

USING SOCIAL MEDIA IN HUMAN RESOURCES RECRUITMENT FOR THE NATIONAL SYSTEM OF PUBLIC ORDER, DEFENSE AND NATIONAL SECURITY

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Abstract

The present study analyses the advantages and disadvantages of using data which is obtained from social media to recruit for the military profession. People disseminate a lot of personal data on social media, which is why social media has become an important tool for recruitment.

The more information people transfer from their private lives on social media, the more their lives become a public space that can be used by anyone. All changes in society through the development of technology have also led to people's erroneous approaches to what the right to privacy means in the use of social media. Thus, social media users provide personal data, without realizing that this data can be accessed by any other user.

In order to determine the advantages and disadvantages of the use of data provided by social media users in recruitment, an analysis of the literature was carried out.

The conclusions highlight the importance of social media in the 21st century and the need to realize that the data provided on social media becomes public and accessible to any other user.

Keywords: *social media, recruitment, data, advantages and disadvantages.*

Introduction

One of the directions of action for ensuring national security established in the National Strategy for National Defense (2015) involves the continuation of the process of transformation, modernization and endowment of the Romanian Army. This process also includes human resources, being mentioned in the Strategy (2015)

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the fact that the priority will be to ensure the human resources necessary to maintain and develop the operational capacity of the competent institutions within the public order dimension. The human resources for these institutions must be of the highest quality. For this to happen, the recruitment process must be at the highest level and be constantly connected to all the changes in society.

The use of social media has become inevitable and indispensable in the 21st century in all areas, including the recruitment process. Clark and Roberts (2015) argue that current recruitment tools allow recruiters to attract candidates to websites and also allow them to explore their social life through social media, thus pointing out the best candidates.

Social networks are currently used in both personal and professional life. The human resource management is one of the areas that has benefited greatly from this, especially in terms of recruitment. However, the use of data obtained from social networks requires special care so as not to violate human rights to privacy.

Considering the importance of the National System of Public Order, Defense and National Security (NSPODNS) institutions in the functioning of the state and the fact that social networks are used in almost any field, the purpose of this study is to identify, by analyzing previous research, the need for recruitment through social networks in the military institutions and to establish the advantages and disadvantages of using this method of recruitment.

Recruiting by using social media

Social networks have become part of people's lives. They are used in both personal and professional lives and so many areas of activity took advantage of them in order to have a higher efficiency.

Human resources management is an area in which the use of social networks has become very common. In the recruitment process, one of the activities in this field, social networks have become the main recruitment tool. However, Munro (2018) is one of those who say that social networks are used in many other processes in human resources management, not just in the recruitment process. Social networks are used in the human resources management process both in terms of the

identification of the candidate and in terms of his testing period, and subsequently, in terms of his period of accommodation with the organization.

The increasing use of social networks in the recruitment process has led to studies meant to demonstrate whether it is necessary or not. Girard, Fallery and Rodhain (2013) conducted a study whose main purpose was to demonstrate the need to use social networks in the recruitment process. The idea of the study is that social networks do not replace other methods of recruitment, but are a dynamic method which facilitates relationships. However, according to this study, the indispensability of social networks in the recruitment process is still a controversial topic.

This recruitment tool is especially effective for young people. Although everyone is connected to the online environment, the Z generation¹ is the one that responds best to this type of recruitment. Wenger et.al (2019) considers that it is important the activity on social networks in order to attract young people because they are the ones who use this method of communication and social interaction on a large scale. Technology makes things easier and helps to make time more efficient. In the century of speed, gaining time is one of the greatest benefits that an activity can offer.

It is important for recruiters to know the social networks most used by young people. Some social networks are special for recruitment. Those who post on that platform are either looking for a job or looking for candidates, which is why they will present their qualities. The challenge comes when the recruiter looks for candidates on social networks that are not intended for recruitment because on these platforms, people do not try to show what is best from a professional point of view. Cülcüloğlu (2013) states that managers sometimes look for a candidate's Facebook profile to understand his/her lifestyle, although the Facebook platform is not dedicated for recruitment.

Smith and Kidder (2010) believe that it is understandable that employers want to know as much data as possible about candidates to a position in their organization and the Facebook provides a lot of

¹ Those born after 1997.

information, some of which is confirmed by the candidate during the recruitment process and some information reveals what the candidate wants to hide.

Although recruitment through social media is at the beginning, this method of recruitment is now widely used. According to Krishna and Mohan (2016), 94% of recruiters use social networks during their activities, or plan to use them. 89% said they recruited through LinkedIn, and 26% said they recruited through Facebook. Arrawatia and Verma (2019) they claim that Facebook is the largest social network with over 400 million users. Although, initially, the purpose of this social network was to connect people for personal purposes, over time, it began to be used in many professional fields.

Their number is growing and this is normal because social networks give the recruiter the opportunity to easily identify the person he needs. The problem arises when there is no clear strategy to allow all recruiters to use this recruitment tool in the same way.

According to Jóhannsson (2016), it is necessary to establish certain strategies for using social networks during the recruitment process for two main reasons: the first reason is to reduce the inaccuracies produced by previously used e-recruitment tools and the second reason is to adapt to the communication of social network users. Both recruiters and candidates need to understand the online environment in order to use it to their advantage.

The information that can be obtained with the help of social networks is diverse, which is why it is difficult to create a grid to compare the profiles on social networks of several applications. Bissola and Imperatori (2013) consider that so far research on social networks has focused on the possibilities they offer and the potential risks involved in using them, paying little attention to identifying a valid method to implement the use of social networks in the process of evaluating candidates.

In their study, Krishna and Mohan (2016) reported that employees who used social networks for employment believe that the quality of candidates has improved by 49%. This is possible because through social networks recruiters can more easily identify certain qualities they are looking for in future employees. They can also

identify the negative aspects of a potential candidate. Taking into account this aspect, it is necessary to develop a recruitment strategy that includes social networks as a recruitment tool.

GDPR implications in the use of data obtained from social networks

The more people transfer information from their private lives to social networks, the more their lives becomes a public space that can be used by anyone. All the changes that have taken place in society through the development of technology have also led to erroneous approaches of people to what it means to have the right to privacy in the use of social networks.

Thus, users of social networks provide personal data, without being aware that this data can be accessed by any other user. But it is this personal data that is fundamental for the survival of social networks. Each element of personal information posted on a social network determines the development of that network and all that personal data is a source for anyone that can be interested and accesses the profile of the person who posted the data. If used positively, according to von Krogh (2012), social networks create an unique opportunity for organizations to get to know both its customers and employees.

The use of social networks in the recruitment process raises questions about the legality and ethics of the information obtained about candidates. When analyzing a person's profile based on data identified on social networks, it is necessary to pay special attention to the management of personal data.

Kluemper (2013) identified a number of issues that may arise during the recruitment process. Personal data identified by recruiters following the investigation of social networks can influence the decision regarding a potential candidate. For example, if the recruiter identifies inappropriate pictures, content that suggests drug abuse or alcohol abuse, insults to the former employer, or discriminatory comments, the recruiter may make the decision to stop the recruitment process. The recruiter is looking for aspects that are not disclosed and that could influence, positively or negatively, the candidate's employment

decision. According to Kluemper (2013), these checks may encounter legal or ethical obstacles because candidates may accuse this method as a method of violating the right to privacy. However, Gustafson (2012) considers that employers have the right to use data posted on these social networks because it is a legitimate means of obtaining data about a person.

Kristl, Mararist, and Bing (2011) explained that there are several questions that need to be answered regarding the use of social networks in the recruitment process. The most important are the questions related to the validity of this method, the perception of candidates regarding the verification of their own social networks by employers and the legality of the verification of social networks during the recruitment process.

The agreed option for checking social networks could be to obtain the consent of the candidates to have their social networks profiles checked before initiating the steps in this regard, but this could involve filtering the data by the candidates.

Through social networks, additional information about the candidate can be obtained, and especially information that one would not provide in an interview. But this is risky because the candidate may consider this a violation of the right to privacy. If from a legal point of view, this practice does not involve any risks, from an ethical point of view the recruiter may encounter certain problems and may even remove the application. Clark and Roberts (2015) compared the activity of searching for information about a candidate on social networks with the activity of physically tracking a person in public spaces. This is not illegal, but it is certainly inconvenient for a person to be followed wherever they go. So, following social networks can be considered inappropriate and extreme for some candidates.

Advantages and disadvantages of using social media in recruitment for the military institutions

The last decade has led to new changes and an increasing development of technology. As society discovers and adopts new methods of communication and organization, such as social media, public institutions, including the police and intelligence services, have

the responsibility to react and adapt. According to Omand (2012), social networks represent the latest technological innovation in recent times and the authorities have the obligation to adapt to them.

Schreurs (2004) argued that the armed forces are encountering increasing difficulties in attracting, recruiting and retaining new employees. This determined the need to change the recruitment strategy. Currently, there are problems in attracting candidates for the military system because the private sector is a strong opponent. Military institutions could make some improvements to their social media pages in order to be able to recruit qualified people. First of all, special attention should be paid to the comments on the posts that a military institution distributes on social pages, and then those who visit these pages should be identified, depending on the purpose of their comments. (Rempfer, 2019) If these comments are positive, there is a chance that some of these people will be a potential candidate.

When a person repeatedly comments on a page's posts, they are presumed to be interested in the domain of that page. Following a study conducted by RAND, those who comment on the social pages of military institutions fall into three categories: those in the general public, those who are part of the army or in reserve and those who have a family member who was part of a military institution or is currently active. (Wenger et al., 2019) With this in mind, people who are active on these social pages can be approached, and if necessary, can be added to the portfolio of candidates.

The increasing presence of military institutions on social networks also determines the correct informing of the population, and, thus, people, having the necessary information related to a certain system, can decide whether they fit, from their perspective, to that system.

Research on recruitment through social networks for the military profession does not exist, but there are some statements of people who have a decision-making role in military institutions regarding the use of social networks to attract recruits. For example, Major General Frank Muth, commander of the U.S. Army Recruitment Unit, believes that it is necessary for the military institution to recruit through platforms such as Hulu or Netflix, because young people no

longer watch commercials on television as previous generations did. He launched a campaign to attract young people to the army through advertisements on the networks on which they are active. (Sheftick, 2018) If before the explosion of social networks the army was promoted through television, now it is time for the promotion to be achieved through the means used by those targeted to be part of the military structures.

The Swedish military is also keen to use social media to recruit staff. They used Facebook for years to recruit. (Sundberg) Through this profile they managed to promote their image and attract many young people.

Regarding Romania, the recruitment process in NSPODNS is affected by “the deterioration of the demographic situation, by the changes produced in the motivational profile of young people and by the competition imposed by the civil sector”. (Rozalia, 2017) In developing the recruitment strategy for NSPODNS it is important to take into account the issues identified by the beneficiaries because they know what they need.

In 2017, Gabriel Leș, Minister of Defence in that time, stated that “attracting and recruiting a valuable human resource is a strategic area with a strong impact on both the ability to respond to new challenges in the security environment and training population and territory for defense”(Rozalia, 2017). This statement suggested that structures with a role in national security need the best quality human resources, and for this to happen, the recruitment process must involve all the steps to determine the compatibility between candidates and employee status to NSPODNS. For the time being, the verification of the candidates' activity on social profiles is not a stage in the recruitment process. In the civilian sector, the use of social networks for recruitment is one of the main methods used and there are even courses for this.² The competition that military structures have with the civilian sector, in attracting quality human resources, requires military structures to update the recruitment procedures and connect to the online environment.

² Social Media Recruitment Course: Facebook, LinkedIn, HR Academy - Performance through People.

Alexandrescu (2018) has the opinion that the selection and recruitment system within NSPODNS is compatible with that of similar structures in NATO member countries, based on the elimination of all forms of discrimination and ensuring equal opportunities for all candidates. Checking the profiles of candidates on social networks can create discrimination because certain data obtained (such as age, sex, race, sexual orientation, and certain physical disabilities) can affect the objectivity of the recruitment process. Although it involves some risks, this initial verification of social networks can significantly reduce the time of employment of an employee by filtering them even before the first meeting.

Although we have not identified strictly related research on the introduction of social media as a tool for recruiting human resources in the military institutions, there is research that identifies possible advantages and disadvantages of using this tool in the recruitment process.

Drahošová and Balco (2017) listed the advantages and disadvantages of using data obtained from social networks. Advantages include great information exchange and an easy way for communication. In terms of disadvantages, internet addiction was considered the most important. The following disadvantages were also identified: lack of security, information overload and loss of social connection. Analyzing these advantages and disadvantages, it can be seen that they are in contradiction. If people communicate through social networks, they lose contact with other people, and if on the one hand they are satisfied that they are informed, on the other hand they are dissatisfied that they are overloaded with information. According to Tal (2018), the biggest advantages of using social networks in the recruitment process are speed, efficiency and the ability to score and attract specifically. She also identified the very low cost of searching for a candidate on social networks as an advantage. If traditional methods involve certain costs, such as paying for ads in audio-visual media, an account on social networks does not involve any costs. Holm (2008) considers that online recruitment has great advantages over traditional recruitment, starting from lower costs, shorter candidate identification

time, and the possibility to identify a candidate from any geographical area and keeping the information on an indefinite period of time.

Serkan (2017) believes that the use of social networks during the recruitment process saves recruiters' time, gives them the opportunity to verify the information provided by candidates and facilitates the process of searching for potential candidates. In addition to these advantages, the use of social networks in recruitment activities presents another great benefit, namely, this method does not involve any costs.

Cülcüloğlu (2013) argues that recruitment through the use of social networks is much less expensive than traditional methods. He also argues that traditional methods for recruitment have a lower success rate than recruitment through the use of social networks.

Although it has many advantages, online recruitment also has disadvantages that must be taken into account in order for success to be guaranteed. As Barber (2006) also said, one of the biggest disadvantages is the lack of face-to-face communication. Although online communication is faster, people need to interact in order to be sure that what they are saying is true. There may be different people behind the screen than what appears on the screen.

In 2001, Pin and his colleagues conducted a study in which they asked human resources workers if interaction with potential candidates was important, and 50% of those who responded to the study agreed. The recruitment process can be done online up to a certain point: scoring the candidate, checking the profile, submitting the offer, but in order to make a decision about the end of the recruitment process it is necessary to establish a face-to-face discussion with him. Pin and colleagues (2001) argue that excluding this discussion may lead to the removal of qualified candidates from the portfolio.

It is also important that all candidates go through the same recruitment process so as not to be discriminated against. And, of course, the recruitment process must be adapted to the job that needs to be filled. The same tools cannot be used for each domain. Masa'd (2015) believes that online recruitment cannot be done for positions that require average skills.

The online environment was considered from the beginning more favorable than the old methods of carrying out activities. It certainly facilitated many of these activities, but with the advent of this, and especially with the advent of social networks, the individual began to lose sight of what privacy means. The growing desire to share aspects of personal life on social media encompassed the whole society. Clark and Roberts (2015) describe the online environment as the place where people meet, make plans, and share the news they have with each other. Usually, people post family pictures, holiday pictures, and pictures of daily activities on their personal pages and also communicate with their loved ones through this page. Although the posts are online, people believe that they decide who has the right to see those posts or not. Therefore, they may find it inappropriate to have an employer or recruiter on their page looking for private information.

The information obtained from social networks can determine the recruiter to judge the candidate. However, some information may be old and irrelevant, and the recruiter must take this into account so as not to misjudge the candidate. Clark and Roberts (2015) claim that recruiters use the information found on the pages of candidates' social networks because it is very easy and very cheap, but their prejudices can lead them to misunderstanding certain information and draw certain conclusions incorrectly.

In order for recruiters to make the right decisions about the information identified on social networks, it is important to give up their own prejudices when browsing a candidate's page. Brown and Vaughn (2011) argue that discrimination can occur because recruiters do not pass on to decision makers the information that underpinned their decision to hire or not a particular person. They should objectively analyze the information and pass it on to those who have the right to decide. This way, the prejudices they may have could be eliminated, and all candidates would have equal chances.

The more attractive it is, the more risky it is to score candidates on social networks. Popescu and Georgescu (2013) presented certain dangers that may arise when searching for information about a candidate on the Facebook page. One of the most common problems would be that the profile identified on the Facebook platform is not real.

There may also be certain risks such as the existence of viruses that can lead to the discovery of personal information about the person accessing the page or receiving inappropriate messages, either in private or on the Facebook wall. The Internet allows all these things, which is why the recruiter who wants to know information about the candidates must have the necessary equipment because it is not known what dangers exist.

Social networks can be both an opportunity and a threat in the recruitment process, either in the civilian or in the military sector. It is important for the recruiter to have well-established goals and strategies that will use to know what to check and to know when to stop, if it is necessary.

Conclusions

Recruitment through social networks is not a solid field in terms of research. However, all existing research shows that this method of recruitment is necessary and presents more advantages than disadvantages. The development of technology has provided great help to this field of activity. Low periods of time and low costs are the main advantages that recruitment through social networks has over traditional recruitment methods. Previous research shows that organizations that have adopted this method of recruitment have had a larger portfolio of candidates in a shorter time and a higher success rate in choosing the right candidate.

Practice has shown, however, that there are disadvantages in using social networks to identify certain candidates and find out things about them. The biggest disadvantage of this method of recruitment is the lack of research in the field because there is no clear strategy to apply to all recruiters. Thus, certain candidates may be discriminated against or recruiters may invade their private space. Also, another disadvantage is the lack of human interaction that is essential for recruiters to be sure that what appears in front of the screen is in line with the reality.

The military organizations, although it has stricter rules than other organizations, are adapting to new trends in recruitment. For the time being, recruitment through social networks is not part of the

procedure for recruiting for military institutions, but it is necessary to introduce it, according to the statements of those who work in these institutions.

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