The Study of Effectiveness on LinkedIn as a Career Search Tool

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Abstract

With the rapid growth of the digital era, social media has become an essential part of communication and professional life. While most platforms center on interpersonal interaction, professional social media networking focuses on career development, networking, and job market access. LinkedIn is a leading global platform dedicated to professional life, including searching for career opportunities. Sri Lankan university graduates face intense job competition, career guidance challenges, and an increasingly digitalized job market. This study examined the utility and effectiveness of LinkedIn as a tool for searching career opportunities. The literature review revealed a thematic research gap on digital job search strategies and LinkedIn participation within the Sri Lankan university system; this study provides new empirical evidence. A mixed-methods design was used. For the quantitative component, 120 final-year students (60 each from state and private universities) were selected through simple random sampling and completed an online questionnaire, analysed using descriptive statistics in SPSS. For the qualitative component, web observation examined LinkedIn's career opportunities searching tools and features, analysed through thematic content analysis. The findings show that LinkedIn has positively transformed the career search and Career transition process of Sri Lankan university students. Both datasets confirmed that Professional Networking, Personal Branding, Automated Career Alerts, Easy Apply, direct access to global Career opportunities, and the ability to showcase expertise affect job search effectiveness. However, intense global competition, misleading information, difficulty in making profiles stand out, and limited Digital Career Literacy were identified as challenges. LinkedIn is a powerful tool for enhancing the Digital Employability of Sri Lankan graduates. The study recommends that university Career Guidance Units (CGUs) introduce practical training on LinkedIn use, Digital Identity Management, and digital branding. Although this study focused on Career opportunities seekers, future research could examine how employers and recruiters use LinkedIn as a Recruitment Tool in the Sri Lankan context.

Keywords: *Career Opportunities, Social Media Networks, LinkedIn, Networking, Career Opportunities Searching Tool*