as effective as they could be(B.J., 2015).

"Social Media" refers to a social interaction through technology and internet-based tools. Social Media differs from other forms of communication due to its ability to reach wider spaces and fast communication speed (Kumar, 2019).Social media platforms are invaluable tools for professional networking, within specific subject fields and across different disciplines and professions. s. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and many other social networking sites allow users to share and interact with online content and to connect with like-minded people (Osterrieder, 2013).

It is largely a free-to-use medium and can reach large, targeted populations rapidly, providing recruitment opportunities to interested but unknown individuals who may not otherwise be engaged within standard professional or institutional contact networks (Khatri, 2015).Any organization incorporating social media as part of their recruiting process should take into account the overall effect it has on the organization and the organization's hiring strategy. With increasing global competition, organizational effectiveness is determined by its ability to attract talented personnel (Marysol Villeda, 2019).

The traditional ways of putting out a job vacancy and waiting for people to come to you are a thing of the past in most industries. Nowadays companies focus more on social media, rather than using newspapers, media, word of mouth, or recruitment agencies(Deshati, 2017). Communicating via social media involves the use of social networking sites that enables people to communicate usually for social purpose with a web based technology and offers an opportunity to interact over the internet (Humera siddiqi, 2016).

In the human resource arena, the presence of social media continues to increase, including a growing use of the internet for pre-screening applicants during the recruitment process. An applicant's presence in social media impacts an applicant's impression during recruitment process (Delores Alarcon, 2019). There is a positive relation between the number of users of social media and recruitment. Recruiting through social media channels is gaining momentum with an increase in the number of users on social media. This trend is a result of an organizations' ability of recognizing the potential to attract not only active prospective job candidates but also passive and semi-passive candidates through these channels.

Social networking sites such as LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter allow recruiters to post job advertisements to lure a wide spectrum of potential candidates to easily access and apply for such potential positions, thereby enabling recruiters to search for and screen potential job applicants – even those who do not necessarily apply. Studies have shown that using social networks help discover more and better candidates at a lower cost, compared to traditional recruitment methods. (Kler, 2018).

It is clear that the use of social media platforms has become the norm for sourcing in recruitment and recruiters believe that social media enables them to find better quality. 93% of recruiters use social media to support their recruiting efforts. With regard to the use of social media in recruitment processes, it was found to be

high among participants overall. Studies also found that the use of LinkedIn is much higher among the participants than the use of either Twitter or Facebook.

Social networking sites often have the same basic features and techniques: "network of friend's listings (showing a person's "inner circle"), person surfing, private messaging, discussion forums or communities, events management, blogging, commenting (sometimes as endorsements on people's profiles), and media uploading". The use of social media and internet-based websites and platforms seems appropriate to recruit Millennials who are considered digital natives (Francesca Mochi, 2019). 94% of the companies surveyed were found to be using LinkedIn as their preferred social networking platform when it comes to recruitment. For Facebook and Twitter, it stands at 65% and 55% respectively (Mohan, 2016).

As in real life, social networks too have personalities and themes. For example, Kaixin.com is helpful in finding students and people for white-collar jobs in China; Orkut.com is great for reaching users in Brazil and India. So, it is vital to know your community well in order to spend time on social media more effectively(Anand, 2010). The presence of technology in personnel selection and recruiting is increasing rapidly. Companies suggest that much of the activity is focused on generating and screening applicants in middle-level positions and for high-tech workers, while lower-level positions and senior management positions continue to be recruited and selected through more traditional approaches

According to a study conducted there has been a shift in the recruiting landscape with the adoption of new software, tools, and methods for screening candidates, bringing different ideas about what jobs are supposed to be, and how to apply to them. Below are statistics detailing the changes occurring in the recruiting industry and among job candidates.
• There has been a steady increase for the last 6 years where 94% of recruiters use, or plan to use social media for recruiting.
• Employers who used social media to hire found a 49% improvement in candidate quality over candidates sourced only through traditional recruiting channels.
• An Aberdeen study found that 73% of 18-34 year olds found their last job through a social network.
• Fully 30% of all Google searches, about 300 million per month, are employment related.89% of all recruiters report having hired someone through LinkedIn. Facebook and Twitter trailed by a wide margin, reaching only 26% and 15% respectively.
• 59% of recruiters rated candidates sourced from social networks as "highest quality." Only 21% of candidates say they found their favourite or best job through a social network.

The research suggests that the recruitment process is increasingly affected by the use of social media, from job seekers researching a role to hiring managers seeking information to inform their screening processes. The major findings are the recruitment, selection process is decentralized, and about 80% of the employees are satisfied with recruitment and selection process.

The other major findings are as follows:

• **Reasons for popularity of different social media websites**: Social media has become a deep-rooted phenomenon with mass appeal. Another interesting fact about social media sites is that each of them provide different purposes which resulted in its popularity.

▢ Facebook, where 74% of professionals maintain a profile, is seen as an indispensable method for connecting with friends and family.

▢ Twitter is also hugely popular, with recently conceived networks such as Google+ and Instagram taking a smaller share of the market.

▢ Sites such as LinkedIn have become a key resource for professional networking, as evidenced by an 85% take-update among job seekers. 69 % of employers also have a corporate professional social media profile.

▢ Although 43% of employers have a Twitter feed, and 42% a Facebook account, these are used principally for marketing and promotional activities rather than to appeal to prospective employees.

A key take away here is that both the job seekers as well as employers see a clear distinction between personal and professional networks, with most social media sites falling into one category or the other.

• **Some social media channels are widely perceived as an acceptable recruitment channel**: It is no doubt that social media dependency has reached an impressively high level, however it is not the most obvious space to search for or post job vacancies.

☐ In the first instance, recruitment consultants remain the leading option for both job seekers (43%) and hiring companies (49%), followed by job boards and company websites.

☐ Among both job seekers (77%) and employers (51%), professional networks lead in searching for jobs compared to other social media sites.

For instance, over nine in ten candidates are happy to be solicited for jobs via LinkedIn– and over 80% would apply for a relevant job that appears in their profile feed. Employers need to be careful to advertise vacancies using channels and platforms.

•**Candidates can rely onsocial media as a method for researching the market**: Studies indicates that of all social media sources used as a research tool, professional networks beat other sites by a margin of four to one. The professional social media has a significant impact on job seekers form impressions of a potential employer. Simply posting vacancies is not enough, employers must ensure they maintain high quality, engaging levels of content that provides information about company's culture, employee opportunities and an indication of future plans. Active participation in online groups specific to a particular sector or industry – now used by nearly 70% of job seekers – is also vital to gaining an advantage over your competitors.

However, there are also negatives attached with Internet recruiting. Broader exposure may lead to many unqualified applicants applying for jobs. More resumes need to be reviewed,specialised applicant tracking software may also be required to deal with large number of applications and there might be situations where competent candidates may be missed out (Aswathappa, 2006).

RESEARCH GAP

The review of literature suggests that a number of studies have been carried out to study the relation between social media and recruitment. As evident from the studies, there is a positive association between the two. With changes in the requirements of both the job seekers as well as organisations there is a need to identify the effectiveness of each social media networks used for recruiting potential candidates. There is a need to analyze whether these sites would replace the traditional methods of recruitment and to what extent.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

☐ To analyze the magnitude of usage of Social Networking Sites for recruitment.

☐ To identify which of the social media platforms are the most effective to use.

☐ To identify whether recruitment through social media platforms would be the new normal in near future.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the study is to analyze how factors such as age, gender, qualification impacts the usage of social media networks to either look for job vacancies or attract potential candidates. It was done using a survey method. The primary research conducted would reflect upon the opinions that people have about the use of social media in recruitment. The data analysis has been done using the SPSS software.

SAMPLE

After a brief review of literature, a questionnaire was which was constructed. The respondents were chosen using the simple random sampling method. The responses were collected online. Additionally, the respondents were free to answer anonymously by filling in the online questionnaire.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

    The study conducted was purely based on the results collected online, which has its own pros and cons as it is not possible to measure its accuracy and reliability.

    The study did not focus on the detailed impact recruitment has on the various social media tools.
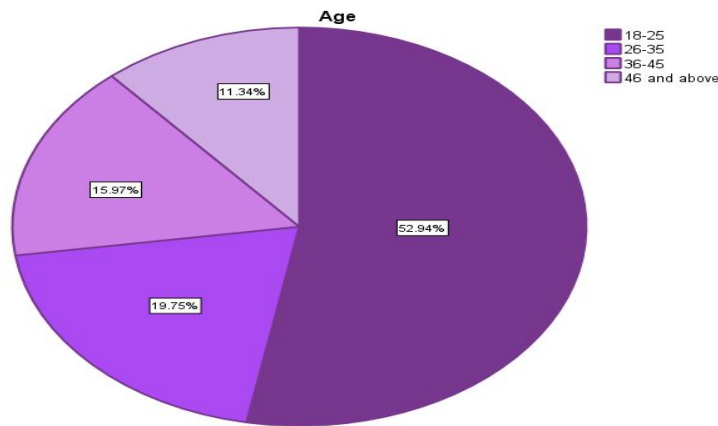
III. RESULTS

A. Factor 1

Table 1: Age as a factor influencing the usage of Social Media Sites

Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-25	126	52.9	52.9	52.9
	26-35	47	19.7	19.7	72.7
	36-45	38	16.0	16.0	88.7
	46 and above	27	11.3	11.3	100.0
	Total	238	100.0	100.0	

Source: Survey

Chart 1: Age as a factor influencing the usage of Social Media Sites

Source: Survey

        From Table (1) and Chart (1)we can infer that from a sample of 238 respondents, 52.9% belonged to the age group of 18-25. 19.7% to the age group of 26-35. 15.97% in the category of 36-45 and 11.34% in the category of 46 and above. This implies that since majority of the respondents are from the age group of 18-25 we can further analyze how it impacts the usage of traditional and modern recruiting methods.
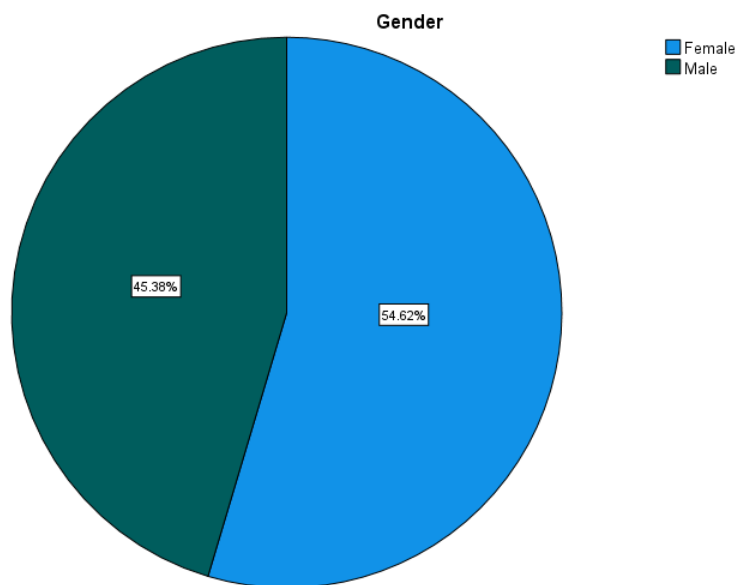
B. Factor II

Table 2: Gender as a factor influencing the usage of Social Media Sites

Gender

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent

Valid	Female	130	54.6	54.6	54.6
	Male	108	45.4	45.4	100.0
	Total	238	100.0	100.0	

Source: Survey

Chart 2: Gender as a factor influencing the usage of Social Media Sites

Source: Survey

From Table (2) and Chart (2), 54.62% of the respondents were female whereas 45.38% were male respondents. Nonetheless, with a difference of 9.2% there is no drastic impact to analyze each gender in specific as a result of the response rate.

C. Factor III

Table 3: Qualification as a factor influencing the usage of Social Media Sites

Qualification

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent

Valid	College or University	170	71.4	71.4	71.4
	High school	40	16.8	16.8	88.2
	Other education	28	11.8	11.8	100.0
	Total	238	100.0	100.0	

Source: Survey

Chart 2: Gender as a factor influencing the usage of Social Media Sites
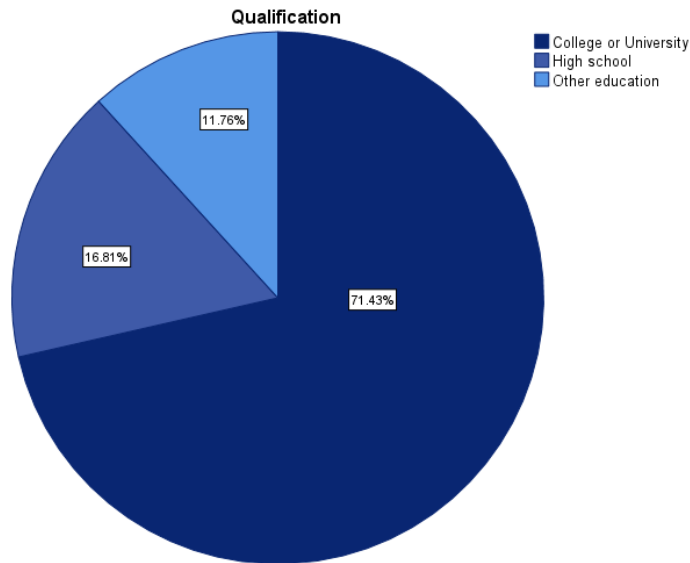
Source: Survey

From the above Table (3) and Chart (3), it is noted that a high percentage of respondents i.e., 71.43% were college or university students, followed by 16.81% high school children and only 11.76% belonged to the category of other education.

D. Table 5: Respondents rate the reliability of the sites

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Highly Unreliable	4	1.7	1.7	1.7
	Unreliable	10	4.2	4.2	5.9
	Neutral	80	33.6	33.6	39.5
	Reliable	115	48.3	48.3	87.8
	Highly Reliable	29	12.2	12.2	100.0
	Total	238	100.0	100.0	

Source: Survey

Chart 5: Respondents rate the reliability of the sites
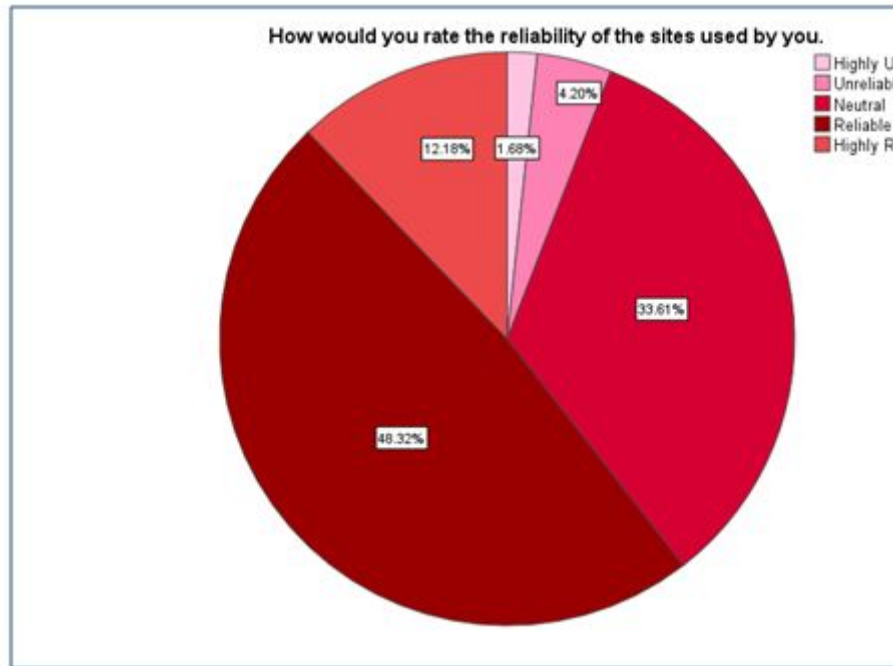
Source: Survey

From the Table (5) and Chart (5), it is inferred that 48.32% of the respondents find social media sites reliable whereas only 12.18% find them highly reliable while looking for jobs. 33.61% of the respondents were neutral about whether or not these sites are reliable. However, it is surprising to note that 4.20% respondents find these sites highly unreliable with only 1.68% finding them unreliable to look for jobs.

E. The data collected is further analyzed by establishing a relationship betweenthe factors (age, gender and qualification) and their preferred platform for seeking jobs.

(i.) Age: From chart (6), it is noted that 56% of the respondents from the age group of 18-25 prefer campus placements while looking for a job followed by social media sites (34%). In the category of 26-35, 15% and 12% of the respondents prefer social media sites and HR recruitment agencies respectively. For the last two categories of age group HR recruitment agencies are preferred, 15% by the former whereas 11% by the latter.
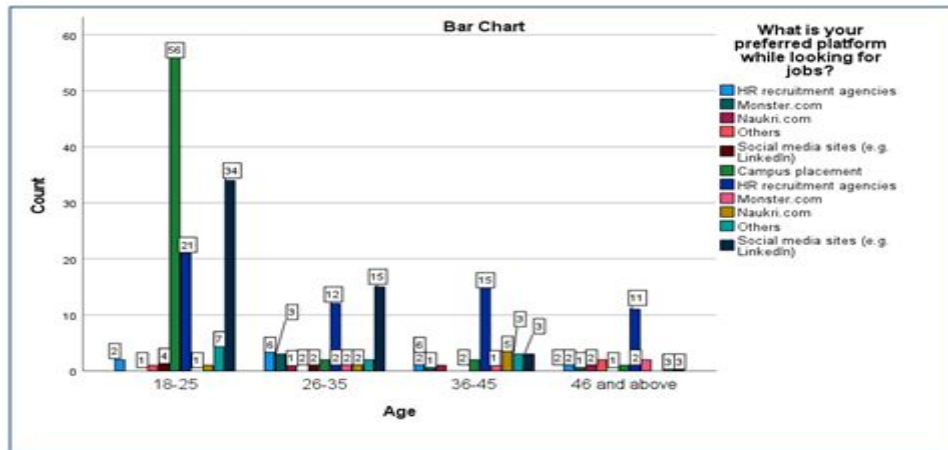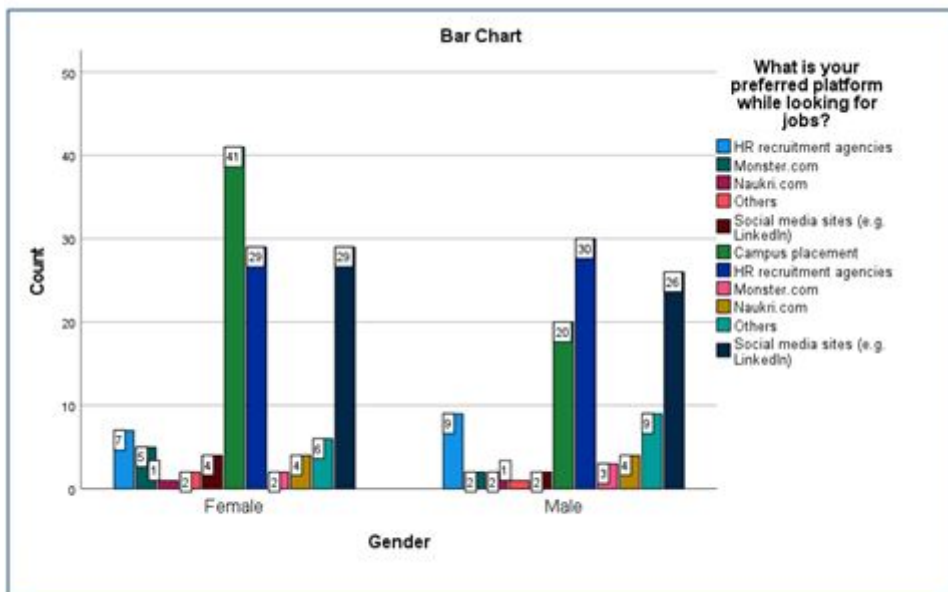
Chart 6

(ii.) Gender: Chart (7) states which platforms are preferred by men and women while searching for jobs. 41% of females tend to prefer campus placements whereas only 20% of males prefer that platform. HR recruitment agencies are preferred by 30% of males and 29% of females. It is also noted that 29% and 26% of females and males would look at social media sites while seeking a job.
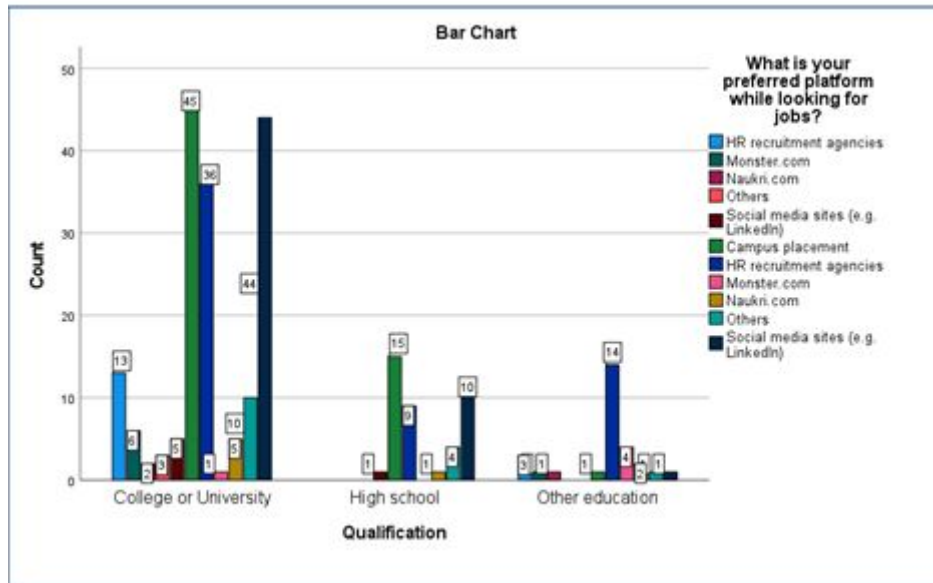
Chart 7

Source: Survey

(iii.) Qualification: We infer from chart (8) that 45% and 44% of college students prefer campus placements and social media sites to look for jobs. 15% and 10% of high schoolers prefer those platforms. However, HR recruitment agencies are preferred by 14% of respondents from the 'other education' category.
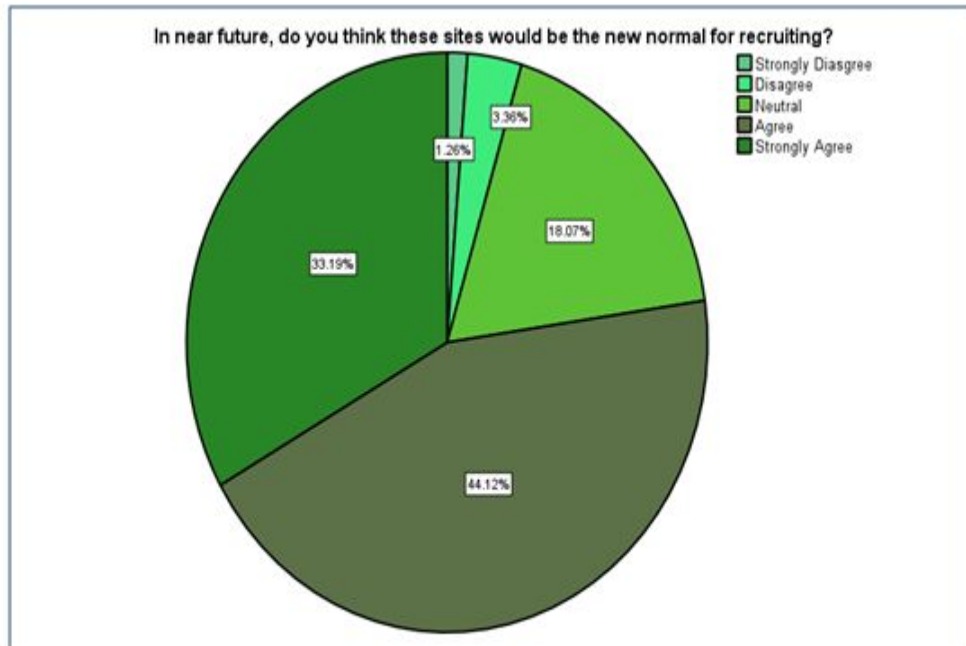
Chart 8

Source: Survey

F. Would recruitment through social media networks replace the traditional method of recruitment?
The data below shows the responses of the respondents:

Table 9
In near future, do you think these sites would be the new normal for recruiting?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	3	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Disagree	8	3.4	3.4	4.6
	Neutral	43	18.1	18.1	22.7
	Agree	105	44.1	44.1	66.8
	Strongly Agree	79	33.2	33.2	100.0
	Total	238	100.0	100.0	

Source: Survey

Source: Survey

Chart 9

The above data denotes that out of 238 respondents, 105 agree that social media sites could be the new normal of recruiting process and 79 respondents strongly agree to the statement. 43 of the responses were neutral i.e. it may or may not replace the traditional methods of recruitment. However, only a handful of the respondents (11) disagree to the statement that the traditional methods would not be replaced.

IV. CONCLUSION

The rise of social media has impacted both individuals and businesses. The consequences of the use of social media has its own pros and cons. A clear understanding of the power of social media is highly essential for both the recruiters and the job seekers. From the study we can see that 48.32% of the respondents find social media sites reliable whereas only 4.20% respondents find these sites highly unreliable. The study also concludes that 33.1% of the respondents strongly agree that social media sites would be the new normal of recruiting as opposed to the 1.3% who strongly disagree to this. Recruiter's run the risk of ignoring outstanding candidates while looking for potential candidates via online platforms only. For job seekers, it is a great opportunity to build new connections and also helps them to enhance their job visibility. Knowing the perfect fit or to know about a candidate's capabilities can only be assessed by having a personal knowledge about the candidate. Therefore, it is of importance on the part of the HR managers to analyze critically which method suits best to employ a candidate who would be a perfect fit for the organization.

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APPENDIX I

Survey Questionnaire

Social media recruitment

Social media has changed the way we do everything, from interacting with friends and family to searching for employment opportunities. This approach allows you to significantly expand your search and open yourself to a wealth of possibilities.The objective of this is to understand the impact social media has on seeking job from the job seeker's perspective.

Name
[   ]

Age *
○ 18-25
○ 26-35
○ 36-45
○ 46 and above

Qualification *
○ High school
○ College or University
○ Other education

Work experience *
○ No experience
○ Less than 1 year
○ Less than 5 years
○ Other: [   ]

Gender *
○ Female
○ Male
○ Other: [   ]

What is your preferred platform or platforms while looking for jobs? *

☐ Campus placement
☐ Social media sites (e.g. LinkedIn)
☐ HR recruitment agencies
☐ Naukri.com, Monster.com
☐ Others

Which platform/platforms have you used for job search? *

☐ Facebook
☐ Twitter
☐ LinkedIn
☐ Naukri.com
☐ Monster.com

How would you rate the reliability of the sites used by you. *

1 2 3 4 5

Least ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Most

In near future, do you think these sites would be the new normal for recruiting? *

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Strongly agree