

A Study on the Factors Influencing Job Seekers' Behavioral Intentions with Social Network Recruitment Based on the UTAUT Model

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Keywords: Social Network Recruitment, UTAUT, Behavioral Intention, Use Behavior.

Abstract: As network technology continues to develop, more enterprises are turning to social networking platforms to effectively attract, meet, and recruit new talent. Based on the UTAUT model, this study investigates the factors that influence job seekers' behavioral intentions and use behaviors with regard to social network recruitment. The study was conducted from the job seekers' perspective. The subjects were university graduates who responded to an online questionnaire, from which 140 valid samples were collected. The results revealed that performance expectancy and effort expectancy had positive impacts on job seekers' behavioral intentions; facilitating conditions had a positive influence on job seekers' use behaviors; and job seekers' behavioral intentions had a positive impact on their use behaviors. The paper concludes with a discussion on the study's implications, limitations, and future research.

1. Introduction

As network technology continues to develop, more enterprises are turning to social networking platforms to effectively attract, meet, and recruit new talent. According to a 2012 Jobsite survey on social network recruitment in the United States, 92% of enterprises employ social networking for recruitment, 73% successfully recruit employees through social networking, and 49% believe that social networking has improved their recruitment efficiency. Therefore, we ask the following question: Which factors in the social network recruitment process will affect job seekers' behavioral intentions and use behaviors? The answer to this question could be the key for enterprises to effectively utilize this new recruitment model and efficiently and accurately recruit suitable talent.

The academic world has been vigorously conducting research on new technology acceptance, from which more relevant theoretical models have emerged. Venkatesh et al (2003) found that the models proposed by previous research could be greatly explained in the respective fields. [1] Therefore, these

theoretical models were integrated and presented as the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT). Several previous studies have proven that the UTAUT model can be applied in many fields to effectively explain the users' new technology acceptance and adoption process (Khechine et al., 2016). [2] However, social network recruitment is a new form, channel, and platform for enterprise recruitment, thus there have been few related studies. In addition, the studies to date have mainly focused on the introduction of social network recruitment and general network recruitment. There is limited empirical research from the job seekers' perspective or their use intentions and behaviors with regard to social network recruitment. This is research gap that needs to be addressed.

The purpose of this study is to examine social network recruitment from the job seekers' perspective, especially how the UTAUT model influences job seekers' behavioral intentions and use behaviors in this process. The results can provide guidance for enterprises to increase the effectiveness of their social network recruitment efforts.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis

2.1 Social Networking Recruitment

Social network recruitment refers to the process by which enterprises use social media to screen and recruit applicants. It is a new form of recruitment that can supplement traditional network recruitment. Social network recruitment takes place between individuals on relationship networking websites through which recruiters and job seekers' can interact to share information and learn about each other. Compared with traditional network recruitment channels, social network recruitment has several advantages. This platform has a larger pool of professionals from which enterprises can search for and locate special talents, observe real personalities, and interact with job seekers.

2.2 UTAUT Model

Venkatesh et al (2003) organized the relevant theoretical models for technology acceptance and proposed the UTAUT model. [1] The main influencing factors of this model include performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating factors. The moderating variables are individual background factors such as gender, age, experience, and voluntariness of use. Among these factors, the user's behavioral intentions are directly affected by performance expectancy, effort expectancy, and social influence, while facilitating conditions directly affect their use behaviors with new technology beyond behavioral intention.

2.3 Model and Hypothesis for the Influencing Factors of Job Seekers' Social Network Recruitment Behavioral Intentions

The UTAUT model is widely used to study the acceptance of new technology. Social network recruitment is a new channel for job seekers, which can be categorized as new recruitment technology. Based on the UTAUT model and the characteristics of social network recruitment, this study explores the factors that influence job seekers' intentions to use this channel and proposes a model of how these factors impact behavioral intention and use behavior, as shown in Figure 1.

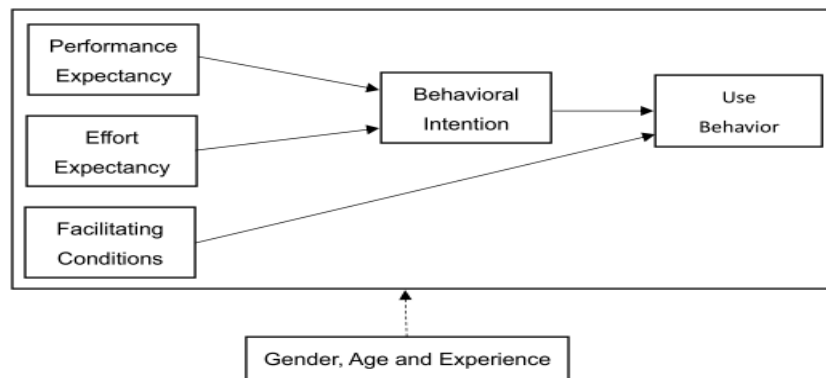


Figure 1: Research model

2.3.1 Performance expectancy, Effort expectancy and Behavioral intention

Performance expectancy refers to the job seekers' perception that using social media platforms can make job hunting more efficient. Effort expectancy refers to the degree of difficulty job seekers experience when using social network platforms for job hunting. Venkatesh et al (2003) proposed the UTAUT model to determine how performance expectancy and effort expectancy affect users' intentions to use new technology. [1] When users recognize that using technology is easy and can help them improve their work efficiency, their behavioral intention to use the technology will be stronger. Slade, Williams, and Dwivedi (2013) found that performance expectancy and effort expectancy positively influenced consumers' behavioral intentions to use mobile payments. [3] Therefore, we propose the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1. Performance expectancy is positively related to behavioral intention.

Hypothesis 2. Effort expectancy is positively related to behavioral intention.

2.3.2 Facilitating conditions, Behavioral intention, and Use behavior

Facilitating conditions refers to job seekers' perceptions of the favorable conditions and the adequacy of various technical conditions needed to successfully use social networking platforms for job hunting. When Venkatesh et al (2003) proposed the UTAUT model, they believed that facilitating conditions did not significantly influence users' behavioral intentions but did directly impact their use behaviors. [1] Baptista and Oliveira (2015) also claimed that facilitating conditions positively affected use behavior with mobile banking services. [4] In this study's context, behavior intention refers to job seekers' subjective acceptance of social network recruitment, which will directly affect their use behavior. Venkatesh et al (2003) suggested that customers' behavioral intentions will have an impact on their use behaviors. [1] Alalwan, Dwivedi, and Rana (2017) also found that customers' behavioral intentions to use mobile banking positively impacted their use behaviors. [5] Therefore, we propose the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 3. Facilitating conditions is positively related to behavioral intention.

Hypothesis 4. Behavioral intention is positively related to use behavior.

3. Methods

3.1 Participants and Procedure

The study sample comprised university graduates with experience in using social network platform for job hunting. An online e-questionnaire was used, which was mainly distributed through an online survey website, and a total of 140 valid questionnaires were collected. Among the respondents, 62.1% were female and 63.6% were liberal arts. The average age was 21.76 years old. In addition, 57% of computer skills were average, 33.6% of the experience of using social networking platforms with more than 2 years, and 46% have used social networking platforms to find a job.

3.2 Measures

All questionnaire items were measured using six-point Likert scale (were 1=strongly disagree and 6=strongly agree). *Performance expectancy* and *Effort expectancy* were measured using the scale developed by Venkatesh, Thong, & Xu (2012) [6], each with 4-items. The Cronbach alpha were 0.89 and 0.92. *Facilitating conditions* and *Behavioral intention* were measured using the scale developed by Venkatesh, Thong, & Xu (2012) [6], with 4-items and 3-items respectively. The Cronbach alpha were 0.91 and 0.85. *Use behavior* was measured using the 3-item scale developed by Sripalawat, Thongmak, & Ngramyarn (2011) [7]. The Cronbach alpha was 0.85.

4. Analysis and Results of Data

4.1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

We formed a five-factor model and found that all items had significant factor loadings. The fit indices fell within acceptable ranges ($\chi^2/df = 2.61$, SRMR = 0.07, NFI = 0.94, NNFI = 0.95, CFI = 0.96, IFI = 0.96), suggesting the model was acceptable. We also established four competition models to compare with the five-factor model, namely: (1) Four-factor model: performance expectations and effort expectations are combined into one factor ($\Delta\chi^2(1) = 156.25$, $p < 0.01$); (2) Three-factor model: performance expectations, effort expectations and facilitating conditions are combined into one factor ($\Delta\chi^2(3) = 272.59$, $p < 0.01$); (3) Two-factor model: performance expectations, effort expectations, facilitating conditions and behavioral intention are combined into one factor ($\Delta\chi^2(6) = 388.38$, $p < 0.01$); (4) One-factor model: all variables are combined into one factor ($\Delta\chi^2(10) = 758.20$, $p < 0.01$). Results of these chi-square tests further support the discriminate validity of the five-factor model.

4.2 Correlations Analysis

As expected, performance expectations and effort expectations were significantly and positively correlated with behavioral intention ($r = 0.48$, $p < 0.01$; $r = 0.52$, $p < 0.01$). Facilitating conditions and behavioral intention were significantly and positively correlated with use behavior ($r = 0.58$, $p < 0.01$; $r = 0.82$, $p < 0.01$). These analysis results are consistent with previous research hypotheses.

4.3 Hypothesis Tests

After controlling for the effects of demographic variables (i.e., gender, age, discipline, computer ability level, experience), the performance expectations and effort expectations have remarkable positive influence on behavioral intention ($\beta = 0.26, p < 0.01$; $\beta = 0.30, p < 0.01$). Thus, Hypotheses 1 and Hypotheses 2 were supported. Moreover, the facilitating conditions and behavioral intention have remarkable positive influence on use behavior ($\beta = 0.13, p < 0.05$; $\beta = 0.74, p < 0.001$). Thus, Hypotheses 3 and Hypotheses 4 were also supported.

5. Discussion

5.1 Conclusion

Based on the UTAUT model and the characteristics of social network recruitment, this study was conducted from the job seekers' perspective to investigate the factors that influence their social network recruitment intentions and use behaviors. The research subjects were university graduates. The results are as follows. First, performance expectancy and effort expectancy positively influence behavioral intention. When job seekers perceive social network platforms as useful for job hunting, it can increase and accelerate their chances of finding a job and improve their job-hunting efficiency. Therefore, job seekers will be more intent on using social network platforms for job hunting. In addition, when job seekers perceive that the various social networking platform functions are easy to operate and use, and require little effort, time, an energy, they will be more intent to search for jobs through these platforms. Second, facilitating conditions and behavioral intention positively impact use behavior. When job seekers perceive there are advantages to using social networking platforms, if they have the necessary knowledge and skills to use them, if the platform software is compatible with existing systems and other technologies, and if problems encountered during use can be quickly resolved, they will be more intent on using these platforms for job hunting. Finally, behavioral intention positively impacts use behavior, which indicates job seekers are more likely to use this platforms.

5.2 Management Implications

5.2.1 Enhancing Job Seeker's Performance Expectancy and Effort Expectancy

The results show that performance expectancy and effort expectancy have positive impacts on behavioral intention. We suggested that HR departments should actively improve their existing recruitment efforts and enhance the usefulness of social network recruitment channels. For example, we periodically publish and update job content, improve the existing recruitment information, accelerate responses to applications, and increase the question-and-answer and interaction functions. In addition, we also recommended that HR departments cooperate with social networking platforms to improve the design of recruitment pages and functions so that job seekers can quickly obtain the desired job vacancy information. These departments might also try to simplify the application process so that job seekers perceive social network recruitment channels as easy to use.

5.2.3 Emphasis on the Influence of Facilitating Conditions on Job Seekers

The results indicate that facilitating conditions had a positive impact on use behavior. We suggested that HR departments cooperate with multiple social networking platforms to make social network recruitment more universal. They can also create a social network recruitment environment using various channels such as networks, company websites, and business locations. Through various marketing and promotion efforts, more job seekers will realize this channel's benefits and thereby increase their use behavior. In addition, HR departments can also offer guidance or set up online resources on their social networking platform's recruitment page to assist job seekers with problems encountered in the application process, which will then motivate applicants to find jobs through these channels.

5.3 Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

This study has several limitations which suggest the need for future research. First, the study's variables were collected at the same time through a self-report questionnaire, which may lead to common method bias and cause-effect confusion. It is suggested that other measurement methods can be used in future research. Alternately, a longitudinal research strategy may be used to increase the rigorousness of the research process. Second, different types of job seekers may have varied perceptions of social network recruitment. Since this study's sample includes university graduates, the results won't reflect the views of other types of job seekers. Therefore, the survey's scope could be expanded in future research to include as many different types of job seekers as possible, which would improve the research conclusions' credibility.

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