Examining the Effectiveness of the Usage of Social Networking Sites and Job Boards in Recruitment Agencies in Ireland.

Dissertation submitted in part fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters in Human Resource Management at Liverpool John Moores University

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DECLARATION

I declare that all the work in this dissertation is entirely my own unless the words have been placed in inverted commas and referenced from the original source.

A full reference section is included with this dissertation.

No part of the work has previously been submitted for assessment, in any form either at Dublin Business School or any other institute.

Signed: ....

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Abstract

The aim of this dissertation was to examine the effectiveness of the usage of social networking sites and jobs boards in Irish recruitment agencies. This study is a response to the need to provide an in-depth analysis of the impact of social networking sites on recruitment activities. Whether the use of social networking sites is more beneficial to recruiters than jobs boards is a contemporary issue in the field of Human Resource Management that needed to be investigated further.

The aims and objectives of this study were investigated using two methods of data collection. Firstly, a review of the relevant literature was carried out. Secondly, a survey strategy with deductive approach was used for this dissertation. The survey focused on recruiters working in Irish recruitment agencies.

The results of this study have confirmed that introduction of social networking sites has changed the total character of recruitment activities and has influenced the way how recruiters search, screen, attract and communicate with candidates. Data findings in this research show that the use of social networking sites is beneficial significantly for recruitment agencies nowadays. However, if its use is more beneficial than the use of jobs boards, it is still not clear. The results in this research confirmed that existent and the use of both recruitment methods (social networking sites and jobs boards) is essential for daily activities in Irish recruitment agencies. The replacment of one method by another would be not beneficial and smart choice for recruiters. Outcomes point out that the best approach seems to be combination of both recruitment methods because each method includes some advantages and disadvantages.

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background to the problem

The introduction of the internet has changed the character of the recruitment process within recruitment agencies. E-recruitment has grown rapidly over the past ten years and is now widely used by both recruiters and job seekers across the world (Cober and Brown, 2006 cited in Dhamija, 2012). Recruiters use different forms of E-recruitment such as jobs boards and social networking sites to look for desirable candidates. There are different types of jobs boards which are used in Irish recruitment agencies. Each jobs board provider has common as well as unique resources and attributes. An even more recent phenomenon is the dramatic rise in the popularity of online social networking sites. Recruiters use these sites as a business tool to look for candidates with desired skills and talents. There are different types of social networking sites: business oriented (LinkedIn) and social oriented (Facebook and Twitter). The use of jobs boards and social networking sites involves many advantages and disadvantages for recruiters. Which of the above methods will be used in the recruitment process depends on the recruiter's needs. It is the recruiter's decision to choose which method they prefer and will use in the recruitment process. The current trend seems to be to use social networking sites rather than jobs boards in the recruitment process. For example, according to Frauenheim (2009) many organizations are eschewing general-purpose jobs boards and turning instead to social networking sites to get the specific worker skills they need. Whether the use of social networking sites is becoming more popular than jobs boards among recruiters in Ireland needs to be investigated further. For this reason the main purpose of this dissertation work was to examine whether the use of social networking sites is becoming more beneficial than jobs boards for Irish recruitment agencies.

1.2 The research question and objectives

Research question: "Are social networking sites becoming more beneficial than jobs boards for recruiters in Ireland nowadays"?

The main purpose of this dissertation is to investigate whether the use of social networking sites is becoming more beneficial than jobs boards for recruiters in Irish recruitment agencies nowadays.

This can be achieved by looking at the following specific objectives which are:

1. To investigate the usage of Social Networking sites and Jobs Boards in Irish recruitment agencies.
2. To investigate the cost effectiveness and time spent on recruiting through Social Networking sites and Jobs Boards in Irish recruitment agencies.
3. To investigate the types of information and candidates obtained through the use of Social Networking sites and Jobs Boards in Irish recruitment agencies.

1.3 Justification for the project

This study is a response to the need to provide an in-depth analysis of the impact of social networking sites on recruitment activities. The literature describes the benefits and drawbacks of the usage of social networking sites and jobs boards in the recruitment process. However, there is a lack of literature related to this problem in the Republic of Ireland. Whether the use of social networking sites is more beneficial to recruiters than jobs boards is a contemporary issue in the field of Human Resource Management that needs to be investigated further. This study seeks to contribute to the existing knowledge about the effectiveness of social networking sites and jobs boards in Ireland. The findings of this research will be presented to all recruiters who have participated in this research and will contribute to the researcher's knowledge. All recruiters who work in Irish recruitment agencies should be aware of all benefits and drawbacks that social networking sites and jobs boards include. It is important to examine the effectiveness of both recruitment methods because Irish recruitment agencies could subsequently benefit from them. The results of this study may serve as a helpful tool for recruiters when they make their final decision regarding the most suitable recruitment method. In addition, it may be useful and interesting for recruiters to be aware of what types of recruitment methods other Irish recruitment agencies use.

1.4 Suitability of the Researcher

This research topic reflects the contemporary issues within the field of Human Resource Management. During a study course of Human Resource Management, this researcher has developed a keen interest in recruitment activities. This researcher is excited by and interested in the areas of online recruitment, particularly in the use of social networking sites and jobs boards in the recruitment process. She believes she will work as a recruiter in the future. The results of this research will improve her knowledge in the field of online

recruitment. Thanks to this investigation the researcher will be familiar with all attributes and the use of social networking sites and jobs boards considered and used by recruiters in Irish recruitment agencies. Subsequently, in the future it may affect her final decision-making process of the most suitable recruitment method.

1.5 Recipients for the research

This dissertation titled 'Examining the Effectiveness of the Usage of Social Networking Sites and Job Boards in Recruitment Agencies in Ireland' is submitted in partial fulfilment of the Master of Human Resource Management in the Dublin Business School in conjunction with the Liverpool John Moores University. The principal for the dissertation will therefore be Dublin Business School and Liverpool Moores University.

In addition, this dissertation will be presented to the companies that have provided information for the primary research. The results of this study will be presented to all recruitment agencies who have participated in this research in order for them to understand the effectiveness of the usage social networking sites and jobs boards nowadays.

1.6 Scope and limitations of the research

In this study there are a number of limitations in terms of finance, time, access to information and access to human resources. In terms of finance, a certain amount of fees have had to be paid to gain access to some academic articles. A researcher could not afford to pay for all of them. Another limitation is access to human resources. Not all recruiters working in Irish recruitment agencies were willing to participate in this research. If they participated, the researcher was the one who had to adjust to the respondent's time schedule. Time is another example of a limitation in this study. The researcher has a limited amount of time to carry out the whole research.

1.7 Organisation of the dissertation

This dissertation work is organised in nine chapters. The first chapter is an introduction to the current study. The second chapter analyses theories, concepts, models that are relevant to the aims and objectives of the study. The third chapter reflects and discusses all research methods used in this study. The fourth chapter presents and illustrates the findings of this study. The fifth chapter chapter focuses on an interpretation of the main research findings. The next chapter draw general conclusions by summarising study findings. The seventh chapter

outlines recommendations related to study findings. The final two chapters include bibliography and appendices.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a review of the relevant literature as it relates to the overall research question which is : "Are social networking sites becoming more beneficial than jobs boards for Irish recruitment agencies nowadays? "

This chapter begins by defining recruitment, online recruitment, social networking sites and jobs boards followed by an in-depth review of the literature related to the problem of the usage and types of social networking sites and jobs boards in the recruitment process. The next chapter analyses the cost-effectiveness and time which is spent on recruitment activities through social networking sites and jobs boards. In the following chapter all types of information and candidates obtained through the use of social networking sites and jobs boards will be discussed. The last section draws the conclusions of the literature review.

2.2 Definition of Recruitment

According to Girard and Fallery (2010, p. 2) recruitment plays a critical role in enhancing organizational survival and success. Human resources are a key components in every company. The success of every company depends on the ability, talent, knowledge, attitude and performance of its employees. The role of recruitment is to seek and select employees with those specific skills and knowledge.

Recruitment 'includes those practices and activities carried out by the organization with the primary purpose of identifying and attracting potential employees ' (Breaugh and Starke, 2000:405) and has long been regarded as an important part of HRM as it performs the essential function of drawing an important resource-human capital-into the organisation ' (Barber, 1998:841, cited in Parry and Tyson, 2008, p. 257). The terms 'recruitment' and 'selection' are often considered together but they are in fact distinct human resource management activities. According to Taylor (2005), while recruitment involves actively soliciting applications from potential employees, selection techniques are used to decide which one of the applicants is best suited to fill the vacancy in question. The role of recruiters is to search and stimulate candidates to apply for jobs positions. Subsequently, recruiters have to screen, evaluate and choose the best qualified and suitable candidates for a particular job position. Recruitment and selection sub-systems can be categorised as: 1. attraction, 2.

reduction, 3. selection, 4. transition (Pilbeam and Corbridge, 2010). Attraction involves pre-recruitment activity, the use of recruitment methods and responding to enquiries. Reduction means filtering, screening and shortlisting of candidates. Selection requires the use of selection methods and making the appointment-offer and acceptance. Transition involves pre-engagement process, induction and appraisal.

2.3 Recruitment Agencies and Types of Recruitment Agencies

Companies use internal or external types of recruitment. Internal recruitment attempts to fill vacancies internally while external recruitment tries to attract applications outside of the organisation. Recruitment agencies belong to the external type of recruitment. Many companies use recruitment agencies nowadays. According to CIPD (2009), 76 % of organisations are using employment agencies as recruitment method (cited in Pilbeam and Corbridge, 2010). Clients are paying recruitment agencies for finding a talent, they can not find themselves. There is a big competition between recruitment agencies nowadays. Chambers et al. (1998) use the term "the war for talents" (Girard and Fallery, 2010, p.2). Recruiters in every recruitment agency attempt to fill jobs vacancies with their own candidates who were selected according to their evaluation. Every recruiter tries to gain the best suitable candidate who would fit with the culture and the needs of an organization. According to Taylor (2005), there are different types of external recruitment agencies which may undertake some part of recruitment process on behalf of the employers: 1. government and voluntary agents, 2. advertising and recruitment consultants, 3. temporary employment agencies and 4. headhunters and permanent employment agencies. Government and voluntary agents offer employers a free recruitment service. In addition, they provide different training programmes for people who have been out of work for a prolonged period. The aim is to give unemployed individuals an opportunity to gain work experience. The second group of recruitment agencies are advertising and recruitment consultants. Recruitment advertising agents assist employers in the drawing up and placing of job advertisements. Recruitment consultants take over a large part of the recruitment process. They undertake much of the administration by sifting initial applicants and providing employers with a shortlist of candidates. Another group of recruitment agencies are temporary employment agencies. They offer to companies a large number of casual employees, who may fill short-term vacancies when employers need it. According to Taylor (2008), as competion has become tougher and more international, the use of temporary staff to cover peaks in business has grown. The last group of agencies are headhunters and permanent employment consultants. They differ from

other types of recruitment agencies described above to a large extent. They offer recruitment services to employers which are more expensive in comparison to other types of recruitment agencies. Headhunters and permanent employment agencies are seeking for candidates who would fill permanent employment, often in a tight labour market. The recruiter's role is to sell the job to a potential candidate and then trying to sell the candidate to the employer. If the job position is filled by the recruiter's candidate, the recruitment agency will benefit from it and the recuiter will obtain a commision.

2.4 Online Recruitment

In order to attract desirable candidates, many recruiters use the medium of online recruitment. The introduction of online recruitment has been the subject of many discussions nowadays (Shafigue, 2012; Parry and Tyson, 2008; Gibson and Swift, 2011; J. Han and J. Han, 2011). The internet has changed the way people communicate and interact with each other. Some authors have suggested that the internet has revolutionised 'the way that people look for work' (Birchfield, 2002) and has brought 'radical change to corporate recruiting' (Cappeli, 2001, cited in Parry and Tyson, 2008, p. 257). Some users believe that the internet may become the only tool used for recruiting in the future (Vaas, 2000, cited in Koong, Liu and Williams, 2002). Online recrument has not only changed the character of recruitment but its use is increasing constantly. The use of online recruitment has grown dramatically over the last 15 years. For example, CIPD (2006) found that 64 pecent of UK organisations used online recruitment (Parry and Tyson, 2008, p. 258). Furthermore, E-recruitment in the USA has begun to displace other more traditional recruitment methods (Parry and Tyson, 2008, p. 25). The use of online recruitment includes many benefits. More authors agreed that online recruitment provides advantages such as cost-effectiveness, speed, ease of use and acess to applicants (Shafique, 2012; Parry and Tyson, 2008; Gibson and Swift, 2011; Torrington et al. 2011). The biggest advantage of using online recruitment is the cost-effectiveness. For instance, Capelli (2001) postulates that there is a considerable reduction in recruitment expenses when using internet technologies with as much as a 95 percent reduction on costs compared to more traditional forms of selection and hiring (cited in Gibson and Swift, 2011, p.62).

2.5 Web 2.0 and Recruitment

The development of web 2.0 offers new perspectives to recruiters. According to Pilbeam and Corbridge (2010), web 2.0 is the label for second generation web activity where individuals

interact and contribute rather than be passive receivers of information. Many potential candidates interact through blogs and social networking sites such as LinkedIn, MySpace and Facebook. There are two principal opportunities for employers. Firstly, through exploiting social networking sites in order to engage with potential job-seekers and to promote the employer brand and, secondly, through seeking information about potential job-seekers through their social networking presence and activity (Pilbeam and Corbridge, 2010). More examples of web.2.0 besides social networking websites and blogs are search engines (such as Google, Bing, Yahoo), encyclopedias (e.g Wikipedia), videos and photos sharing (such as Youtube, Flickr).

2.6 Definition of Social Networking Sites and Jobs Boards

Social Networking has been defined as "Web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system" (Osborn and LoFrisco, 2012, p.263).

The growth in popularity and use of social networking is a well-known fact. Nielson describes it as "the global consumer phenomenon" (cited in Sinclaire and Vogus, 2011, p.294). Every day social network sites gain more members who sign up. Many individuals use these sites to meet friends, make connections, upload personal information, share their interests and photos. Nowadays, companies and recruitment agencies use these sites for business purposes.

Jobs boards are another form of online recruitment. Online jobs boards provide access to detailed and up-to-date information about jobs vacancies in different locations around the world (Brenčič and Norris, 2012). Each Jobs Board provider offers the same as well as unique resources and attributes to corporate recruiters and job seekers. Koong, Liu and Williams (2002) found in their study that all Jobs Boards do not have the same capabilities and they do not offer the same attributes either. For this reason, recruitment agencies and job seekers should choose the type of jobs board which they want to use very carefully. In the case of recruitment agencies, it is important to select jobs board that will meet the needs of the company for which they need to recruit new employees. Job seekers need to choose the type of jobs board that fits their individual needs.

2.7 Use and types of Social Networking Sites

According to Kurt Ronn the use of social networking sites has gone from nonexistent to essential (Hutson, 2008, p.68). The use of social networking sites has spread very fast and has become an essential part of every recruitment activity. According to social recruitment survey conducted by online recruiter Jobvite, 78 percent of small and medium-sized businesses use social networking to support recruitment efforts (Hutson, 2008, p.68). Social networking sites may be used in many aspects of recruitment process. For instance, many recruiters and HR managers use social networking sites to attract desirable candidates, to check upon the backgrounds of applicants, to reach passive workers and to promote the brand of the company. According to a Jump Start Social Media poll (cited in Grensing-pophal, 2009, p. 42), three-quarters of hiring managers check LinkedIn to research the credentials of job candidates. Similarly, a survey conducted by Vault.com (2007, cited in Oleniczak, Pike, Mishra J. and Mishra B., 2010) found that 44 percent of employers use social networking sites to examine the profiles of job candidates and 39 percent have looked up the profile of a current employee. The use of social networking sites have proven to be useful for reaching passive candidates as well. According to SHRM Staffing Research (2008) many organizations use these sites to identify passive jobseekers who use the websites to indicate that they are interested and available for certain job positions and occupations (cited in Davison and Maraist, 2011, p.155). The use of social networking sites may be very beneficial when companies want to promote the brand of their company. The Web content analysis results indicate that all of the companies in all industry groups (100%) surveyed for this study are using various social networking sites to promote their company and their products (Sinclaire and Vogus, 2011, p.301).

Recruiters use different types of social networking sites. The three most prominent social networking sites are LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter. LinkedIn is a business-oriented network site, while Facebook and Twitter are social-oriented networking sites. According to Kristin Hunt (2010) social networking sites meet various purposes. LinkedIn recruiting tools focus on finding candidates and networking online while Facebook and Twitter recruiting tools focus on employer branding-an important part of engaging candidates. LinkedIn is an online recruitment professional network that allows users to connect with trusted contacts to exchange knowledge, ideas and opportunities within a broader network of professionals (Witzig, Spencer and Galvin, 2012, p.113). The number of new members who join LinkedIn is continually growing. Professionals are signing up to join LinkedIn at a rate of

approximately two new members per second (LinkedIn, 2013). LinkedIn is beneficial for different purposes. LinkedIn will help members to (a) reconnect: "find past and present colleagues and classmates quickly", (b) power your career: "discover inside connections when you are looking for a job or new business opportunity", (c) get answers: "your network is full of industry experts willing to share advice" (Get The Most, 2012, cited in Osborn and LoFrisco, 2012, p. 264). Facebook is another example of social networking site that may be used for business purposes. Facebook describes its purpose as a "social utility that helps people communicate more efficiently with their friends, family and coworkers" (Facebook, 2009, cited in Clark and Roberts, 2010, p.508). Facebook has million of users and the figure of new members is growing exponentially on a daily basis. According to Leader-Chivee and Cowan (2008) many companies use Facebook for marketing initiatives, recruiting and employer brand leverage (cited in Hunt, 2010, p.38). Companies are posting jobs on their Facebook pages, or at least linking users back to their corporate web site for career opportunities and applications. Facebook has become popular especially among young users. Students and young people consider Facebook page as a helpful tool when they are seeking for new job opportunities. Doctor Hope Koch (2009) reveals in his research that a social site like Facebook is the preferable way to find a job for students (cited in Elmore, 2009,pp. 1-2). Students in his research claimed they trust Social Networking sites more than company websites. Twitter is another social-oriented networking site. Twitter is a real-time information network that connects you to the latest stories, ideas, opinions and news about what you find interesting (Twitter, 2013, p.1). Twitter similarly as LinkedIn and Facebook, can be used for business purposes, including recruitment. Many companies simply post open jobs to their Twitter account with compressed URL for the corporate web site, which followers can link to for some information (Hunt, 2010, p.39). In addition, Twitter enables recruiters and HR managers to send direct private messages to potential candidates as well.

2.8 Use and types of Jobs Boards

Similar to social networking sites the use of jobs boards has become very popular among recruiters over the last decades. Kerr and Downs (2005) research study of human resource executives responsible for hiring in a variety of industries found that nearly half of all HR professionals (46 percent) believe that online jobs boards are the best resources to find job candidates, compared to traditional resources (Smith, 2005). In addition, when looking for candidates in a specific field, 65 percent of HR professionals choose association jobs boards over any other source, including association trade journals, newsletters and conventions,

newspaper classified advertising, or college/university sources (Smith, 2005). At present, however, there are some authors who do not consider jobs boards as useful as they used to be in the past. For instance, according to Wharton workplace expert Peter Cappelli, jobs boards are neither as cheap nor as efficient as they once were. He claims that companies are receiving too many résumés and users sense that their applications are ending up in a black hole (cited in Russo, Francine, 2011). Subsequently, many users begin to rely more on the use of social networking sites. As a response to this trend, jobs boards providers try to imitate and outgun the competition. For example, Monster and Career Buider claim that they are not just jobs boards any more but instead offer an array of products , some with social-networking features (Russo, Francine, 2011). Some of those jobs boards have launched social networking sites services which means that candidates do not need to visit jobs boards separately to search for jobs. Keith Potts, chief executive of Jobsite says: "We don't see social media as something that needs to be competed against and instead see it as something to embrace and work with, in order to offer a better service to candidates" (cited in Weekes, 2010,p.28).

In Ireland employers have the opportunity to choose from a large number of Jobs Boards. Jobs Boards are divided into three categories in Ireland: 1. The generalist Jobs Boards, 2. The specialist Jobs Boards, 3. Buyer Beware. Online Recruitment Research (2008, cited in Whatjobsite, 2013) provides the following information about Irish Jobs Boards:

1. The generalist jobs boards: The Irish job board market is dominated by the Saongroup which operates a portfolio of recruitment websites such as Irishjob.ie, NIjobs.com as well as a plethora of network sites (sites that simply reproduce relevant jobs from the larger sites) such as fitnessjobs.ie, graduatejobs.ie etc. Beyond Saongroup, the global online recruitment brand Monster also has a presence in Ireland with Monster.ie. RecruitIreand.com is another popular generalist job boards that has a significant presence in the market.

2. The specialist jobs boards: Beyond generalists, there are the beginnings of a real niche jobs board sector. This segment is being driven largely by one company Jobs Online Group, which operates a suite of niche sites Saesjobs.ie, Computerjobs.ie and Accountantjobs.ie. However, there are a number of other specialists jobs boards including retailsjobs365.ie, activelink.ie, Irelandhoteljobs.com for example.

3. Buyer Beware: Included in this are Jobs Boards such as Fas.ie (run by the government training agency), gumtree.ie, employireland.com.

2.9 Cost-effectiveness and time spent on recruiting through Social Networking Sites and Jobs Boards

Employers believe that the use of social networking sites brings them many benefits. According to more authors, one of the biggest advantage of using social networking sites is the cost-effectiveness (Davison, Maraist and Bing, 2011; Grensing-Pophal, 2009; Sinclaire and Vogus, 2011; Andrews, 2012). Rother states that besides the low cost of signing up there are no out-of-pocket costs associated with social media recruitment efforts.(cited in Grensing-Pophal, 2009). This may save a large amount of recruitment costs. The use of social networking sites may save a large amount of money when recruiters need to check the backgrounds of applicants as well. According to Davison, Maraist and Bing (2011) searching social networking sites appears to be less costly than traditional background checks. As a result many companies reduce the number of more traditional recruitment methods. Recruiters who use jobs boards are obligated to pay for all recruitment activities, including job advertisement and background checks. Shawbel (2010) found in his price comparison research that traditional jobs boards are much more expensive than alternatives such as LinkedIn. He has compared prices from Monster, CareerBuilder and LinkedIn. However, even when the costs of jobs boards seem to be more expensive, according to Elkington (2005) the use of jobs boards is still cheaper than traditional recruitment methods.

Another advantage of using social networking sites is the fact that recruiters may receive plenty of résumés in a very short period of time when they advertise new job positions. For example, according to Andrews (2012) when speed is a factor, Twitter can offer a great advantage for recruiting. Similarly, one of the reasons why jobs boards are so popular is because it enables to make recruitment faster through the posting of jobs advertisement online. Social networking sites and jobs boards enable to recruiters operate 24 hours a day. Recruiters are able to reach potential candidates without leaving their homes. This can save plenty of time. Unfortunately, the use of social networking sites and jobs boards may attract a high volume of unqualified candidates besides qualified candidates. According to Elkington (2005) receiving this level of irrelevant applicants can negate the time-saving benefits of online recruitment. Recruiters can spend far too much time wading through and discarding the irrelevant applications. Paul Whitney (cited in Frauenheim, 2009), vice president of

Human resource data networking equipment company Infinera found jobs boards filling just 5 percent of his openings despite the fact that trolling through résumés from major job boards took up about 25 percent of his recruiter's time. In addition, editing, publishing information about new job opportunities, giving feedback to job candidates may be time consuming as well.

2.10 Types of information gained through the use of Social Networking Sites and Jobs Boards

Thanks to the use of social networking sites recruiters have the opportunity to find out a lot of information about the job candidates. What potential employees send on social networking sites may have positive or negative impact on what recruiters will think of them. For example, on the Twitter website, four out of five recruiters liked to see memberships and affiliations with professional organizations on a candidate's profile, and another 66% react positively when a profile mentions volunteerism efforts. On the other hand, references to illicit drugs, posts of a sexual nature, and mentions of alcohol consumption were likely to be viewed negatively by 78%, 67%, and 47% of recruiters (cited in Shawbel, 2012). For this reason, job candidates should consider very carefully what kind of information they will share on social network sites because it may have a big impact on recruiter's hiring decisions. According to Clark and Roberts (2010, p. 509) there are two negative consequences as a result when employers view information online they deem unacceptable: employers do not hire the applicant and current employees are fired. According to them, there appears to be a disconnection between how users of social networking sites view the purpose and utility of social networking sites and how employers view the sites. Clark and Roberts (2010,p.519) summarize that users of social networking sites use them mainly for social interaction, whereas employers use a site to gather character information about job candidates without the applicants ever knowing what information was considered. Therefore, recruiters should be aware of this fact and take this into consideration. However, there are some risks for recruiters when they use social networking sites for online checks of applicants as well. There are privacy issues. Recruiters should request only information that are relevant to the position. Much of the information on social media sites — like ethnicity, age, religion, marital status and sexual orientation, is considered protected by the Equality Act. Sensitive 'protected' information could cause employers to be exposed to discrimination claims, especially if it is not information relevant to the job (cited in HRNewsDaily, 2012). Therefore, recruiters should be very careful when they use social networking sites for

background checks of candidates. On the other hand, the use of social networking sites may bring considerable benefits for recruiters. Users of social networking sites create their own profiles. Through these profiles recruiters have the opportunity to get to know candidates better and build a relationship with them. For example, on LinkedIn recruiters may look at candidates' profiles which provide information about their work experience, skills and expertise, education, professionals connection, groups they have joined and some of them have blogs with additional information. They also have the opportunity to obtain recommendations on LinkedIn about job candidates from their colleagues, other professionals who work in the field, friends, family etc.

Through the use of Jobs Boards recruiters have access to résumés of jobs candidates. According to Cole, Rubin, Feild and Giles (2007) résumés play a critical role in determining who is subsequently invited for pre-employment interviews (cited in Chen, Huang and Lee, 2011). Applicants' résumé information is a specific type of biographical data (biodata), representing historical and verifiable pieces of information (Asher,1972) pertaining to their life history (Bobko, Roth and Potosky, 1999, cited in Chen, Huang and Lee, 2011). Candidates' résumés should include basic contact information, profile information, career summary, experience section, education section, skills, hobbies and interests of candidates and list of references. References are usually available on request. However, on LinkedIn, references and recommendation are situated directly on candidates' profiles. A difference between the use of résumés and social networking sites is that recruiters may learn more about candidates thanks to different discussions within social networking sites. Résumés do not provide this kind of information. Another difference between the social networking profiles and candidates' résumés is the level of candidates' awareness of information which they share on these websites. When applicants send their résumés on jobs boards they are usually aware that potential employers will screen their CVs. On the other hand, users on social networking sites often do not realise that employers may check up their profile, especially on the social-oriented websites such as Facebook and Twitter.

2.11 Types of candidates obtained through the use of Social Networking Sites and Jobs Boards

Thanks to the use of social networking sites and jobs boards, recruiters have the opportunity to attract and select potential employees from a large pool of job applicants. According to Gutmacher (2000) the job board's greatest strength is the sheer numbers of job applicants

listing résumés, it has been estimated that they contain five million unique résumés (cited in Dhamija, 2012, p. 37). However, there is a risk that social networking sites and jobs boards may not only attract only desirable candidates but also many applicants who do not fit the requirements needed for a particular job position. Mathis and Jackson' s research (2008) on internet recruiting in general has indicated that employers do not only get more qualified applicants but also more unqualified applicants. Subsequently, the selection of the right candidates from a huge pool of qualified and unqualified applicants can last long and complicate the work of recruiters (cited in Davison, Maraist and Bing, 2011, pp. 154-155). Of course, the effort of every recruiter is to attract the most suitable candidates for a particular job position. But who are those candidates and where can recruiters reach them? According to DeKay (2009) passive workers are often assumed to be well-qualified, stable workers (cited Davison, Maraist and Bing, 2011, p.155). Passive candidates are those candidates who are not actively looking for a job but if a better opportunity came along they might take it. Many recruiters and hiring managers consider LinkedIn as very helpful tool for reaching passive candidates they might not otherwise have access to (Raghavendra, 2011, cited in Shikari, 2011, p.31; Vega, cited in Grensing-Pophal, 2012, p. 27; Guericke, cited in Berkshire, 2005, p.96). Another benefit of using social networking sites and jobs boards is a possibility to gain access to candidates who may be disadvantaged by their geographic location. For example, the strong representation of regional and rural females in the Fenner et al. (2012, p. 10) study demonstrate the potential benefit of using social networking sites to recruit a segment that traditionally has been quite difficult to reach. Recruiters in a population that is disadvantaged by geographic location may find desirable candidates who they are looking for.

The drawback of using Jobs Boards is that they are considered to be too generous and hardly useful when employers are seeking for specific set of skills and knowledge. According to Koong, Liu and Williams (2002) high-level jobs, that require multiple expertise or experienced candidates with wide-ranging skills, can not be confined to just a few key words. In addition, Jobvite published the results "Social Recruitment survey" which found employers are more satisfied with the quality of candidates from employee referrals and social networks than those of jobs boards. As a result, companies intend to invest more in these cost-effective candidate sources in 2009, rather than jobs boards and other traditional resources (cited in Grensing-Pophal, 2009, p.43).

2.12 Conclusion

The literature review has appraised and discussed several ideas pertaining to this research. The use of social networking sites and jobs boards involves many advantages and disadvantages. These attributes may influence the recruiter's final choice of method which they use in recruitment process. According to the literature review the use of social networking sites in recruitment is a relatively new phenomenon that affects and changes the whole recruitment process. According to Paul Whitney (cited in Frauenheim, 2009), organizations that once relied on general-purpose jobs boards are turning to alternative strategies, including social networking sites. In addition, Social Talent, the Europe's leading provider of online and social media training, brings interesting facts about the most popular website among Irish people. According to Fawcett (2011), social networking sites (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter) belong to the top ten most popular websites in Ireland while the first job board site, Jobs.ie takes the 74th spot, Fas.ie takes 101st spot and Irishjobs.ie is the 117th popular website among Irish people. That means that jobs seekers prefer to visit social networking sites rather than jobs boards sites. Knowing this fact may be very beneficial for recruiters in Irish recruitment agencies. Whether social networking sites are more popular among recruiters in Irish recruitment agencies as well and have a tendency to replace jobs boards was investigated in this study.

According to this literature review, there are a few gaps that require a deeper exploration.

1. Is the use of social networking sites more beneficial than the use of jobs boards for recruiters in Irish recruitment agencies nowadays?
2. What types of social networking sites and jobs boards do recruiters use in Irish recruitment agencies nowadays?
3. Which of the online recruitment methods is cheaper and time saving these days?
4. Which of the online recruitment methods provide better information about potential employees?
5. Which of the online recruitment methods attract well-qualified candidates?
6. Which of the follow online recruitment methods attract more diverse candidates?

This study offers answers to these questions.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Chapter 3: Research Methodology and Methods

3.1 Introduction

Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler (2008) define business research as "a systematic inquiry whose objective is to provide the information that will allow managerial problems to be solved".

This chapter aims to provide the rationale for the selection of the methodology and the methods used to explore the research question and research objectives:

Research question: "Are social networking sites becoming more beneficial than jobs boards for recruiters in Ireland nowadays"?

Research objectives:
1. To investigate the usage of social networking sites and jobs boards in Irish recruitment agencies.
2. To investigate the cost-effectiveness and time spent on recruiting through social networking sites and jobs boards in Irish recruitment agencies.
3. To investigate the types of information and candidates obtained through the usage of social networking sites and jobs boards in Irish recruitment agencies.

In order to answer the research question and objectives the first step is to discuss the design of the research in detail: it includes the research philosophy, the research approach and research strategy used. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009) point out that the matter lies at the centre of the "research onion" before coming to this central point there are important layers of the onion to be peeled away. The first of these onion layers is that pertaining to research philosophies.

Figure 5.1 **The research 'onion'**

Source: © Mark Saunders, Philip Lewis and Adrian Thornhill 2006
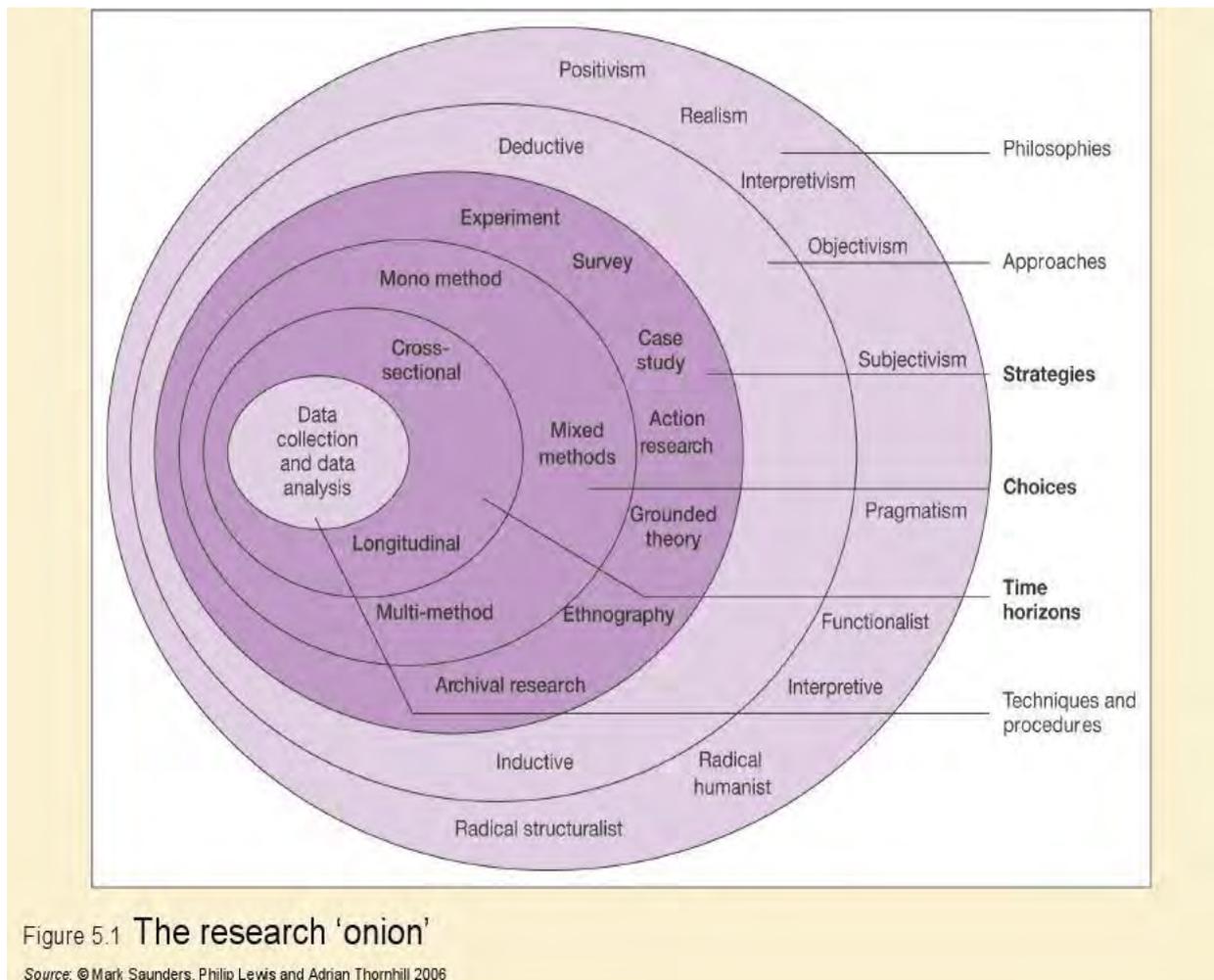
3.2 Research Philosophy

According to Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler (2008), knowledge of research philosophies is beneficial for a researcher because it helps to clarify the research design and facilitates the choice of an appropriate one.

In the following chapter an overview of the two most distinguished research philosophies, positivism and interpretivism, is provided. Between these two positions the most notable additional philosophy is realism.

Positivism is a research philosophy adopted from the natural sciences. Its three basic principles are:

1. the social world exist externally and is viewed objectively

2. research is value-free

3. the researcher is independent, taking the role of an objective analyst (Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler, 2008).

Positivists view that knowledge comes from human experience. The researcher has adopted positivism research philosophy in this research. According to Gill and Johnson (2002, cited in Saunders et al. 2007), a positivist researcher is likely to use a highly structured methodology to facilitate replication while taking the role of an objective analyst, coolly making detached interpretations about those data that have been collected in an apparent value free manner. This is practical in this research although it focuses on just the Irish recruitment industry, it will have relevance for the entire recruitment industry.

Interpretivists, unlike positivists hold the view that the social world can not be understood by applying research principles adopted from natural sciences and propose that social sciences require a different research philosophy. The basic principles of interpretivism are:

1. The social world is constructed and is given meaning subjectively by people
2. The researcher is part of what is observed
3. Research is driven by interests (Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler, 2008).

Interpretivism has not been used in this study because the researcher prefers working with an observable social reality. Interpretivism proposes to find out the details of the situation to understand reality behind the subject. According to Saunders et al. (2007), the researcher has to join the social world of the researcher's subject and understand their world from their point of view. This philosophy requires a considerable time to be spent for a deep exploration of a social reality. However, the researcher has had a limited time for this study, therefore she has not done the research by interpretivism point of view.

Realism is a research philosophy sharing principles of positivism and interpretivism. The essence of realism is that what the senses show us as reality is the truth: that objects have an existence independent of the human mind (Saunders, Lewin and Thornhill, 2009). Realism has been cast off in this study because it is based on belief that a reality exists which is independent of human thoughts and beliefs. While realism shares some philosophical aspects of positivism, it also recognises that people themselves are not objects to be studied in the style of natural science. The theory of realism is that there is a reality quite independent of the mind (Saunders et al., 2007).

3.3 Research Approach

The research approach is derived from the research philosophy. There are two types of research approaches:

<u>Deductive approach</u>

Deduction is a form of inference that purports to be conclusive. The conclusion must necessarily follow the reasons given. These reasons are said to have led to a conclusion and therefore represent proof (Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler, 2008).

Deduction involves:

- scientific principles
- moving from theory to data
- the need to explain causal relationships between variables
- the collection of quantitative data
- the application of controls to ensure validity of data
- the operationalisation of concepts to ensure clarity of definition
- a highly structured approach
- researcher independence
- the necessity to select samples of sufficient size in order to generalise conclusions (Saunders et al., 2009)

Saunders et al. (2009) mention that an important characteristic of deduction is that concepts must be operationalised in a way that enables facts to be measured quantitatively.

<u>Inductive approach</u>

Inductions are radically different. They do not have the same strength of relationship between reasons and conclusions. To induce something is to draw a conclusion from one or more particular facts or pieces of evidence. The conclusion explains the facts, and the facts support the conclusion (Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler, 2008).

Induction involves:

- gaining and understanding of the meanings humans attach to events
- a close understanding of the research contents
- the collection of qualitative data

- a more flexible structure to permit changes of research emphasis as the research progresses
- a realisation that the researcher is part of the research process
- less concerned with the need to generalise (Saunders et al., 2009)

The deductive approach has been used in this study. According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2002) deductive approach can be a lower risk strategy and quicker to complete in comparison with inductive approach. Another reason why inductive approach has been refused is that the aim of this study was to gain data from a large sample. When using inductive approach a small size of sample can be used. Furthermore, the inductive method demands a much longer period of data collection and analysis than deductive approach and the researcher has had a limited time for this study.

3.4 Research Strategy

The next layer in the onion is the research strategy. According to Saunders et al. (2007) research strategy is a general plan of how the researcher will go about answering the research question.

There are different types of research strategies. Saunders et al. (2007) proposes the following strategies:

- Experiment
- Survey
- Case study
- Grounded theory
- Ethnography
- Action research

All strategies have their advantages and disadvantages. Some of them belong to the deductive approach, others to the inductive approach. In addition, Saunders et al. (2007) emphasise that no research strategy is inherently superior or inferior to any other. These strategies should not be thought of as being mutually exclusive. For example, it is possible to use the survey strategy as part of case study.

The researcher in this study has adopted a survey strategy method for answering the research question. The survey is usually associated with the deductive approach. It allows collecting

information from a large sample of individuals. The survey method is a popular and common strategy in business and management research and is most frequently used to answer who, what, where, how much and how many questions (Saunders et al., 2007). Another reason why the researcher has chosen the survey method is because the survey should give the researcher more control over the research process and, when sampling is used, it is possible to generate findings that are representative of the whole population at a lower cost than collecting the data for the whole population (Saunders et al., 2007). Therefore, the researcher considers the survey method as the most suitable method for this study.

3.5 Research Choice

There are two types of research choices: mono methods or multiply methods. When using mono methods, single quantitative data collection technique, such as questionnaires are combined with quantitative data analysis procedures; or a single qualitative data collection technique, such as in-depth interviews, are combined with qualitative data analysis procedures (Saunders et al., 2007) . The term multi-method refers to those combinations where more than one data collection technique is used with associated analysis techniques (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003, cited in Saunders et al., 2007). For answering the research question, the researcher has used mono methods in this study. The researcher has analyzed quantitative data quantitatively.

3.6 Time Horizon

The time horizon can be segmented by two principals which are cross-sectional studies and longitudinal studies. According to Saunders et al (2007), study cross-sectional research is a particular phenomenon at a particular time. Cross-sectional research refers to studies which take a snapshot of a situation in time. On the other hand, longitudinal studies require a period of time sufficiently long for changes to have occurred and to be observed. According to Saunders et al. (2007), the main strength of longitudinal research is the capacity that it has to study change and development.

As the dissertation´s time frame was only a few months, a cross sectional time frame has been used due to the thesis submission deadline of the 16th of August, 2013.

3.7 Data collection

Data collection is the inner core of the research onion proposed by Saunders et al. (2007). It is an important part of the research. There are two types of data collection: primary and

secondary. Research at a Master level requires a combination of both: existing knowledge (secondary data) and an originality of an individual study (primary data).

3.7.1 Primary data collection

Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler suggest (2008) that all data techniques do not have equal value. Primary data techniques are far more superior as a data collection method than secondary techniques. In this research, primary quantitative data collection has been used. According to Bryman and Bell (2007) quantitative research is described as entailing the collection of numerical data and as exhibiting a view of the relationship between theory and research as deductive, a predilection for a natural science approach and as having an objectivist conception of social reality. An example of quantitative primary data collection is a questionnaire.

Questionnaires

The questionnaire is one of the most widely used data collection techniques within the survey strategy. DeVaus (2002, cited in Saunders et al, 2007) defines questionnaires as a general term to include all techniques of data collection in which persons are asked to respond to the same set of questions in a predetermined order. These questions may be asked verbally, in writing or via a computer, and responses may be obtained in any of these forms.

Bryman and Bell (2007) describe advantages of the use of the self-administered questionnaire over the structured interview:

- *Cheaper to administer*. Interviewing can be expensive.
- *Quicker to administer*. Self-completion questionnaires can be sent out by post or otherwise distributed in very large quantities at the same time.
- *Absence of interviewer effects*. Characteristics of interviewers (and respondents) may affect the answers that people give.
- *No interviewer variability*. Self-administered questionnaires do not suffer from the problem of interviewers asking questions in a different order or in different ways.
- *Convenience for respondents*. Self-completion questionnaires are more convenient for respondents, because they can complete a questionnaire whenever they want and at the speed that they want to go.

It was ideal to use self-administered questionnaire in this research as it is less expensive and faster to administer than interviews, have reduced bias and can be administrated in great quantity at a time and place capturing a large sample size.

<u>The questionnaire design</u>

In order to access the credibility of any questionnaire the validity and reliability must be established. The validity and reliability of the data the researcher collects depends to large extent, on the design of questions and the structure of questions. A valid question enables accurate data to be collected, and the one that is reliable means that these data are collected consistently (Saunders et al., 2002). Foddy (1994) emphasises that the question must be understood by the respondent in the way intended by the researcher and the answer given by the respondent must be understood by the researcher in the way intended by the respondent (cited in Saunders et al., 2002).

There are different types of questionnaires. The design of a questionnaire differs according to how it is administered. In this study, a researcher has used a self-administrative questionnaire. Self-administered questionnaires are delivered and returned electronically using either email or the internet or delivered by hand to each respondent and collected later. In this study, the questionnaire has been sent and given to recruiters working in Irish recruitment agencies through the Internet and personally in a written format as well. The researcher has used the Internet (Survey Monkey) for delivering questionnaire and collecting answers. In addition, a questionnaire has been delivered by hand to each respondent working in recruitment agency and collected later on. A questionnaire included 25 questions.

There are different types of questions that may be used in a questionnaire: open questions and closed questions. Open questions allow to respondent to give answers in their own way (Fink, 1995) while closed questions provide a number of alternative answers from which the respondent is instructed to choose (Saunders et al., 2002).

Youngman (1986, cited in Saunders et al., 2003) identifies six types of closed questions:
1. *list*, where respondent is offered a list of items, any of which may be selected;
2. *category*, where only one response can be selected from a given set of categories;
3. *ranking*, where the respondent is asked to place something in order;
4. *scale or rating*, in which a rating device is used to record responses;

5. *quantity*, to which the response is a number giving the amount;
6. *grid*; where responses to two or more questions can be recorded using the same matrix

The researcher has used different types of questions in this study such as open questions, list questions, category questions and scale questions. Questions were grouped into four main sections.

The first section (Section A) of the survey contains 2 questions which requested basic information from respondents. The researcher has used open style and category questioning. These questions asked respondents to identify the name of the recruitment agency they work for and years of their experience within recruitment industry.

The second section (Section B) contains 9 questions. In this section, respondents were asked to answer questions about the usage of social networking sites and jobs boards in recruitment process. The researcher has used list, category and open types of questions.

The third section (Section C) contains 6 questions. Respondents were asked about the cost-effectiveness and time spent on recruiting through social networking sites and jobs boards. The researcher has used scale and category types of questions.

The last section (Section D) contains 8 questions. Respondents were asked about the types of candidates and information they obtain through the usage of social networking sites and jobs boards. The researcher has used scale and list types of questions.

Pilot testing

According to Saunders et al (2007) the purpose of pilot test is to refine the questionnaire to avoid respondents having problems with answering the questions and also recording of data. The researcher in this study has chosen and asked a few recruiters to comment on the suitability of the questions designed in questionnaire. This helped her to establish a content validity.

3.7.2 Secondary data collection
Secondary data is information or data that has been already been collected and recorded by someone else, usually for other purposes (Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler, 2008).

Secondary data include both raw data and published summaries. For this study reference articles, books and online sources were considered and evaluated. All references are documented in the bibliography section of this dissertation proposal.

3.7.3 Data collection procedures

The questionnaire containing a cover letter, were delivered to 51 recruiters working in Irish recruitment agencies. The questionnaire circulation time frame was 5 working days. The researcher attempted to encourage a high response rate with the cover letter. The cover letter explains the purpose of the survey, describes how long it takes to complete it, describes all instructions for completing a questionnaire, describes how results will be used, promises the confidentiality and anonymity, informs whom to contact if respondents have any queries and thanks the recipients for their help.

Response rate

According to Neumann (2000, cited in Saunders, et al. 2002) active respondent rate is calculated as: Total number of respondents/ Total number in sample (ineligible + unreachable) *100.

In this study, the questionnaire has been given personally to 60 recruiters working in recruitment agencies in Ireland. From the total number of respondents (60), 41 recruiters filled in and returned the questionnaire. The rest of the responses, the researcher has gained through the internet (Survey Monkey), where 10 recruiters filled in the questionnaire. The questionnaire has been advertised through the social networking site LinkedIn, where the researcher has had a connection with 36 recruiters working within recruitment agencies. Furthermore, the questionnaire has been sent to other 30 recruiters through e-mail. Thus, the researcher has gained access to 126 recruiters and she has obtained a response only from 51 recruiters. Active rate in this case was calculated as 41+10/ 60+36+30*100= 40, 47%.

3.8 Population and Samples

Population is the full set of cases from which a sample is taken. It is possible to conduct a 'census' in a research whereby a researcher collects and analyzes data from every possible case or group member considering the fact that the population is of manageable size. However, in this research, it was impracticable for the researcher to collect or to analyze all the data from all recruitment agencies in Ireland given the tight deadline, costs associated with it and access to human resources. For these reasons it was necessary to choose the

sample in this research. Sampling techniques provide a range of methods that enable the researcher to reduce the amount of data that is needed to collect by considering only data from a subgroup rather than all possible cases or elements (Saunders et al., 2007).

Hussey and Hussey (1997) note that a sampling process must involve the following steps:

1. Defining the target population: The target population is the collection of elements or objects that possess the information sought by the researcher. The target population for this research are all recruiters working in recruitment agencies in Ireland.

2. Choosing the sampling frame: The sampling frame is closely related to the population. It is the list of elements from which the sample is actually drawn (Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler, 2008). An example includes the telephone book, an association directory listing the firms in an industry, a mailing list on a data base purchased from a commercial organization, a city directory or a map of an area. In this study the sampling frame is the complete list of all registered recruiters working in recruitment agencies in Ireland.

3. Selecting the sampling method: there are two sampling techniques implored in selecting a sample for a research: probability and non-probability sampling method.

   - Probability or representative sampling- Probability of each case being selected from the population is known and is usually equal for all cases. It means that it is possible to answer the research question and to achieve objectives that require the researcher to estimate statistically the characteristics of the population from the sample (Saunders et al., 2002).
   - Non-probability or judgemental sampling- The probability of each case being selected from the total population is not known and it is impossible to answer the research question or to address objectives that require you to make statistical inferences about the characteristics of the population (Saunders et al., 2002).

According to Saunders et al. (2002) probability is the most commonly associated with survey-based research where the researcher needs to make inferences from the sample about

a population to answer research question or to meet objectives. There are different types of random sampling which include:

1. simple random sampling
2. systematic sampling
3. stratified random sampling
4. cluster sampling
5. multi-stage sampling

The researcher has adopted simple random sampling and refused other sampling techniques as the simple random technique was the best suitable method for this research. Simple random sampling involves 'selecting the sample at random from the sampling frame using either random numbers tables or computers' (Saunders et al., 2002). According to Saunders et al. (2002) the advantage of random simple random sampling is the selection of random numbers from sample without biases. The sample selection can therefore be said to be representative of the whole population. Another reason why the researcher has chosen the simple random sampling is because this method is suitable for a geographically dispersed area when it is used an alternative technique of collecting data for such as online questionnaires. As the researcher would not be able to travel and hand out the questionnaire to all recruiters working in recruitment agencies in Ireland, she was sending the questionnaires through the internet and giving it personally only to recruiters who worked in Dublin City Centre. The researcher identified a comprehensive list of all recruitment agencies in Ireland from the online source *IrishJobs.ie*. Due to a strict time limit it was difficult to contact all recruitment agencies in Ireland and for this reason the researcher randomly selected 30 recruitment agencies. However, only 15 of them were willing to participate in this research. With regards to the obtained amount of questionnaires and recruiters who were willing to participate in this research, the sample size was 51.

3.9 Ethical Issues

According to Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler (2008), ethics is the study of the 'right behaviour' and addresses the question how to conduct research in a moral and responsible way. Thus, ethics does not only address the question of how to use methodology in a proper way to conduct sound research, but it also adress the question of how the available methodology may be used in the 'right' way.

As in other aspects of business, all parties in research should exhibit ethical behavior. Ethics refers to the appropriateness of the researcher' s behaviour in relation to the rights of those who become the subject of work, or are affected by it (Saunders et al., 2002). Ethical issue arise when the researcher for the sake of obtaining data oversteps the bounds of personal privacy or confidentiality. Saunders et al. (2002) summarise following ethical issues:

- privacy of possible and actual participants;
- voluntary nature of participation and the right to withdraw partially or completely from the process;
- consent and possible deception of participants;
- maintenance of the confidentiality of data provided by individuals or identifiable participants and their anonymity;
- reactions of participants to the way in which the researcher seeks to collect data;
- effects on participants of the way in which the researcher uses, analyses and reports data;
- behaviour and objectivity of the researcher.

According to Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler (2008), the researcher should follow three principles:

1. explain the benefits of the study
2. explain the participant's rights and protection
3. obtain informed consent.

<u>Benefits of the study</u>

The role of the researcher is to explain the purpose of the study and discuss its benefits. The researcher should begin an introduction with his or her name, the name of the research organization, and a brief description of the purpose and benefits of the research. This puts participants at ease, lets them know to whom they are providing information, and motivates them to answer questions truthfully (Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler, 2008).

<u>Deception</u>

Deception occurs when participants are told only part of the truth or when the truth is fully compromised (Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler, 2008). Some authors believe that this should never occur.

Others suggest two reasons for deception:

- ➢ to prevent biasing participants before the survey or experiment
- ➢ to protect the confidentiality of a third party (e.g. the sponsor).

However, the participants' rights and well-being must be protected adequately and they must have given their informed consent before participating in the research.

<u>Informed consent</u>

According to Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler (2008), securing informed consent from participants is a matter of fully disclosing the procedures of the proposed survey or other research design before requesting permission to proceed with the study. Having obtained the consent of the respondent, the researcher is obliged to stick to the procedures outlined previously.

There are two dominant philosophical standpoints on research ethics: deontology and teleology. *The deontological view* argues that the ends served by the research can never justify the use of research which is unethical (Saunders et al., 2007). The researcher who adopts deontological view would never use, for example, deception to obtain research data. In contrast *the teleological view* argues that the ends served by the research justify the means. Consequently, the benefits of the research findings would be weighed against the costs of acting unethically (Saunders et al., 2007). In this study, the researcher has adopted the deontological standpoint as the researcher wishes to remain ethical in all mediums of this investigation as research findings will not outweigh the costs of acting unethically.

In the best interest of this study the researcher has remained ethical in all aspects of this investigation.

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Findings

The aim of this chapter is to evaluate the findings of quantitative research carried out according to the research methodologies outlined.

The information collected from the questionnaire was analysed using an online tool, Survey Monkey. All data that the researcher has obtained from recruitment agencies personally have been transformed and analysed in Survey Monkey.

The questionnaire was distributed in July 2013 and respondents were given a full working week, Monday-Friday to return the questionnaire to the researcher. In addition, the researcher emailed the questionnaire to more recruiters. However, time was an issue for both the researcher and the respondents. The researcher has experienced some difficulty as respondents in recruitment agencies were too busy to fill in the questionnaire. Furthermore, many recruiters who received the email with the questionnaire were not willing to participate. Out of 126 possible respondents, the researcher received 51 completed questionnaires.

Results are arranged according to question numbers, showing frequency tables and figures.

4.1 Results- 1st Question : The name of the recruitment agency the recruiter works for

A table 4.1.1 illustrates the list of recruitment agencies and the number of respondents who participated in this research. The most willing to participate in this research has been CPL recruitment with 13 recruiters who have completed the questionnaire, followed by Allen recruitment with 8 and Kaizen recruitment with 5 respondents. The rest of recruitment agencies have filled out between 1 to 4 questionnaires.

Table 4.1.1

1.	Kaizen Recruitment	5
2.	Jackson Stone Recruitment	2
3.	Recruiters looking for you	2
4.	Reed Recruitment	4
5.	CPL Recruitment	13
6.	Hays Recruitment	3
7.	Jobsource Recruitment	2
8.	Firstaff Personnel Consultants	2
9.	Allen Recruitment	8
10.	Storm Recruitment	1
11.	Pharma Solutions Recruitment	1
12.	Accountancy Solutions	2
13.	Abrivia Recruitment	2
14.	MGI Recruitment	2
15.	Sigmar Recruitment	2

4.2 Results- 2nd Question: Length of recruiter's experience within the recruitment industry

<u>Table 4.2.1</u>

Answer Choices	Responses	
1-4 years	**52.94%**	27
5-8 years	**9.80%**	5
9-12 years	**17.65%**	9
13-16 years	**15.69%**	8
more	**3.92%**	2
Total		51

<u>Figure 4.2.2</u>
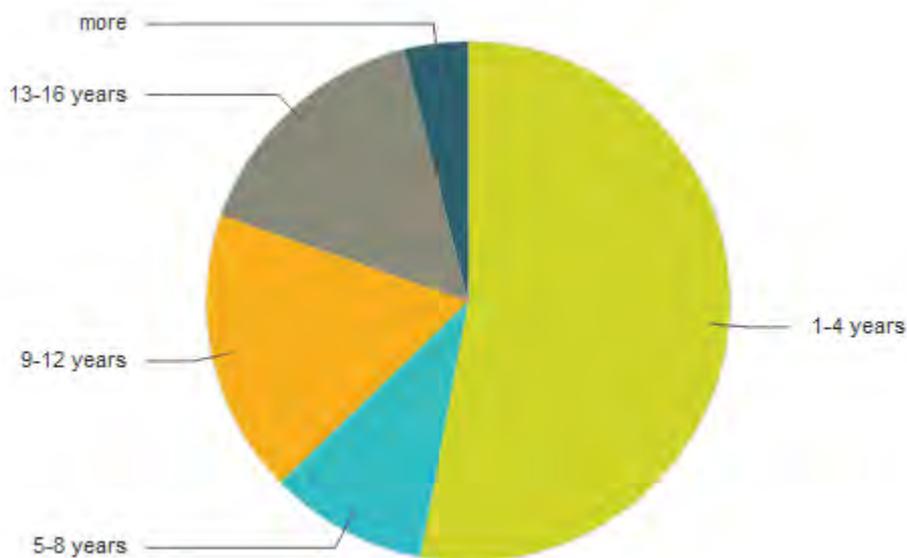
Figure 4.2.2 illustrates the length of time the respondents have worked in the recruitment industry. Out of the total number of recruiters (51), 52. 94% have worked in recruitment more than 1 year but less than 4 years, so more than half of the respondents were relatively new in recruitment industry. 17.65% of respondents have been employed in recruitment industry more than 9 years but less than 12 years. 15.69% of recruiters have worked in recruitment more than 13 years but less than 16 years. 9.8% of respondents have been employed in recruitment agencies more than 5 years but less than 8 years. Surprisingly, only 3.92% of recruiters have had more than 16 years experience in recruitment.

4.3 Results- 3rd Question: Types of Social Networking sites used in the recruitment process (searching/sourcing candidates and advertising life jobs)

Table 4.3.1

Answer Choices	Responses	
LinkedIn	98.04%	50
Twitter	21.57%	11
Facebook	27.45%	14
Total Respondents: 51		

Figure 4.3.2
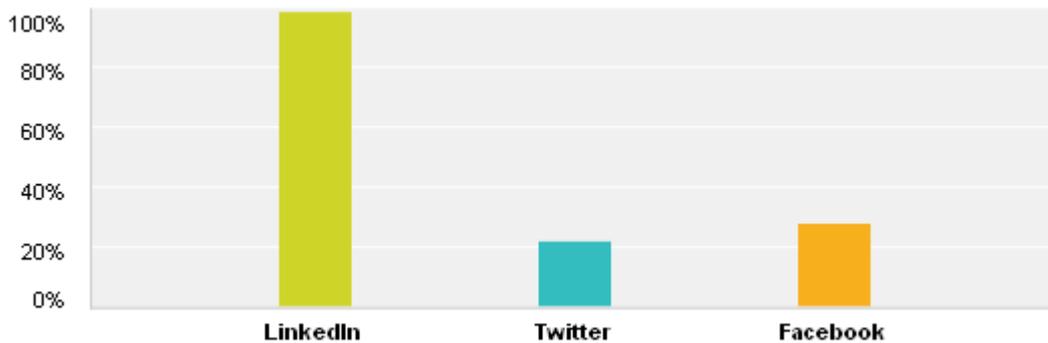
All respondents who have completed the questionnaire use Social Networking sites for recruitment purposes. Out of the total number of recruiters (51), 50 respondents (98.04%) state, they use social networking site LinkedIn in a recruitment process. Facebook has shown as the second most used Social Networking site. Out of the total number of recruiters (51), 14 respondents (27.45%) said, they use Facebook for recruitment purposes. The figure 4.3.2 indicates that only 11 respondents (21.57%) have been using Twitter as recruitment tool. Only one respondent has been using different type of Social Networking site (Xing) besides LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook in the recruitment process.

4.4 Results- 4th Question: The most used Social Networking sites within recruitment agencies in Ireland

Table 4.4.1

Answer Choices	Responses
Business oriented Networking Sites (LinkedIn)	90%
Social oriented Networking Sites (Facebook, Twitter)	10%
Total	

Figure 4.4.2
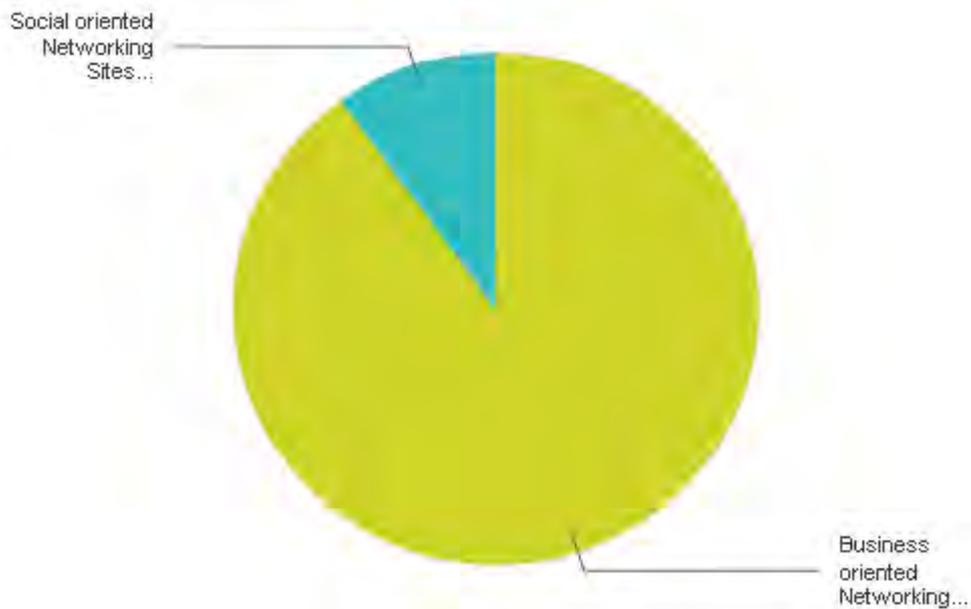
The above distribution showed that the majority of the respondents (90%) prefer to use business oriented networking sites (LinkedIn) more than social oriented networking sites (Facebook and Twitter).

4.5 Results- 5th Question: The percentage of the use of Social Networking sites in all recruitment activities in total.

Table 4.5.1

Answer Choices	Responses	
0-15%	18%	9
15-30%	30%	15
30-45%	20%	10
45-60%	14.00%	7
60-85%	12%	6
85-100%	6%	3
Total		50

Figure 4.5.2
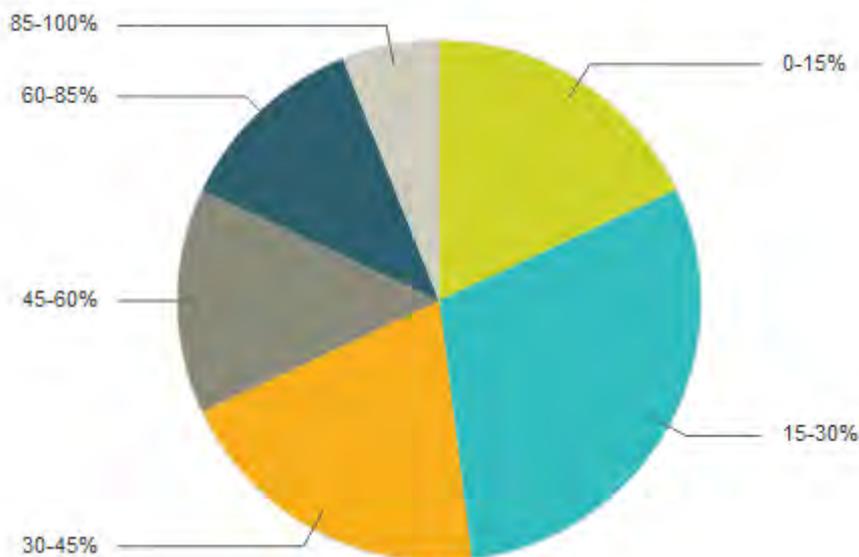
The figure 4.5.2 above illustrates the percentage and frequency of the use of social networking sites during recruitment activities (sourcing/searching candidates and advertising live jobs). Out of the total number of respondents (51), 15 of them stated, they have been using Social Networking sites which covered from 15% to 30% of their total recruitment activities. For another 10 surveyed recruiters the use of social networking sites covered from 30% to 45% of their total recruitment activities. 9 respondents stated they have been using social networking sites rarely, which covered only 0-15% of their total recruitment activities. 7 surveyed recruiters have been using social networking sites more often which covered 45-

60% of their total recruitment activities. 6 respondents have been using social networking sites very often (60-85%) and a very small proportion of recruiters in this sample (3), rely heavily on the use of social networking sites (85-100%) when they are sourcing, searching and advertising live jobs.

4.6 Results- 6th Question: Frequency of use of Social Networking sites for different purposes

Table 4.6.1

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Semi-annually	Less than semi-annually	Never	Total	Average Rating
Updating Business Homepage	56.00% 28	18% 9	12% 6	2% 1	4% 2	8% 4	50	2.04
Jobs Postings	50.98% 26	47.06% 24	1.96% 1	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0	51	1.51
Searching Candidates	74% 37	20% 10	6% 3	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0	50	1.32
Backgrounds Checks	28.00% 14	28.00% 14	6% 3	10% 5	8% 4	20% 10	50	3.02

Table 4.6.1 indicates that the majority of respondents (56%) use social networking sites for updating their business homepage on a daily basis, 18% of respondents on a weekly basis, 12% on monthly basis, 4% less than semi-annually, 2% semi-annually. 8% of respondents have never used social networking sites for updating their business homepage. Social networking sites have shown to be used very frequently for the jobs postings purposes. 50.98% of recruiters use social networking sites for jobs postings on a daily basis and 47.06% on a weekly basis. Only 1 respondent has been using social networking sites for jobs postings purposes on a monthly basis. Almost three-quarters of recruiters use social networking sites daily for searching desirable candidates, 20% weekly and 6% monthly. 28% of respondents state they use social networking sites for background checks on a daily and weekly basis, 10% semi-annually and 8% less than semi-annually. Out of the total number of recruiters (51), 10 respondents (20%) have never used social networking sites for background checks.

4.7 Results- 7th Question: Types of Social Networking sites used for background checks

Table 4.7.1

Answer Choices	Responses	
LinkedIn	93.94%	31
Twitter	12.12%	4
Facebook	21.21%	7
Total Respondents: 33		

Figure 4.7.2
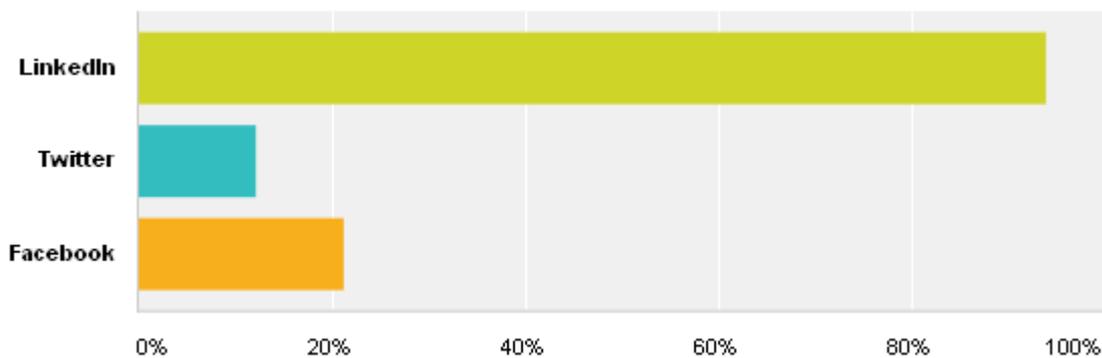
Out of all respondents (51), 18 stated they do not use social networking sites for background checks. More of them specified they do not use social networking sites because they are not relevant and reliable. 2 of them said they use call references instead of the use social networking sites. The figure 4.7.2 illustrates that from the total number of respondents who use social networking sites (33) for background checks, 93.94% of them use LinkedIn, 21.21% use Facebook and only 12.12% use Twitter.

4.8 Results- 8th Question: Types of Social Networking sites used for promoting the brand of the company they work for

Table 4.8.1

Answer Choices	Responses	
LinkedIn	95.92%	47
Twitter	53.06%	26
Facebook	55.10%	27
Total Respondents: 49		

Figure 4.8.2
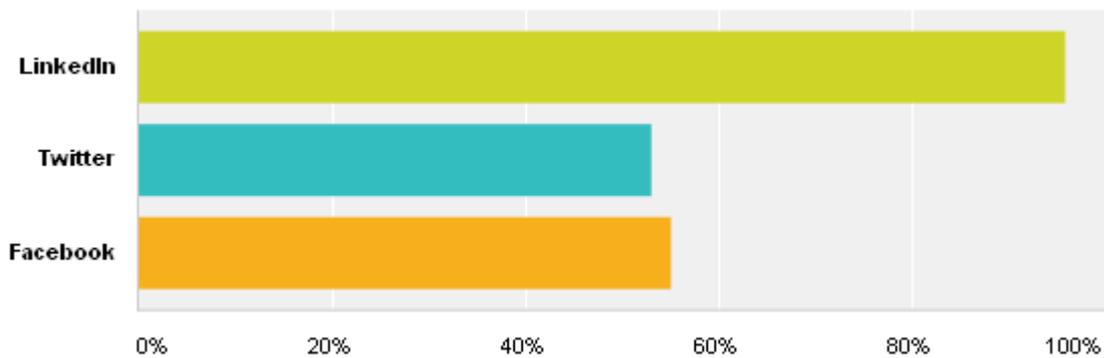
Out of all respondents (51), only 2 has been not using social networking sites for promoting the brand of the recruitment agency they work for. They stated they have not made a use of it yet but they plan to do it in the future. The figure 4.8.2 shows that out of the total number of respondents who use social networking sites (49) for the promoting brand of the company, 95.92% of them use LinkedIn. More than half of respondents stated they use Facebook (55.10%) and Twitter (53.06%) for the promoting the brand of the recruitment agency they work for.

4.9 Results- 9th Question: Types of Jobs Boards used in the recruitment process (searching/sourcing candidates and advertising life jobs)

Table 4.9.1

Answer Choices	Responses
Jobs.ie	62%
Irishjobs.ie	76%
Indeed.ie	40%
Fas.ie	18%
RecruitIreland.com	42%

Figure 4.9.2
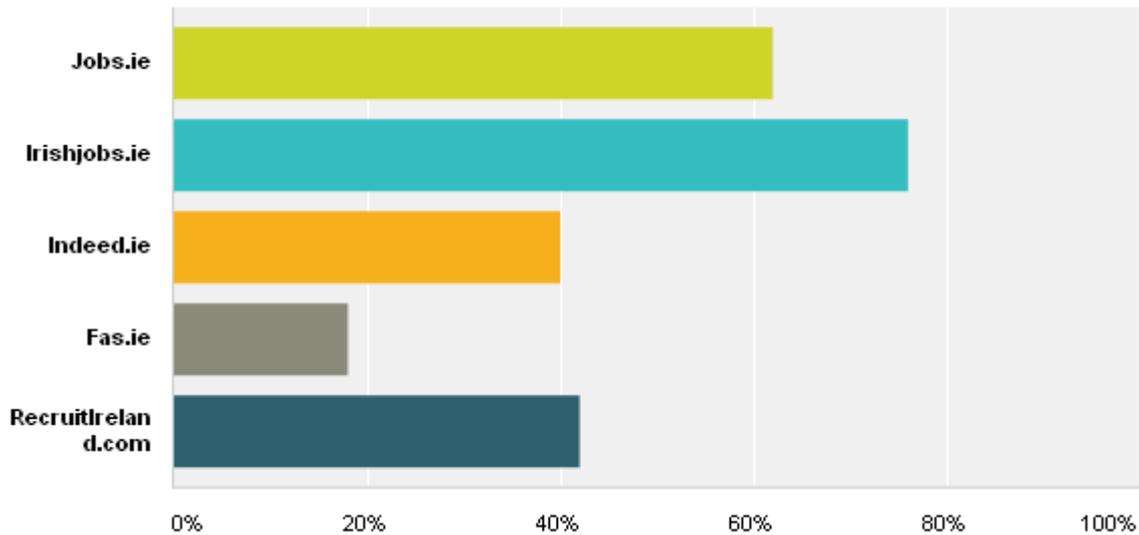
All recruiters in the sample use jobs boards in the recruitment process. The figure 4.9.2 illustrates that out of the total number of respondents (51), 76% use Irishjobs.ie when recruiting. The second most used jobs board among recruiters has shown to be Jobs.ie. 62% of respondents use Jobs.ie in the recruitment process. 42% of the sample use RecruitIreland.com and 40% Indeed.ie. The least favourable recruitment method among the jobs boards has shown to be Fas.ie. Only 18% of respondents use Fas.ie in the recruitment process. Apart from these types of jobs boards, many respondents stated they use Monster.ie in their recruitment activities. Out of all respondents (51), 24 (47.05%) use Monster.ie when recruiting. A small proportion of respondents in this sample use additional jobs boards in the recruitment process such as Computerjobs.ie, Toplanguage.ie, Simplyhired.ie, Reedglobal.ie, Jobserve.ie, Cpljobs.ie.

4.10 Results- 10th Question: The percentage of the use of Jobs Boards sites in all recruitment activities in total.

Table 4.10.1

Answer Choices	Responses	
0-15%	5.88%	3
15-30%	17.65%	9
30-45%	33.33%	17
45-60%	11.76%	6
60-85%	21.57%	11
85-100%	9.80%	5
Total		51

Figure 4.10.2
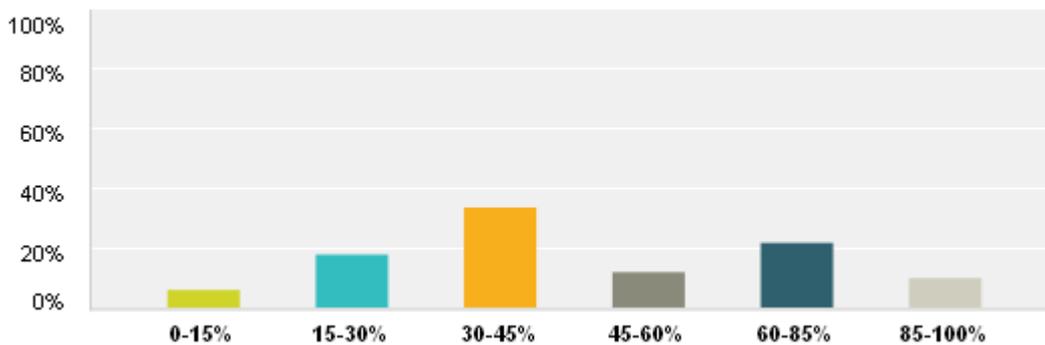
The figure 4.10.2 above illustrates the percentage and frequency of the use of jobs boards in a total recruitment activities (sourcing, searching candidates and advertising live jobs). Out of the total number of respondents (51), 17 of them stated, they have been using jobs boards which covered from 30% to 45% of their total recruitment activities. Another 11 of the surveyed recruiters have been using jobs boards very frequently which covered 60-85% of their total recruitment activities. For another 9 respondents the use of jobs boards covered from 15 to 30% of their total recruitment work. Another 6 surveyed recruiters have been using jobs boards frequently (45-60%) and 5 recruiters rely heavily on the use of jobs boards (85-100%) when they are sourcing, searching and advertising live jobs. Only 3 respondents said they have been using jobs boards very rarely (0-15%) in their work.

4.11 Results- 11th Question: Frequency of the use of Jobs Boards for different purposes

Table 4.11.1

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Semi-annually	Less than semi-annually	Never	Total	Average Rating
Updating Business Homepage	37.25% 19	29.41% 15	3.92% 2	3.92% 2	3.92% 2	21.57% 11	51	2.73
Jobs Postings	68.63% 35	31.37% 16	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0	51	1.31
Searching Candidates	72.55% 37	25.49% 13	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0	1.96% 1	51	1.35
Backgrounds Checks	21.57% 11	23.53% 12	11.76% 6	5.88% 3	5.88% 3	31.37% 16	51	3.45

The table 4.11.1 shows that jobs boards are very frequently used among recruiters for jobs postings activities and searching candidates. The majority of respondents (68.63%) use jobs boards for jobs postings on a daily basis. The rest of respondents (31.37%) use it on a weekly basis. Similarly, a big proportion of respondents (72.55%) use jobs boards for searching candidates on a daily basis, 25, 49% on a weekly basis and only 1,96% do not use it at all. Jobs Boards have shown as rarely used method when recruiters need to do background checks. Out of all respondents (51), 31.37% said they have never used it for background checks. 23, 53% of respondents use it for background checks on a weekly basis, 21.57% on a daily basis, 11,76% on a monthly basis. Jobs Boards are used among recruiters for updating their business homepage as well. Out of the total number of respondents (51%), 37.25% use it for updating business homepage on a daily basis and 29.41% on a weekly basis. 21.57% of respondents stated they have never use it for this purpose.

4.12 Results- 12th Question: The use of Social Networking sites is cheaper than Jobs Boards when it comes to jobs advertising, searching and screening the profiles of candidates.

Table 4.12.1

Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly disagree	3.92%	2
Disagree	17.65%	9
Neither agree or disagree	39.22%	20
Agree	33.33%	17
Strongly agree	5.88%	3
Total		51

Figure 4.12.2
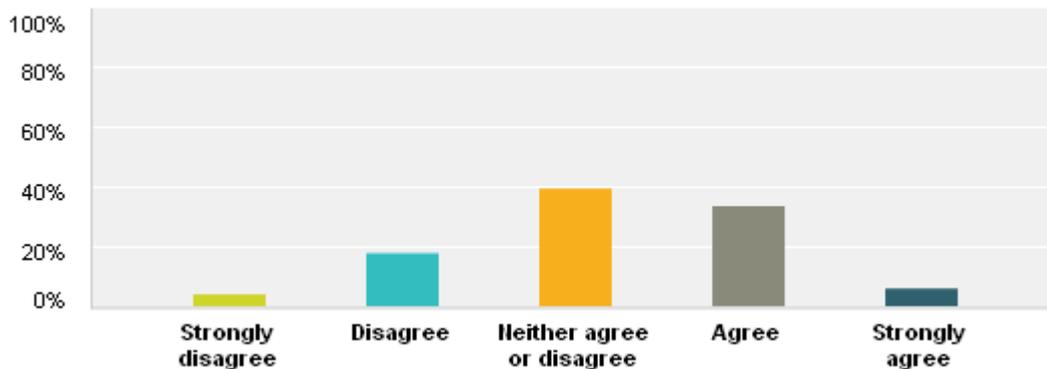
Clearly the opinion of the majority of the recruiters in this question is mixed. 39.22% of surveyed respondents have ambivalent opinions whether the use of social networking sites is cheaper than the use of jobs boards. The figure 4.12.2 above shows that 33.33% of respondents agreed and 5.88% strongly agreed that social networking sites are more affordable than jobs boards. In contrast, 17.65% of recruiters disagreed and 3.92% strongly disagreed with this statement.

4.13 Results- 13th Question: The use of Social Networking site LinkedIn is cheaper than the use of other Irish Jobs Boards

Table 4.13.1

Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Disagree	7.84%	4
Disagree	19.61%	10
Neither agree or disagree	29.41%	15
Agree	33.33%	17
Strongly agree	9.80%	5
Total		51

Figure 4.13.2
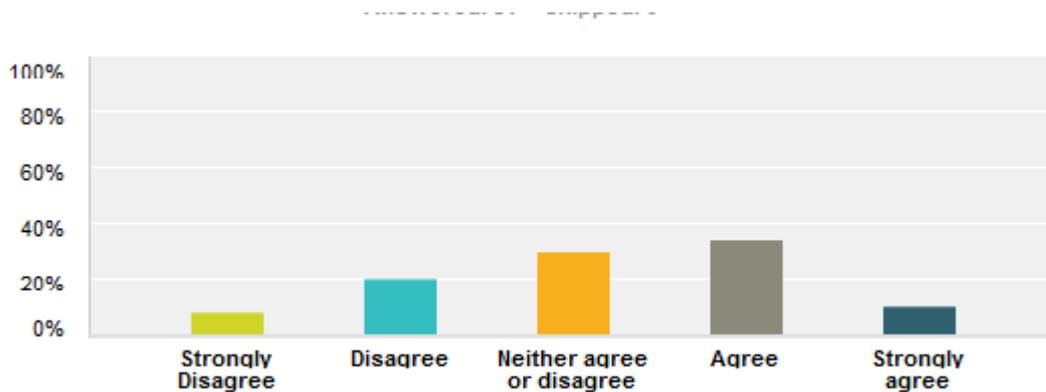
The result of this question revealed that 33.33% of respondents agreed and 9.80% strongly agreed that the social networking site LinkedIn is cheaper than other jobs boards. However, 29.41% of surveyed respondents were uncertain whether LinkedIn is more cost-effective in comparison with jobs boards. 19.61% disagreed and 7.84% strongly disagreed with this statement.

4.14 Results- 14th Question: The use of Social Networking site Facebook does not incur any costs when it comes to jobs advertising, searching/screening profiles of candidates.

Table 4.14.1

Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly disagree	17.65%	9
Disagree	33.33%	17
Neither agree or disagree	13.73%	7
Agree	31.37%	16
Strongly agree	3.92%	2
Total		51

Figure 4.14.2
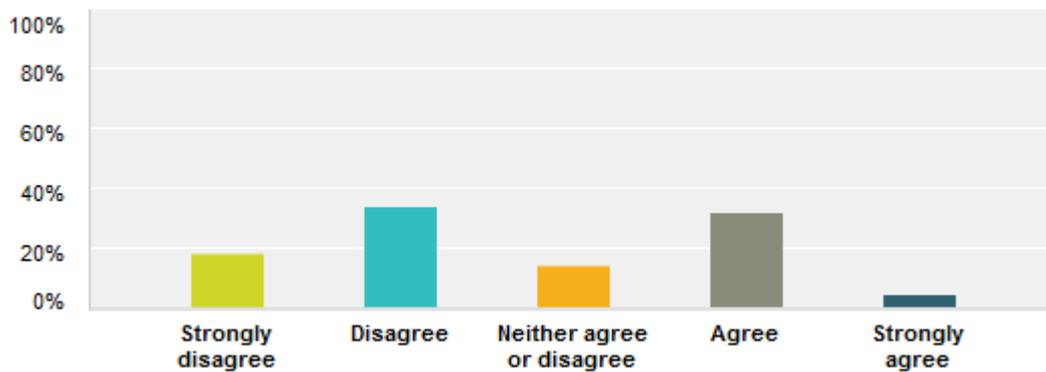
The figure 4.14.2 shows that about half of recruiters in this survey disagree (33.33%) and strongly disagree (17.65%) that the use of Facebook is free when it comes to jobs advertising, searching/screening profiles of candidates. However, some of respondents agreed (31.37%) and strongly agreed (3.92%) with this statement. 13.73% of respondents were uncertain whether the recruitment agency they work for has to spend any costs for the use of Facebook in recruitment process.

4.15 Results- 15th Question: Candidates' reactions to jobs advertisements are faster through the use of Social Networking sites than Jobs Boards

Table 4.15.1

Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly disagree	5.88%	3
Disagree	39.22%	20
Neither agree or disagree	39.22%	20
Agree	13.73%	7
Strongly agree	1.96%	1
Total		51

Figure 4.15.2
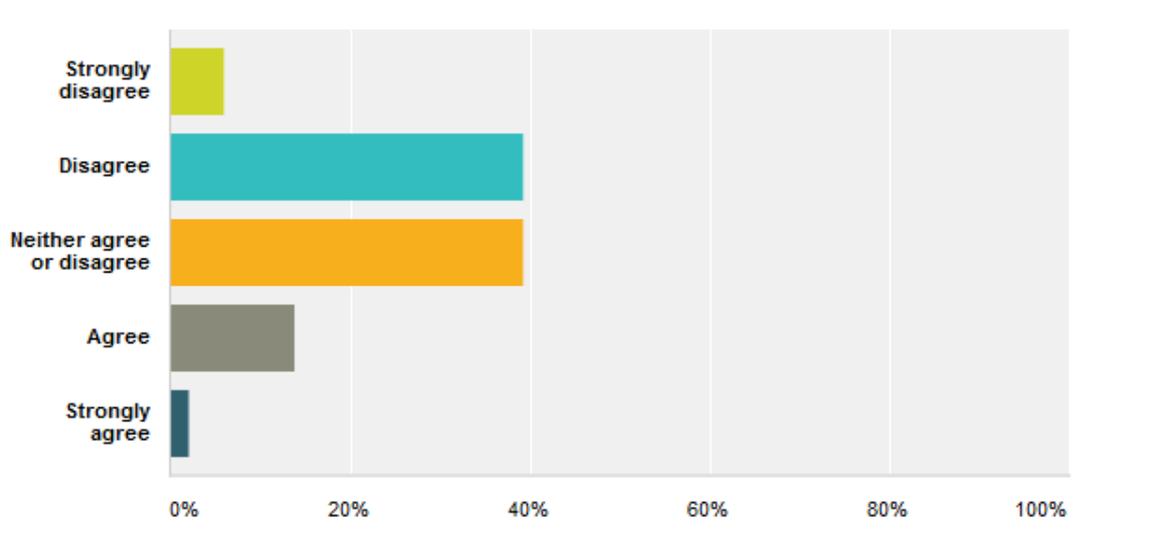
The view of the majority respondents in this question is not clear. The same proportion of respondents disagreed (39.22%) and neither agreed or disagreed (39.22%) that candidates' reactions to jobs advertisement are faster through the use of social networking sites than through jobs boards. 13.73% of respondents agreed, 1.96% strongly agreed and only 5.88% strongly disagreed with this statement.

4.16 Results- 16th Question: The percentage of the total recruitment time spent for shortlisting of applicants résumés when using Social Networking sites

Table 4.16.1

Answer Choices	Responses	
0-15%	35.29%	18
15-30%	41.18%	21
30-45%	7.84%	4
45-60%	5.88%	3
60-85%	9.80%	5
85-100%	0%	0
Total		51

Figure 4.16.2
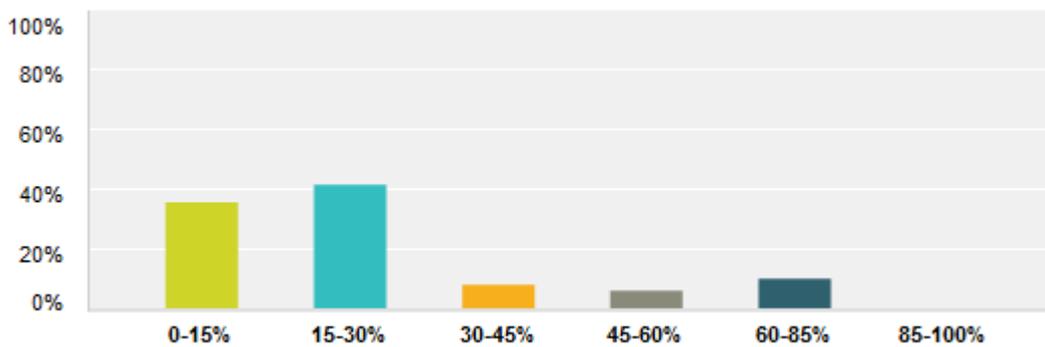
The table 4.16.1 illustrates the percentage of total recruitment time which recruiter spent usually for shortlisting of applicants résumés when using social networking sites. Out of all recruiters (51), 21 surveyed recruiters have spent from 15 to 30% of their total recruitment time for shortlisting of applicants résumés when using social networking sites. Another 18 surveyed respondents stated they have spent from 0-15% of their total recruitment time for this purpose. The results of this question revealed that most recruiters in this survey do not spend so much time for shortlisting the résumés of candidates when using social networking sites. Only 5 surveyed respondents stated that the use of social networking sites takes them from 60-85% of their total recruitment time for shortlisting of applicants résumés.

4.17 Results- 17th Question: The percentage of the total recruitment time spent for shortlisting of applicants résumés when using Jobs Boards

Table 4.17.1

Answer Choices	Responses	
0-15%	5.88%	3
15-30%	23.53%	12
30-45%	39.22%	20
45-60%	21.57%	11
60-85%	9.80%	5
85-100%	0%	0
Total		51

Figure 4.17.2
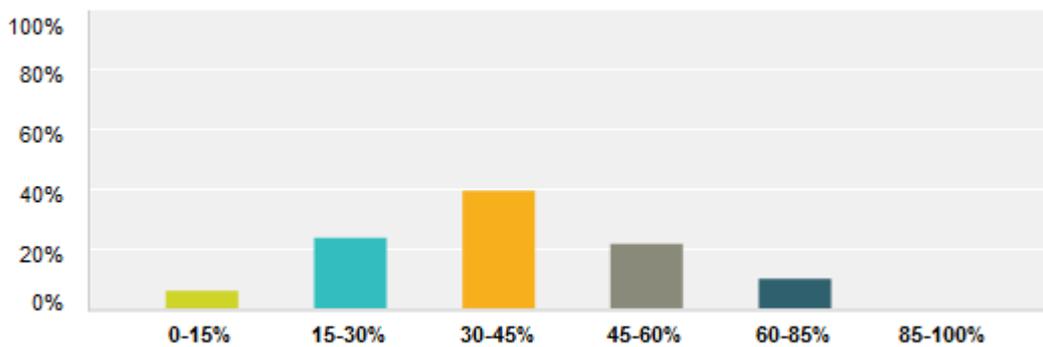
The table 4.17.1 shows the percentage of total recruitment time which a recruiter spent usually for shortlisting of applicants résumés when using jobs boards. Out of all recruiters (51), 20 have spent from 30 to 45% of their total recruitment time for shortlisting of applicants résumés when using jobs boards. 12 surveyed respondents stated they have spent from 15 to 30% and another 11 respondents from 45 to 60% of their total recruitment time for this purpose. 5 surveyed respondents agreed that the use of jobs boards has taken from 60 to 85% of their total recruitment time for shortlisting of applicants' résumés. The results of this question shows that recruiters spent more time for the shortlisting of applicants' résumés when using jobs boards in comparison with social networking sites.

4.18 Results- 18th Question: The use of Social Networking sites attracts better qualified candidates than the use of Jobs Boards

Table 4.18.1

Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly disagree	0%	0
Disagree	29.41%	15
Neither agree or disagree	43.14%	22
Agree	21.57%	11
Strongly agree	5.88%	3
Total		51

Figure 4.18.2
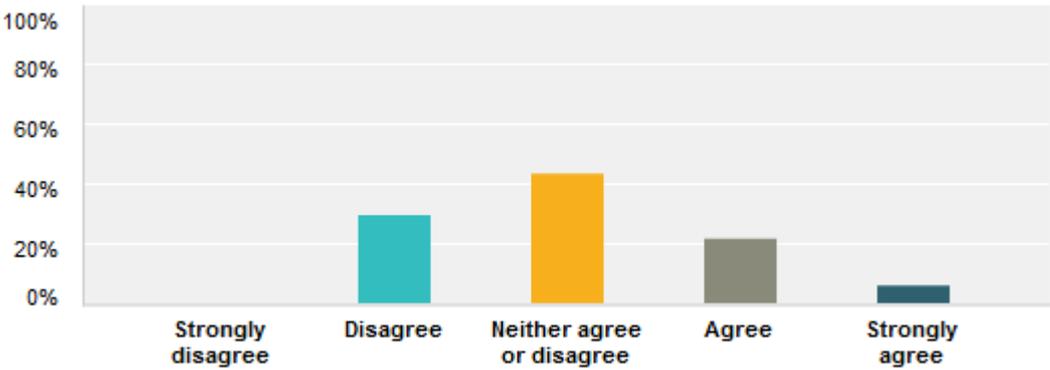
Respondents in this question were asked whether they consider the use of social networking sites as a better recruitment tool than jobs boards for attracting qualified candidates. Clearly the opinion of the majority of the respondents in this question is mixed. A large proportion of respondents (43.14%) are not sure whether the use of social networking sites or jobs boards attracts better qualified candidates. 29.41% of surveyed recruiters do not perceive social networking sites as a more helpful tool than jobs boards for attracting better qualified candidates. In contrast, 21.57% of respondents agreed and 5.88% strongly agreed with this statement.

4.19 Results- 19th Question: The use of Social Networking sites attracts more diverse candidates than the use of Jobs Boards

Table 4.19.1

Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly disagree	0%	0
Disagree	19.61%	10
Neither agree or disagree	47.06%	24
Agree	33.33%	17
Strongly agree	0%	0
Total		51

Figure 4.19.2
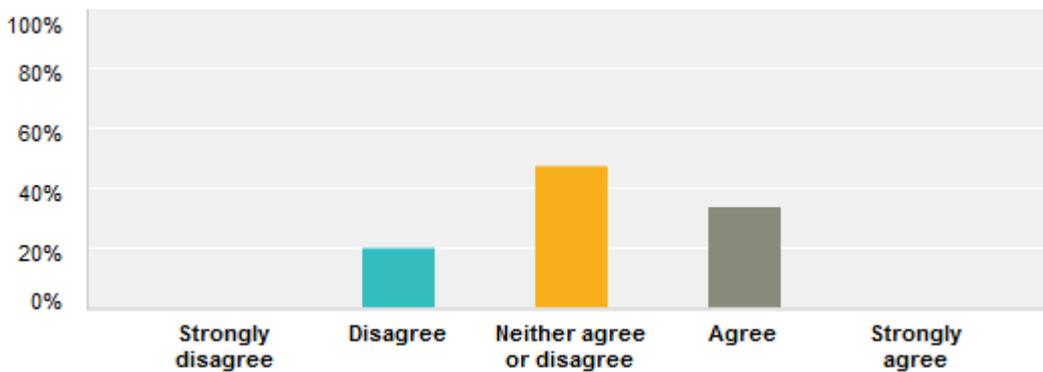
From the table 4.19.1 it is clear that almost half of the surveyed recruiters (47.06%) have ambivalent opinions whether the use of social networking sites attracts more diverse candidates than the use of jobs boards. Out of a total number of respondents (51), 17 agreed that more diverse candidates are easier to attract through the use of social networking sites than jobs boards. In contrast, 10 surveyed recruiters disagreed with this statement.

4.20 Results- 20th Question: Types of Social Networking sites used for reaching passive candidates

Table 4.20.1

Answer Choices	Responses	
LinkedIn	100%	51
Twitter	21.57%	11
Facebook	15.69%	8
Total Respondents: 51		

Figure 4.20.2
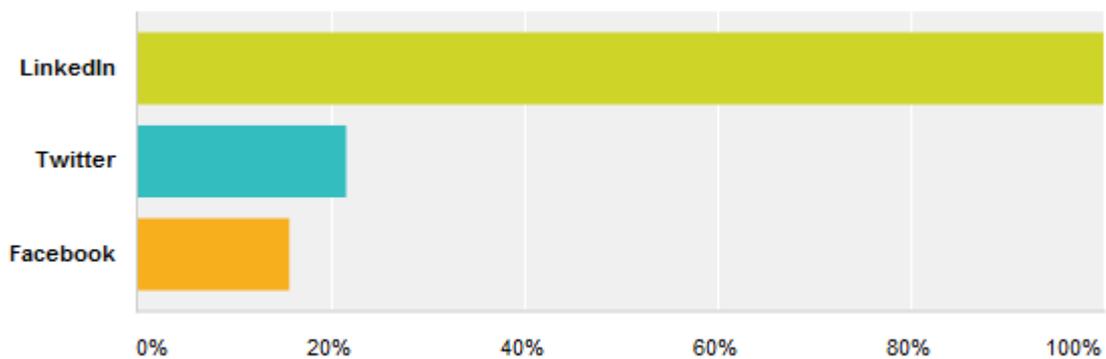
The social networking site LinkedIn has shown to be perceived by all recruiters as a very helpful and useful tool when reaching passive candidates in this research. The proof of this is that all surveyed recruiters (51) have been using LinkedIn for reaching passive candidates. Surveyed recruiters have been using besides LinkedIn, other social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter for the same purpose as well. From the table 4.20.1 it is clear that 21.57% of surveyed recruiters have been using Twitter and a lesser proportion of respondents (15.69%) have been using Facebook for reaching passive candidates.

4.21 Results- 21st Question: The use of Social Networking sites offers more detailed and useful information about job candidates than the use of Jobs Boards

Table 4.21.1

Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly disagree	1.96%	1
Disagree	13.73%	7
Neither agree nor disagree	35.29%	18
Agree	41.18%	21
Strongly agree	7.84%	4
Total		51

Figure 4.21.2
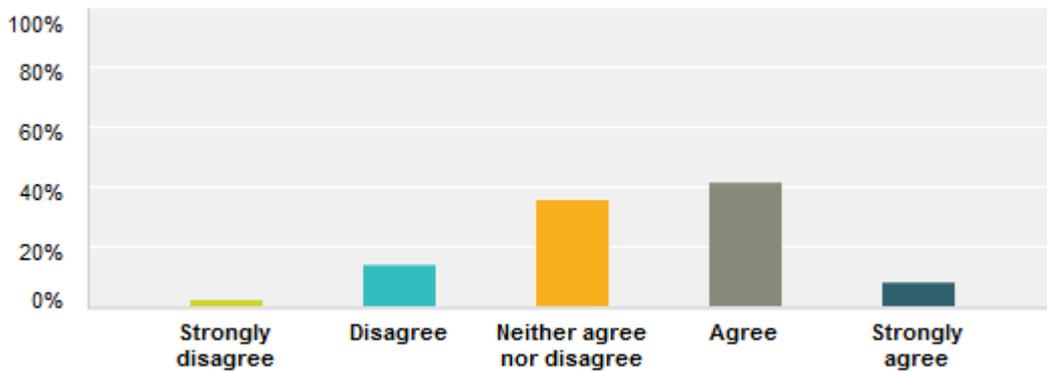
The table 4.21.1 illustrates that out of all respondents (51), 21 agreed and 4 strongly agreed that the use of social networking sites offers more detailed and useful information about job candidates. 18 respondents hesitated whether the use of social networking sites or jobs boards provides these kind of information about job applicants. Only 7 respondents disagreed and 1 strongly disagreed with this statement.

4.22 Results- 22nd Question: Different discussions within Social Networking sites help to learn a lot about job candidates

Table 4.22.1

Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly disagree	0%	0
Disagree	9.80%	5
Neither agree nor disagree	35.29%	18
Agree	50.98%	26
Strongly agree	3.92%	2
Total		51

Figure 4.22.2
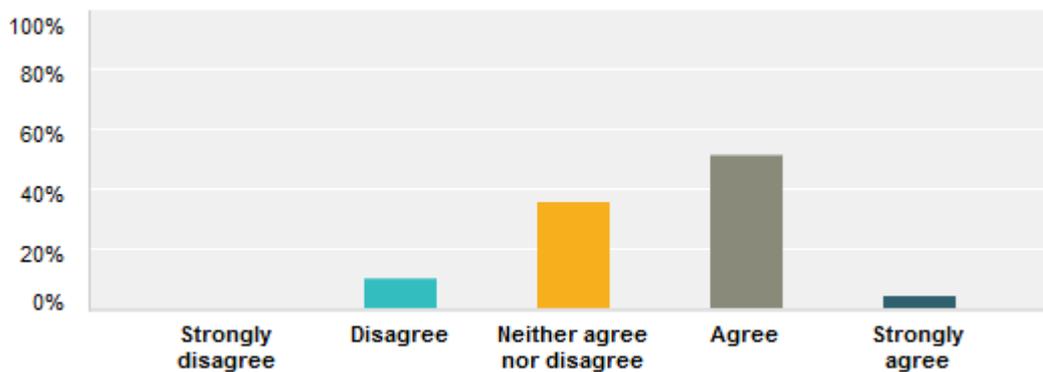
It is apparent from the figure 4.22.2 that more than half of the surveyed recruiters (50.98%) agreed and 3,92% strongly agreed that social networking sites are very beneficial when recruiters need to learn more about job candidates. Out of all respondents (51), 18 neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement. Only 5 respondents did not consider discussions within social networking sites as helpful when recruiters need to study more about job applicants.

4.23 Results- 23rd Question: The extent of the agreement on the information quality about job applicants when using Social Networking sites

Table 4.23.1

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total	Average Rating
Can be trusted	4% 2	54% 27	26% 13	16% 8	0% 0	50	2.54
Includes all necessary information	1.96% 1	13.73% 7	31.37% 16	52.94% 27	0% 0	51	3.35
Is relevant to our recruitment	25.49% 13	50.98% 26	19.61% 10	3.92% 2	0% 0	51	2.02
Is up-to date for our work	8.33% 4	56.25% 27	25% 12	10.42% 5	0% 0	48	2.38
Is clear	5.88% 3	54.90% 28	33.33% 17	5.88% 3	0% 0	51	2.39

Out of all respondents (51), more than half (54%) believe that information on social networking sites can be trusted and about one quarter of respondents (26%) have maintained a neutral point of view to this statement. The table 4.23.1 shows that according to more than half of the respondents (52.94%), social networking sites do not include all necessary information about job applicants. 31.37% of surveyed respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this fact. Only 13.73% of respondents agreed and 1.96% strongly agreed with this statement. About three quarters of the respondents consider information about job applicants on social networking sites as relevant to their recruitment. 50.98% respondents agreed and 25.49% strongly agreed with this statement. 19.61% respondents have had a neutral opinion. More than half of the surveyed recruiters (56.25%) agreed and 8.33% strongly agreed that information on social networking sites are up-to-date for their work. One quarter of respondents (25%) have maintained a neutral point of view to this statement. Again, more than half of the respondents (54.90%) agreed and 5.88% strongly agreed that information about job applicants on social networking sites are clear. 33.33% neither agreed nor disagreed with this fact.

4.24 Results- 24th Question: The extent of the agreement on the quality of applicants/applications when using Social Networking sites

Table 4.24.1

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total	Average Rating
Number of qualified applicants has increased	9.80% 5	49.02% 25	35.29% 18	5.88% 3	0% 0	51	2.37
Incoming applications are more structured	4% 2	34% 17	28.00% 14	32% 16	2% 1	50	2.94
Incoming applications have a high-quality	5.88% 3	33.33% 17	33.33% 17	25.49% 13	1.96% 1	51	2.84
Incoming applications are more readable	2% 1	20% 10	58.00% 29	20% 10	0% 0	50	2.96

The results in the table 4.24.1 reveal that about half of the respondents (49.02%) agreed and 9.80% strongly agreed that the number of qualified applicants has increased thanks to the use of social networking sites. 35.29% of respondents did not agree or disagree with this statement and only 5.88% disagreed with this statement. According to 34% of respondents, incoming applications through the use of social networking sites are more structured. 4% of surveyed recruiters strongly agreed, 32% disagreed and 28% neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement. From the table 4.24.1 it is clear that the same proportion of respondents agreed (33.33%) and also had a neutral opinion (33.33%) whether incoming applications are high of quality thanks to the use of social networking sites. 25.49% disagreed and 1.96% strongly disagreed with this fact. More than half of the respondents (58%) neither agreed nor disagreed whether incoming applications are more readable thanks to the use of social networking sites. The same proportion of respondents agreed (20%) and disagreed (20%) with this statement.

4.25 Results- 25th Question: The extent of the agreement on the diversity of applicants when using Social Networking sites

Table 4.25.1

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total	Average Rating
Amount of applicants with different backgrounds has increased	36% 18	50% 25	10% 5	4% 2	0% 0	50	1.82
Total amount of national applicants has increased	11.76% 6	50.98% 26	23.53% 12	13.73% 7	0% 0	51	2.39
Total amount of regional applicants has increased	9.80% 5	45.10% 23	29.41% 15	15.69% 8	0% 0	51	2.51
Amount of applicants from other parts of Ireland has increased	1.96% 1	49.02% 25	25.49% 13	23.53% 12	0% 0	51	2.71

From the table 4.25.1 it is obvious that half of the surveyed recruiters (50%) agreed and 36% strongly agreed that the amount of applicants with different backgrounds has increased thanks to the use of social networking sites. 10% have maintained a neutral opinion and only 4% disagreed with this statement. Out of all respondents (51), 26 agreed and 6 strongly agreed that the total amount of national applicants has increased thanks to the use of social networking sites. 12 surveyed recruiters neither agreed nor disagreed and only 7 respondents disagreed with this fact. According to 28 surveyed recruiters, the total number of regional applicants has increased through the use of social networking sites. Out of all respondents (51), 23 agreed and 5 strongly agreed with this statement. 15 surveyed recruiters have maintained a neutral point of view and only 8 disagreed with this fact. Similarly, about half of respondents agreed (25) and 1 strongly agreed that the amount of applicants from other parts of Ireland has increased through the use of social networking sites. Out of all respondents

(51), 13 neither agreed or disagreed and 12 disagreed with this statement.

DISCUSSION

Chapter 5: Discussion

This chapter focuses on an interpretation of the main research findings. Key findings in relation to the research objectives will now be discussed.

5.1 The length of time of recruiter's experience within recruitment industry

From the findings in this study it is clear that more than half of the employees work less than 4 years in the recruitment industry. This could be explained by the fact that employers attempt to employ young people because they may bring many benefits for their business in the future. Many employers do a long-term investment in their workforce. For example, they provide full training for them. Young workforce has the potential to bring new qualities into a business. Employers do realise that young people may be highly-motivated. Many of graduates are willing to learn and they are not held back with their previous experience and ways of doing things. They are usually cheaper labour in comparision with experienced recruiters which is very beneficial for recruitment agencies. In addition, less experienced workforce tend to be more flexible in terms of working hours, they are willing to work more hours and also they are willing to move and work in different locations of Ireland.

About 35% of recruiters in this research have worked in the recruitment industry more than 9 years. The presence of experienced staff is important in business because they may train and teach new recruiters to do their job and to perform well. Furthermore, thanks to their experience there is a lower risk that they will make mistakes when recruiting. This is beneficial for recruitment agencies. Many years of experience have given them an opportunity to learn from their own mistakes, develop all knowledge and skills that are required for the job. However, there were only two recruiters who have worked more than 16 years in recruitment industry. One of the reasons could be that highly experienced recruiters usually leave recruitment agencies and they move forward with their career and seek for new job opportunities for instance in the field of HR Management.

5.2 The use of Social Networking sites and Jobs Boards in Irish recruitment agencies

The results of this research have revealed that all recruiters working within Irish recruitment agencies use social networking sites in the recruitment process. It agrees with Kurt Ronn (cited in Hutson, 2008) who stated that the use of social networking sites has gone from non-

existent to essential. The use of social networking sites has widespread very fast in Ireland and recruiters rely on its use nowadays. The most used and popular social networking sites among recruiters working in Irish recruitment agencies is LinkedIn. Every recruiter except of 1 has been using LinkedIn as a recruitment tool. This is not surprising as LinkedIn is an online recruitment professional network site which offers a complete portfolio of recruiting solutions to recruiters. A much smaller number of recruiters have been using Facebook (27.45%) and Twitter (21.57%) as a recruitment tool in comparison with LinkedIn. This may be due to the fact that Twitter and Facebook are more socially than business oriented and they do not offer these kind of services as LinkedIn does for recruiters. Therefore, a majority of recruiters (90%) working in Irish recruitment agencies prefer to use business-oriented networking sites such as LinkedIn more than social oriented networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter.

Similarly, all recruiters working in Irish recruitment agencies use jobs boards in recruiting process. The results in this research show that the most used and popular jobs board is Irishjobs.ie (76%), followed by Jobs.ie (62%) and Monster.ie (47.05%). These results contradict with the results of Fawcett (2011) according to whom the first most popular Job Board site among Irish people is Jobs.ie (74th spot), followed by Fas.ie (101st spot) and Irishjobs.ie (117th). However, Fawcett's results apply to the entire Irish poulation and not just to the recruitment sector.

When we compare the percentage and the frequency of the usage of social networking sites and jobs boards in all recruitment activities (sourcing/searching candidates and advertising live jobs), it is clear from the survey that jobs boards are more used by recruiters in Irish recruitment agencies than social networking sites. The majority of surveyed recruiters (39) stated, they have been using jobs boards in recruitment process which covered more than 30% of their total recruitment activities. However, only 26 surveyed recruiters have been using social networking sites that covered more than 30% of their total recruitment work. The results of the survey are inconsistent with Frauenheim's conception (2009) who stated that many companies are eschewing general-purpose jobs boards and turning instead to social networking sites. From the results in this research, it is clear that social networking sites did not replace the use of jobs boards within Irish recruitment agencies. Jobs Boards are still an essential part of every recruitment activity and recruiters within Irish recruitment agencies rely heavily on its use.

Both social networking sites and jobs boards have shown to be very frequently used by recruiters for jobs postings and searching candidates. The majority of surveyed respondents use both methods on a daily and weekly basis for these purposes. When we compare the use of both recruitment tools, jobs boards have shown to be more frequently used by recruiters for jobs postings (68.63% on a daily basis) and social networking sites for searching candidates (74% on a daily basis). Social networking sites (56%) have been more frequently used by surveyed recruiters than jobs boards (37.25%) for updating their business homepage. Both recruitment tools have been used by respondents rarely for background checks. Recruiters in the sample preferred to use social networking sites (28% on a daily basis) more than jobs boards (21.57% on a daily basis) for this purpose.

Out of all respondents (51) only 33 have been using social networking sites for background checks. The majority of recruiters (93.94%) have been using LinkedIn for this purpose. Only small proportion of respondents have been using other types of social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter. These results are similar to a survey which was conducted by Vault.com (2007, cited in Oleniczak, Pike, Mishra J. and Mishra B.,2010) where it was found that 44 percent of employers use social networking sites to examine the profiles of job candidates. However, a significant part of the sample (18) do not use social networking sites for background checks. They considered social networking sites as not reliable and many of them stated they are not relevant. One of the respondent said that she does not perceive personal information on social-oriented networking sites such as Twitter and Facebook as related information to the candidates' job abilities, skills and knowledge. Thus, some recruiters do realize they should check up and require only information that are related to the jobs positions. Although, on LinkedIn, unlike Facebook and Twitter, candidates create their business' profiles and they share jobs related information. For this reason, it was surprising for the researcher that only 31 recruiters have been using LinkedIn for background checks.

LinkedIn has shown to be the most used social networking site for the promoting brand of the company as well. Out of all respondents (51), 47 have been using it for this purpose. More than half of respondents have been using Twitter (26) and Facebook (27) for promoting the image of the recruitment agency they work for. This response does not agree with Hunt (2010) according to whom Facebook and Twitter tools focus on employer branding and LinkedIn on finding candidates and networking online. According to this point of view, it

was assumed that recruitment agencies will use mainly Facebook and Twitter for promoting the brand of the company.

5.3 Cost-effectiveness and time spent on recruiting through Social Networking sites and Jobs Boards in Irish recruitment agencies

According to the literature review the costs related to the use of social networking sites are cheaper than the use of jobs boards. The results in this research illustrates that many of the surveyed recruiters (39.22%) have an ambivalent opinion to this statement. Confusion among recruiters could be caused by the employees' unawareness of costs associated with the use of social networking sites and jobs boards. The majority of respondents were employees of recruitment agencies who said that they do not have access to this kind of information. However, there were respondents as well who clearly expressed their opinions to this statement. 20 recruiters considered social networking sites as cheaper compared to jobs boards. On the other hand, 11 did not agree with this statement. In the next question, respondents were asked about the price comparison between the social networking site LinkedIn and jobs boards. Most of the recruiters surveyed agreed that LinkedIn is more affordable than using jobs boards. Responses are consistent with Shawbel (2010) who found in his comparison research that traditional jobs boards are much more expensive than alternatives such as LinkedIn. However, there were more surveyed recruiters (15) who were uncertain about this issue as well. In the following question, recruiters were asked about costs associated with the use of Facebook. More than half of the recruiters (26) did not feel that costs for the use of Facebook are free when it comes to jobs advertising, searching/screening profiles of candidates. Apparently, some recruitment agencies do pay for the use of Facebook. On the other hand, many of the other recruiters (18) were convinced that the use of Facebook is free. As it can be seen, responses of recuiters vary to a large extent. There can be more reasons for that. Every recruitment agency chooses different types of jobs boards with a wide range of prices. Every jobs board offers unique packages and services. The same applies to the use of social networking sites. Recruitment agencies can pay extra fees for services and packages that LinkedIn and other social networking sites offer. It is up to the recruitment agencies to which extent they will use and pay for services on social networking sites and jobs boards.

Most of the recruiters surveyed (23) believed that the reactions of candidates to jobs advertisement are faster through the use of jobs boards than social networking sites. Many

recruiters (20) have a neutral opinion to this statement. One of the reasons why candidates react faster through jobs boards could be that active jobs seekers visit jobs websites with the main purpose to look for a new job opportunity. Thus, when jobs seekers see a job advertisement on a jobs board website, they react very fast and they send their résumés. Many members visit social networking sites, especially Facebook and Twitter, for other purposes as well such as social interaction with friends and family and sharing information, pictures with them etc.

Findings point out that recruitment agencies do not spend much (less than 30 %) of their total recruitment time for the shortlisting of applicants' résumés when using social networking sites. In contrast, most of the recruiters surveyed (36) have spent more than 30% of their total recruitment time when using jobs boards. Although, through the use of jobs boards recruiters are able to obtain many résumés in a very short period of time thanks to the fast reactions of candidates, trolling through the résumés takes them more time in comparison with social networking sites. These results agree with Paul Whitney's experience who stated that the shortlisting of applicants' résumés from major jobs boards took him about 25 % of his recruiter's time. Shortlisting of applicants is time-consuming because recruiters usually receive a high volume of unqualified candidates as well besides qualified candidates. This can complicate the work of recruiters.

5.4 Types of information obtained through the use of Social Networking sites and Jobs Boards in Irish recruitment agencies

More than half of the recruiters in this research:
1. believe that social networking sites offer more detailed and useful information about jobs candidates in comparison to jobs boards
2. believe that different discussions within social networking sites help recruiters to learn more about jobs candidates
3. trust information on social networking sites
4. consider that information on social networking sites are relevant to their recruitment
5. think that information on social networking sites are clear.

However the majority of recuiters (27) did not agree that social networking sites include all necessary information about jobs candidates. Therefore, they use other recruitment tools such

as jobs boards for obtaining all necessary information about job applicants. According to results of this survey it is clear that some information on social networking sites are beneficial for recruiters working within Irish recruitment agencies. Thanks to the use of social networking sites, recruiters have access to information which is perceived by them as clear, trustful, reliable and helpful for many recruitment activities.

5.5 Types of candidates sourced through the use of Social Networking sites and Jobs Boards in Irish recruitment agencies

Recruiters are eager to seek for passive candidates. It is because passive workers are considered to be well-qualified, stable workers (DeKay, 2009, cited in Davison, Maraist and Bing, 2011). In this research, LinkedIn has shown to be the most used social networking site among recruiters for reaching passive candidates. The proof of this is that all recruiters surveyed (51) have been using it for this purpose. This outcome is aligned with the conception of more authors (Raghavendra, 2011, cited in Shikari, 2011, p.31; Vega, cited in Grensing-Pophal, 2012, p. 27; Guericke, cited in Berkshire, 2005, p.96) who stated that many recruiters and hiring managers consider LinkedIn as a very helpful tool for reaching passive candidates. According to Adler (2011) there are 83% of fully-employed members on LinkedIn who are not actively looking for a job (passive candidates) and only 17% who are actively looking. It means that the majority of LinkedIn members are passive workers. Thanks to LinkedIn many recruiters have the opportunity to gain access and choose from a large pool of passive workers. Much smaller number of recruiters have been using Twitter (11) and Facebook (8) for reaching passive candidates.

Whether social networking sites attract better qualified candidates than jobs boards is not clear to many recruiters. Almost half of recruiters (22) have ambivalent opinions to this statement. However, the majority of recruiters (30) believed that the number of qualified applicants has increased thanks to the use of social networking sites. Ambiguous responses were obtained in the next question, where recruiters were asked whether social networking sites attracts more diverse candidates than jobs boards. About half of the respondents (24) had mixed opinions to this statement.

On the other hand, the majority of the recruiters surveyed in this research believed:
1. that the amount of applicants with different backgrounds has increased thanks to the use of social networking sites

2. that the total amount of national applicants has increased thanks to the use of social networking sites

3. that the total amount of regional applicants has increased thanks to the use of social networking sites.

More than half of the recruiters (26) agreed that the amount of applicants from other parts of Ireland has increased thanks to use of social networking sites.

As it can be seen from the results of the data findings above, the majority of recruiters have had a positive experience with the use of social networking sites as it increased the number of regional, national applicants, from other parts of Ireland and applicants with different backgrounds. Thanks to the use of social networking sites recruiters are able to reach candidates who would be otherwise hard to reach. This is a big advantage for recruiters because they have a chance to gain access to a large number of potential employees from which they can choose the most qualified and talented candidates.

CONCLUSIONS

Chapter 6: Conclusions

6.1 Conclusions

In order to achieve the goal of this research, firstly, a critical literature review was carried out. Secondly, the primary research was implemented using the form of a questionnaire. Responses from recruiters who have been working in Irish recruitment agencies were collected and analysed. Three main objectives were investigated in this research.

The first aim was to examine to what extent recruiters make use of social networking sites and jobs boards in recruitment process nowadays. After the analysis and discussion of the results of the primary research, the researcher can declare that recruiters working in Irish recruitment agencies use both methods: social networking sites and jobs boards to a large extent. The most favourable and used jobs board among recruiters was Irishjobs.ie and LinkedIn was the most popular social networking site. The results show that overall recruiters use more jobs boards than social networking sites in total recruitment activities nowadays. Further data results of this research point out that social networking sites are a more preferable tool for recruiters in certain aspects. For instance, recruiters use social networking sites more than jobs boards for searching candidates, updating business homepage and background checks purposes.

The second objective of this research was to investigate which of the recruitment methods (social networking sites and jobs boards) are more cost and time effective for recruitment agencies in Ireland. The results of data findings overall illustrates that the majority of recruiters are not certain whether the use of social networking sites or jobs boards is more beneficial for the recruitment agency they work for when it comes to costs. However, most of the recruiters agreed that LinkedIn is cheaper than the use of other jobs boards. In addition, results point out that recruitment agencies have to pay for the use of Facebook services as well as for the other social networking sites and jobs boards.

Candidates' reactions to jobs advertisements/postings have shown to be faster through the use of jobs boards than social networking sites. On the other hand, social networking sites have proven to be more time saving when it comes to shortlisting of applicants' résumés in

comparison to jobs boards. Recruiters usually spend much less of their total recruitment time on social networking sites for this purpose.

The third and final purpose of this research was to examine which of the recruitment tools (social networking site and jobs boards) offers more quality information about jobs applicants and attracts more qualified and diverse candidates. After having analysed the data results, the researcher can generalize that recruiters consider information about candidates on social networking sites as more detailed and useful in comparison to the information on jobs boards. Furthermore, recruiters consider information about candidates on social networking sites as trustful, clear and relevant to their recruitment. About half of the recruiters believed that discussions within social networking sites help them to learn a lot about candidates. However, recruiters did not agree that social networking sites include all necessary information about job applicants. Therefore, recruitment activities require the use of other methods such as jobs boards as well.

Which one of the recruitment method (social networking sites or jobs boards) attracts better qualified and diverse candidates has shown to be uncertain for the majority of recruiters working in Irish recruitment agencies. On the other hand, most of the recruiters surveyed believe that thanks to the use of social networking sites, the number of regional, national applicants and applicants with different backgrounds has inceased. It means that the figure of diverse candidates has risen since the use of social networking sites in recruitment process. Moreover, judging from the results of this research there is no doubt that LinkedIn is considered by all recruiters as the best tool for reaching passive candidates.

Apparently, the introduction of social networking sites has changed the total character of recruitment activities and has influenced the way how recruiters search, screen, attract and communicate with candidates. The introduction of social networking sites have made recruiters' work easier and faster. After having analysed data findings and discussed them, the researcher is able to answer the following research question: "Are social networking sites becoming more beneficial than jobs boards for recruiters in Ireland nowadays"? According to the results, the use of social networking sites is of a significant benefit for recruitment agencies nowadays. However it is still not clear whether its use is more beneficial than the use of jobs boards. The results in this research confirmed that existent and the use of both recruitment methods (social networking sites and jobs boards) is essential for daily activities

in Irish recruitment agencies. The replacament of one method by another would be not beneficial and a smart choice for recruiters. The results point out that the best approach seems to be a combination of both recruitment methods. Each method includes some advantages and disadvantages. For example, the use of social networking sites is more beneficial for recruiters when they want to obtain a higher number of diverse candidates. Irish jobs boards are a better choice for recruiters when they want to attract a high volume of national job applicants as candidates' reactions to jobs advertisements are faster through the use of jobs boards than the use of social networking sites. Or if recruiters need to look for passive candidates with the specific set of skills and knowledge, the use of social networking sites especially LinkedIn would be the best choice for them.

6.2 Limitations

Due to the exploratory nature of the study, obvious limitations exist, perhaps most notably that primary data represents the opinions and views of only 51 recruiters in total. The sample size is smaller than the researcher planned in the first place. Many recruiters refused to participate because they were preoccupied with their work or they were just not willing to fill in the questionnaire. As the sample size was smaller, some generalization issues could arise. The results are based on perceptions and experience of recruiters and there is no absolute guarantee that these results obtained in a study will occur in every situation outside of the study. Another limitation is that the use of social networking and jobs boards is a fast moving topic and it is changing continuously. New applications, services and packages on social networking sites and jobs boards are developing constantly. It means that this problem requires a long-term investigation. The next limitation is that not all recruiters surveyed have had access to information about any costs which their recruitment agency would usually spend for the use of social networking sites and jobs boards. Time was another limitation in this study. The time frame available to the researcher was an important factor when choosing her questionnaires. The researcher had a limited amount of time to complete the research.

However, overall the researcher is confident that primary empirical data collected in conjunction with secondary literature referred to, offer a valuable insight into contemporary issues within the field of Human Resource Management.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter 7: Recommendations

Although the recruitment methods and tools are evolving constantly nowadays, the total number of recruitment agencies has declined due to the global financial crisis. Many recruitment agencies were closed down in last few decades. The recruitment industry has to face the biggest challenge and find a way to maintain their existence and retain current clients. For these reasons, recruiters need to find recruitmet tools which will be the most cost and time effective. Both recruitment methods (social networking sites and jobs boards) have shown to be useful in a certain way. Based on the results, the researcher would recommend for recruitment agencies to combine and use both methods in their recruitment process.

The researcher recommends recruiters working in Irish recruitment agencies:

1. To use business-oriented networking sites (LinkedIn) rather than social-oriented networking sites (Facebook, Twitter) as LinkedIn has shown to be the most appropriate recruitment tool for all types of recruitment activities in this research.

2. To use social networking sites for updating the business homepage of the company. In this study, social networking sites have shown to be the tool which was more preferred and used for this purpose in comparison to jobs boards.

3. To use LinkedIn for background checks as information on LinkedIn is jobs and business-oriented. Information on social-oriented networking sites is mostly personal and not related to applicants' working skills, abilities and knowledge.

4. To use both methods (social networking sites and jobs boards) for jobs posting and searching of candidates as both tools have shown to be useful and frequently used by the majority of recruiters working in Irish recruitment agencies.

5. To use all social networking sites (LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter) for promoting the brand of the company as all types of social networking sites have shown to be helpful and frequently used by recruiters in this study.

6. To use LinkedIn for searching high qualified and passive candidates as LinkedIn is the most convenient tool for this purpose. The majority of members on LinkedIn are passive workers which gives recruiters a big opportunity to reach contact and choose from the huge pool of best qualified and high-skilled workers.

7. To use social networking sites (LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter) for seeking more diverse candidates as its use has increased the number of regional, national applicants and applicants with different backgrounds.

8. To use Irish jobs boards for obtaining high volume of national candidates. Thanks to the fast reactions of candidates on Irish jobs boards, recruiters may obtain a large number of national applications.

9. To use LinkedIn to learn more about candidates. Discussions within LinkedIn have shown to be helpful when recruiters wish to find out and study more about jobs applicants.

10. To use both methods to find out all necessary information about job applicants. It is necessary to use both methods as using only one method is not sufficient for finding out all information about candidates.

In the end, it is important to note that the whole recruitment process does not rely only on the use of online recruitment methods and technology. It is also recruiters' abilities and skills are that play an important role as well. Therefore, the researcher would recommend recruitment agencies to employ recruiters, who have ability to identify talent by technology and social media, who have communication, mediation and persuasive skills. The recruitment industry and its trends are changing continuously, therefore being a recruiter requires constant learning.

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APPENDICES

Cover Letter

Dear Participant

My name is Petra Andreanska and I am a graduate student at Dublin Business School. For my final project, I am examining whether the use of social networking sites is becoming more beneficial than jobs boards for recruiters working in Irish recruitment agencies nowadays.

This survey will investigate the use, time-effectiveness and actual time spent on recruiting through the use of Social Networking sites and Jobs Boards. In addition, you will be asked about the types of information and candidates you obtain through the usage of Social Networking sites and Jobs Boards. Because you are a recruiter working in an Irish recruitment agency, I am inviting you to participate in this research study by competing the attached survey.

The following questionnaire includes 25 questions and will require approximately 5 minutes to complete. There is no compensation for responding nor is there any known risk. In order to ensure that all information will remain confidential, please do not include your name. Copies of the project will be provided to the supervisor of the dissertation work and to Dublin Business School and Liverpool John Moore University. If you decide to participate in this project please answer all questions as honestly as possible. Please answer the question in the spaces provided. Try to complete the questions at a time when you are unlikely to be disturbed. Also, do not spend too long on any one question. Your first thought is usually your best! The questionnaire will be collected by me, the researcher, later on. Participation is voluntary and you may refuse to participate at any time.

Thank you for taking the time to assist me in my educational endeavors. I hope you find completing the questionnaire enjoyable. Completion and return of the questionnaire will indicate your willingness to participate in this study. If you require additional information, please contact me at the number listing below.

Sincerely,

Student's name: Petra Andreanska

Student's contact number and e-mail address : 086 0610687, petka.andreanska@gmail.com

Supervisor's name: Ann Masterson

Supervisor's e-mail: ann.masterson@dbs.ie

QUESTIONNAIRE

Examining the effectiveness of the usage of Social Networking Sites and Job Boards in Recruitment Agencies in Ireland (Survey).

Section A *(basic information)*

1.) What is the name of the recruitment agency you work for?

....

2.) How long do you work as a recruiter?

          ☐ 1-4 years

          ☐ 5-8 years

          ☐ 9-12 years

          ☐ 13-16 years

          ☐ More

Section B *(Questions related to the usage of social networking sites and jobs boards the in recruitment process)*

3.) Which of the following social networking sites/platforms do you use for searching/ sourcing candidates and advertising live jobs? (you can choose more than one option)

    ☐ LinkedIn

    ☐ Twitter

    ☐ Facebook

    ☐ Others (if others, please specify)

       ....

    ☐ None (can you explain why?)

       ....

4.) Which of the following social networking sites do you use the most? (Please choose only one answer)

    ☐ Business-oriented networking sites (LinkedIn)

    ☐ Social-oriented networking sites (Facebook, Twitter)

5.) What percentage of your <u>total recruitment activities</u> *(Sourcing/ searching candidates and advertising live jobs)* are being covered by using social networking sites?

(Please choose only one answer)

- ☐ 0-15%
- ☐ 15-30%
- ☐ 30-45%
- ☐ 45-60%
- ☐ 60-85%
- ☐ 85-100%

6.) How often do you use Social Networking sites? (Please choose only one option in each row)

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Semi-annually	Less than semi-annually	Never
Updating business homepage	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Jobs Postings	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Searching candidates	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Backgrounds checks	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

7.) Which of the following social networking sites do you use for backgrounds checks ? (You can chose more than one option)

- ☐ LinkedIn
- ☐ Twitter
- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ Others (if others, please specify)...

☐ None (can you explain why?)

....

8.) Which of the following social networking sites do you use for promoting the brand of your company? (You can chose more than one option)

☐ LinkedIn

☐ Twitter

☐ Facebook

☐ Others (if others, please specify)..

☐ None (can you explain why?)

....

9.) Which of the following jobs boards do you use for recruitment activities *(Sourcing/ searching candidates and advertising live jobs)?* (You can chose more than one option)

☐ Jobs.ie

☐ Irishjobs.ie

☐ Indeed.ie

☐ Fas.ie

☐ RecruitIreland.com

☐ Others (if others please specify) ....

☐ None (can you explain why?) ....

10.) What percentage of your <u>total recruitment activities</u> *(Sourcing/ searching candidates and advertising live jobs)* are being covered by using jobs boards? (please choose only one answer)

☐ 0-15%

☐ 15-30%

☐ 30-45%

☐ 45-60%

☐ 60-85%

☐ 85-100%

11.) How often do you use jobs boards? (please choose only one answer in each row)

	daily	weekly	monthly	semi-annually	less than semi-annually	never
Updating business homepage	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Jobs Postings	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Searching candidates	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Backgrounds checks	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section C

(Questions related to the cost-effectiveness and time spent on recruiting through social networking sites and jobs boards)

12.) I consider the use of social networking sites cheaper or more affordable than jobs boards when it comes to jobs advertising, searching and screening the profiles of candidates. (Please choose only one answer)

☐ Strongly disagree

☐ Disagree

☐ Neither agree nor disagree

☐ Agree

☐ Strongly agree

13.) The use of social networking site LinkedIn is much cheaper than the use of other Irish jobs boards. (Please choose only one answer)

☐ Strongly disagree
☐ Disagree
☐ Neither agree nor disagree
☐ Agree
☐ Strongly agree

14.) The recruitment agency I work for, does not have to spend any costs for jobs advertising, searching and screening the profiles of candidates on social network site Facebook. (Please choose only one answer)

☐ Strongly disagree
☐ Disagree
☐ Neither agree nor disagree
☐ Agree
☐ Strongly agree

15.) According to my experience, candidates' reactions to job advertisements are faster through the use of social networking sites than jobs boards. (Please choose only one answer)

☐ Strongly disagree
☐ Disagree
☐ Neither agree nor disagree
☐ Agree
☐ Strongly agree

16.) What percentage of your total recruitment time do you spend for shortlisting of applicants résumés when using social networking sites? (Please choose only one answer)

☐ 0-15%
☐ 15-30%
☐ 30-45%

☐ 45-60%

☐ 60-85%

☐ 85-100%

17.) What percentage of your total recruitment time do you spend for shortlisting of applicants résumés when using jobs boards? (Please choose only one answer)

☐ 0-15%

☐ 15-30%

☐ 30-45%

☐ 45-60%

☐ 60-85%

☐ 85-100%

Section D

(Questions related to the types of candidates and information obtained through the usage of Social Networking sites and Jobs Boards)

18.) According to my experience, the use of social networking sites attracts better qualified candidates than the the use of jobs boards. (Please choose only one answer)

☐ Strongly disagree

☐ Disagree

☐ Neither agree nor disagree

☐ Agree

☐ Strongly agree

19**.)** According to my experience, the use of social networking sites attracts more diverse candidates than the the use of jobs boards.

(Please note: diversity is used broadly to refer to many demographic variables, including, but not limited to, race, religion, color, gender, national origin, disability etc.)

(Please choose only one answer/option)

☐ Strongly disagree

☐ Disagree

☐ Neither agree nor disagree

☐ Agree

☐ Strongly agree

20.) Which of the following social networking sites do you use for reaching passive candidates? (You can chose more than one option)

☐ LinkedIn

☐ Twitter

☐ Facebook

☐ Others (if others, please specify) ....

☐ None   (can you explain why?) ....

21.) I find more useful and detailed information about job candidates thanks to the use of social networking sites than jobs boards. (Please choose only one answer)

☐ Strongly disagree

☐ Disagree

☐ Neither agree nor disagree

☐ Agree

☐ Strongly agree

22.) Thanks to different discussions within social networking sites, I have the opportunity to learn a lot about job candidates. (Please choose only one answer)

☐ Strongly disagree

☐ Disagree

☐ Neither agree nor disagree

☐ Agree

☐ Strongly agree

23.) To which extent do you agree with the following statements about social networking sites that your company uses for recruitment? (Please choose only one option in each row)

A.) <u>Information quality about Job applicants</u>

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Can be trusted	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Includes all necessary information	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Is relevant to our recruitment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Is up-to date for our work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Is clear	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

24.) To which extent do you agree with the following statements about social networking sites that your company uses for recruitment? (Please choose only one option in each row)

B.) <u>Quality of Job applicants/applications</u>

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Number of qualified applicants has increased	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Incoming applications are more structured.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Incoming applications have a high-quality	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Incoming applications are more readable.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

25.) To which extent do you agree with the following statements about social networking sites that your company uses for recruitment? (Please choose only one option in each row)

C.) Diversity of applicants

Diversity of applicants	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Amount of applicants with different background has increased	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Total amount of national applicants has increased	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Total amount of regional applicants has increased	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Amount of applicants from other parts of Ireland has increased.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐