ONLINE SELF-DISCLOSURE BEHAVIOUR OF YOUNG PROSPECTIVE JOB APPLICANTS

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Abstract - The factors that lead to a positive self-presentation of prospective job candidates provide an important means for evaluating job applications. Paper aims to determine which type of online self-disclosure behaviour lead to a positive self-presentation. An online questionnaire survey was conducted to collect data during the winter semester of the academic year 2019/2020 among 101 university students in the field of Human resources and personnel management. Binary logistic regression showed that it is the effort to build new relationships (NRB) which leads to positive self-presentations. The study extends the research on online self-disclosure and the applicability of the reliability and validity of the ascertained information in the process of employee selection. Second, it expands the knowledge about generation and gender influence on online self-disclosure. It also has several implications also social media screening HR practitioners. Firstly, it should be noted that information published on social media should be taken with caution in order to serve as a basis for recruitment decision-making. Secondly, legal aspects should also be considered before using social networking information.

Keywords - HRM, Self-Disclosure, Social Media, Screening,
JEL Classification - J00, M12, M54

I. INTRODUCTION

Social media has quickly become an integral part of people's personal and professional lives [1]. Recruitment, as one of the foremost HR activity, is also impacted by the rise of social media [2]. Employers are no longer waiting for face-to-face encounters before forming an impression about the candidates they have invited to interview [3]. Modern technologies, such as social media screening, allow them to get valuable and cost-effective information about candidates long before they are interviewed [4].The use of online information from social media to evaluate job candidates displacing, supplementing or shaping conventional personnel selection and employment relationships, often in unexpected ways [5].Ability to understand why and how users create social media content respectively, what is the truth value of disclosed information is gaining in importance[6].Data from social media may bias judgments about applicants and prevent individuals from obtaining job opportunities [7] or prevent the company from getting the undesired employee. The use of social media by employers to investigate candidates is a rapidly emerging hiring practice [8].Moreover, many job applicants have been asked to enable prospective employers to gain full access to their personal social media profiles [9]. However, there is relatively little research on these issues in human resource management literature[10-12]. In order to address mentioned research gaps in the existing literature, the study examines why users create social media content, respectively, which type of online self-disclosure behaviour leads to a positive self-presentation. The paper is organised as follows. We first discuss the literature on social media, social media screening and online self-disclosure (OSD) behaviour. This is followed by the methodology section which explains the research context, methods of data collection and data analysis. This is followed by the results and discussion on their implications for literature and practice. Finally, we conclude with insights on future research.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Social media are 'a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User-Generated Content'[13]. They enable users to create, share, and communicate various contents among and across individuals [14]; to build social relations with others who have similar interests, activities, backgrounds or real-life connections [15]. They have a collaborative nature and are flexible, agile, spontaneous, unstructured, and informal [16]. Social media now represents a common source of information [17]. They fundamentally reshaped the way people make decisions, but also profoundly changed our lives and how we interact with others [18]. Social media are recognized by HR professionals as important tools for HR management and are more and more used by HR managers to support HR related activities [19]. Some scholars mentioned social media also as social networks or social network services (SNS) [3, 20-22]

or online social networks [23, 24]. For preciseness, we understand SNS as a social media platform whose primary purpose is to mediate the relationships between its users or as Cheung et al. noted (2015) platform that facilitate the construction of social networks or social relations among people [25]. Social networks (e.g., Facebook) are services on which users can find and add friends and contacts, send messages to friends, and update personal profiles. They leverage the power of relationships and the collective wisdom of many[26]. Current examples of SNS include networks like Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn). From SNS can be excluded networks for micro-blogging activity (Twitter, Tumblr, Sina-Weibo) because they focus on information dissemination (typically in the form of shorter blogging) and interactivity among users in an open platform, and social network sites which facilitate users developing social relationships among their social networks [27]. More than three-quarters employers directly acknowledged looking online for applicant information, although the reported timing and tools varied somewhat [5]. Kluemper et al. (2012) suggest that social media screening may provide useful information for potential use in candidate screening, taking into consideration various legal and ethical issues. According to their work, the job applicant ratings based on the social media demonstrate firstly sufficient interrater reliability and internal consistency; secondly convergent validity with self-ratings of the Big Five traits [28]. Hedenus et al. (2019) found that online networks can serve as a source of information about connections with people who are trustworthy or who have compromising interests and social capital that can be converted into economic capital [29]. A survey of 300 hiring managers conducted by Reppler.com found that 91% of hiring managers use SNWs to screen applicants [30]. Self-disclosure refers to the act of sharing personal information with others [31]. People routinely communicate information about themselves and others via social media [32]. Online self-disclosure (OSD) behaviour describes the tendency of individuals to be more or less willing to share sensitive information about themselves with others [33]. The theoretical foundations of self-disclosure go back to Social Exchange theory, which posits that interpersonal relationships are based on a subjective evaluation of benefits (tangible or intangible) and costs between at least two persons [34]. OSD on social media typically take the form of self-communication on a user's profile as well as in the process of communication with others (e.g. by posting comments, participating in group discussions, posting on the Wall) [23]. According to Kim et al. (2015) results, the users' intent to disclose on social media is not different from those in real life [35]. Gross and Acquisti (2005), found that university students who used social media disclosed accurate personal information on their SNSs profiles with seemingly little concern over the negative ways their information might be accessed or how it might be used [36]. Cheung et al. (2015) suggest that users pay less attention to the potential privacy risks when they decide to reveal personal information in social media and encourage educators to launch educational programs to raise students' awareness to the potential risks of online self-disclosure [25]. According to Taddicken (2014), the extent of self-disclosure on social media revealed that it is necessary to differentiate between different forms of personal information. For instance, users tend to provide accuratet and valid information such as names and profession, fewer users disclose factual information, which cannot be considered standard and considerably fewer users disclose sensitive information. Nevertheless, approximately two-thirds of the participants distributed publicly accessible photos, about half of them disclosed experiences, thoughts and feelings on the Social Web at least once. When taking into account that this was done with open access in every third case, these numbers can be considered proof of extensive self-disclosure on social media[33].

III. METHODOLOGY

In this section, we will discuss our research method with regard to construct measurement, data collection, reliability check, and limitations of the chosen methodology. The research utilised a quantitative design. An online questionnaire survey was used to obtain data. The survey was conducted during the winter semester of the academic year 2019/2020. The sample was created from university students in the field of Human resources and personnel management. There were 101 usable responses. The respondents were divided into generational groups as follows: Generation Yborn between 1981 - 1996; Generation Z born after 1997 [37].In the sample, 62.38 per cent were women (N=38), 37.62 per cent were men (N=39)44.55 per cent belonged to the Generation Y (N=45), and 55.45 per cent belonged to the Generation Z (N=56).

Following published studies [25, 38] we utilised four sub-dimensions' model of OSD behaviour specifically: convenience of maintaining existing relationships (MER) as a result of the opportunity to efficiently communicate with each other; new relationship building (NRB) by being connected to a broader range of people user have the opportunity to accumulate social capital; self-presentation (SP) caused by the opportunity to present only desirable information; and enjoyment (EN) affected with the possibility to reveal preferences.Seven-point Likert scale with 1 being strongly disagreed and 7 being strongly agreed was used. Additional questions addressing demographic information on gender, generation group, and the form of the study were

added. As the current study was conducted in a Slovak speaking context, and the original measures of the studied constructs were in English, the survey instrument was translated from English into Slovak. Before administration of the survey, the questionnaires were distributed to researchers and several doctoral students. Some revisions in translation were made based on their feedback. Strategies and procedures for reporting and interpreting Likert scale scores were used following the Warmbrod (2014) recommendations. Appropriate Cronbach's α coefficient for the summated total score (0.8636) and any subscale scores (MER=0.7631; NRB=0.7846; SP=0.8818; EN=0.7588) were calculated. To describe the reliability coefficients, they were compared with coefficients cited in the articles. The sum of the responses to a set of multiple items was calculated because it is a more stable and unbiased estimate than are responses to any single item in the set [39]. The Cronbach's alphas above 0.7 indicate acceptable internal consistency of the constructs. We used binary logistic regression to predict the relationship between predictors (MER; NRB; EN) and a predicted variable (SPb). The factors and their sources are shown in Table 1. Independent variables were calculated as the average response of the corresponding construct. Depended variable was coded as a dummy binary variable; whose value is 1 if the respondent wants to present only desirable information (average response for SP≥3.5) and 0 if the respondent does not want present only desirable information (average response for SP<3.5). The target level for logistic regression was set to 1 (the respondent wants to present only desirable information).

Factors	Components	Mean	StdDev	Cronbach alpha
MER	Social media is convenient for informing all my friends about my ongoing activities	4.35	1.57	
	Social media allows me to save time when I want to share something new with my friends	4.80	1.71	
	I find social media efficient in sharing information with my friends	4.68	1.85	
		4.61	1.33	0.7631
NRB	Through social media, I get connected to new people who share my interests	5.02	1.66	
	Social media helps me to expand my network	4.55	1.86	
	I get to know new people through social media	4.11	1.83	
		4.56	1.49	0.7846
SP	I try to make a good impression on others on social media	3.57	1.98	
	I try to present myself favourably way on social media	4.55	1.98	
	Social media helps me to present my best sides to others	3.52	1.90	
		3.88	1.76	0.8818
EN	When I am bored, I often go to social media	5.42	1.72	
	I find social media entertaining	4.72	1.36	
	I spend an enjoyable and relaxing time on social media	3.31	1.64	
		4.48	1.17	0.7588
Entire set				0.8636

Table 1 The factors and their sources
Source: Own calculations

IV. RESULTS

We employed binary logistic regression to examine linkages between the predictors (MER; NRB; EN) and a predicted variable (SPb).Binary logistic regression is generalised linear model that estimates the probability of a binary outcome based on one or more independent predictors and can be used as a classifier by setting a decision rule. This method offers the advantages of fast training time and interpretability and is suitable for problems where a linear relationship between the predictors and log odds can be assumed[40]. To build the model, we started withall possible interaction combinations as effects. The goal of the model was to estimate the likelihood that a dummy binary variable is either "positive" (1) or "negative" (0) and thus, which factors lead to positive self-presentation.The lack of fit report of the first model showed that the model fits the data well (0.1182).Also, themisclassification rate proved that only 19.80% response is not the observed category. As Table 2 present only Intercept (0.0026) and NRB (<.0001)were significant, so in the new model, we decided to keep only these factors.

The lack of fit report of the new model showed that the model also fits the data well (0.2170). However, the misclassification rate of the new model was slightly deteriorated but still at the acceptable level (23.76%). Table 3 presents a significant effect for the intercept (<.0001) and NRB (<.0001).

Term	Estimate	Std Error	ChiSquare	Prob>ChiSq
Intercept	-7.3006832	2.42300717	9.08	0.0026
MER	0.19308024	0.31235866	0.38	0.5365
NRB	2.11217941	0.53069611	15.84	<.0001
(MER-4.61056)*(NRB-4.56106)	-0.1495203	0.51371381	0.08	0.771
EN	-0.6779306	0.399399	2.88	0.0896
(MER-4.61056)*(EN-4.48185)	0.4382537	0.37487887	1.37	0.2424
(NRB-4.56106)*(EN-4.48185)	-0.3406742	0.4397841	0.6	0.4386
(MER-4.61056)*(NRB-4.56106)*(EN-4.48185)	0.58368499	0.5223835	1.25	0.2638

Table 2
Source: Own calculations

Term	Estimate	Std Error	ChiSquare	Prob>ChiSq
Intercept	-8.4035319	1.76809025	22.59	<.0001
NRB	1.85291303	0.37412933	24.53	<.0001

Table 3
Source: Own calculations

Because we seek to predict whether a specific type of online self-disclosure behaviour leads to a positive self-presentation, we can conclude that it is the effort to build new relationships (NRB), which leads to positive self-presentations. To reduce the misclassification rate of the new model, we had taken into account the gender and generation impact on the model. We found that the model did not fit well for men (lack of fit $p < .0001$)inboth generations due to the results in generation Y (lack of fit $p < .0001$). The misclassification rate for men in generation Z is 2.03 per cent. On the other hand, the model fits well and is significant for women of both generations. The misclassification rate for both generation women is 15.87 per cent, for women in generation Y is 28.00 per cent, and for women in generation Z is 13.16 per cent.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The relationship between employers and potential employees is further changed by new practices [41]. Social media do not replace other e-recruitment tools, but many experts consider them more and more important tools for recruitment. Nevertheless, the essential nature of social media remains for the moment subject to controversy [42]. An organisation that used social networking websites as a selection tool is perceived as less fair than an organisation that did not. Similarly, job pursuit intentions are lower for an organisation that used social networking websites as a selection tool than an organisation that did not [43]. In light of a growing interest in the use of social media among HR activities, this study set out to answer the question of why users create social media content, respectively which type of online self-disclosure behaviour leads to a positive self-presentation. We have drawn on the literature of social media and online self-disclosure to study the phenomenon. Based on the literature, four sub-dimensions' research model of OSD behaviour was derived and tested. We used binary logistic regression to predict the relationship between predictors as follows: the convenience of maintaining existing relationships (MER), new relationship building (NRB), enjoyment (EN)) and a predicted variable (self-presentation (SPb)).We find that only the effort to build new relationships (NRB) significantly leads to positive self-presentations. We have shown that if the employee candidates seek to build new relationships, it significantly leads to a positive self-presentation social media. This study makes several contributions to extant human resource management literature. First, it extends the research on online self-disclosure and the applicability of the reliability and validity of the ascertained information in the process of employee selection. Second, it expands the knowledge about generation and gender influence on online self-disclosure. The current research also has several implications for social media screening HR practitioners. Firstly, it should be noted that information published on social media should be taken with caution in order to serve as a basis for recruitment decision-making. Secondly, legal aspects should also be considered before using social networking information. The current paper provides several implications for theory and practice, but there are also some limitations which should be discussed. Data collected from university students might raise issues of generalize ability to other populations.

However, this demographic bias is not without warrant, as young adults represent the largest cohort of social media users [44], thus making this group the most effective in determining online disclosure behaviour [45]. The fact that students are also future job candidates is also important. The self-reported questionnaire could cause response bias from a misunderstanding of what a proper measurement is to social-desirability bias, where the respondent wants to 'look good' in the survey, even if the survey is anonymous [46]. In future research, the findings of this study should also be included in cross-cultural contexts to increase the generalise ability of the results.

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