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Social Media for Selection: Are New Zealanders Prepared?

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Kirsty McPherson

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Abstract

Personnel selection is a process which most people go through in their life. Job seeking is also a process which most people experience and there are many ways in which people are able to find new jobs as well as information about organisations they want to work for. Social media has a significant impact in many New Zealanders' daily lives. As people are spending so much of their time online it is commonly believed among recruiters that one's social media presence can be informative in terms of what people may be like as employees (Berkelaar, 2014; Berkelaar, 2017; Bogen & Rieke, 2018; Doherty, 2010; Jeske & Shultz, 2015; Kashi, Zheng, & Molinaux, 2016).

This study aimed to explore New Zealanders' perceptions of the use of social media as both a job seeking tool and as a selection tool. Through conducting individual interviews and one focus group, a thematic analysis was conducted to explore New Zealanders' experiences with social media in job seeking and selection.

Overall, job seekers found social media a useful tool to find jobs and gather information about organisations they were interested in to curate their CVs and prepare to apply. However, many job seekers had negative perceptions of organisations in terms of organisational justice when social media was used for selection decisions. For recruiters, social media was a useful tool in searching 'red flags' in order to cut down candidate lists to the most suitable applicants. The results of this study suggest that job seekers should be aware of the potential for organisations to screen their social media and be prepared for it. For organisations, the results suggest that social media can be a good tool for advertising roles and presenting themselves positively, however they need to take into account the negative impression they may create if using social media during selection.

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The present study was evaluated by peer review and recorded as low risk in the Annual Report of the Massey University Human Ethics Committee (Appendix A)

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Social media is increasingly being utilised as an information-seeking tool by both job seekers and organisations. While social media can be used to initially look for work, job seekers also want to know what they need to do to be successful applicants, including finding out what skills and abilities are needed to fulfil a role as well as the knowledge needed to meet various job demands. In addition, they may also want to know what sort of culture the organisations they are interested in have so that they can ensure their own personality, culture and values are aligned. Job seekers can find this information through social media by viewing an organisations' social media profiles as well as the posts they create. Social media posts from customers of an organisation could also reveal negative information about what a company is like which job seekers can use to shape their application decisions. This is often important for many people as working for an organisation with similar values can help improve ones' job satisfaction. These different types of information are generally referred to as person-job and person-organisation fit and helps job seekers to determine their own perceived fit for roles they apply for (Nolan, Langhammer, & Salter, 2016).

Organisations are also using social media to seek information. During the hiring process, organisations need to be able to have trust in the information they have on applicants, as well as wanting as much information as possible to make the best hiring decision. Social media provides organisations with an extra source of information to verify applicant information as well as ensure that they are hiring an individual that will have a strong person-job and person-organisation fit. This means organisations will hire an applicant that will have good on-the-job performance and tenure as well as being able to promote job satisfaction for the new employee. In addition, organisations can also use social media as a tool for recruiting by either using social media to advertise jobs or as a method to headhunt potential candidates (Bogen & Rieke, 2018; Nikolaou, 2014).

1.1 What is social media?

Social media are online platforms which are designed to share, co-create and discuss a variety of content with other users (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre, 2011). These platforms use web-based mobile technology and can be accessed anywhere if one has a device capable of connecting to the internet. An important feature of social media is its focus on User Generated Content (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). User Generated Content is content that is created by social media users, whether text, photos or videos, and is publically available for other users to view and interact with.

Social media provides people with an interactive tool to stay in touch with their friends and family as well as meeting new people. These platforms allow individuals to create a personal profile and set up a list of other users that they have connections with (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Profiles are created by answering a variety of personal questions such as age, gender, location and interests with some platforms offering the option to upload a profile photo. Users are then able to make their social connections visible and view the networks of others so that they can build their own connections, even with people they may not know.

History

The first recognised social media site was the networking site SixDegrees.com which launched in 1997 (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). It was designed as a tool to connect with others and send direct messages. However, there were not many users due to the limited access to the internet and the platform was shut down in 2000. From 2003 social media took off with the creation of many new social networking platforms. LinkedIn was one of these and was created as a networking tool for professionals. MySpace was created as a platform for people to connect with each other and saw a large number of bands joining to connect with their fans as well as promoters using MySpace as a tool to advertise events and clubs. 2004 saw the creation of Facebook which was originally designed for the use of Harvard university students but expanded to include any university students as long as they signed up with a university email address. Due to its' popularity,

Facebook later expanded to include high school students and professionals before opening up to include the general population.

Growth

A 2018 Pew Research Centre survey of U.S adults found that the use of social media is continuing to follow long-standing trends with Facebook remaining the main platform of use for most Americans (Smith & Anderson, 2018). In general, the use of social media has remained similar since 2016, with the exception of the platform Instagram which has increased to 35% of U.S adults using it compared to 28% in 2016. Overall, 68% of U.S adults reported being Facebook users with approximately three-quarters of users accessing Facebook daily and around 50% of those daily users accessing Facebook several times a day. For other platforms, YouTube, Instagram and Twitter were the most accessed. LinkedIn was found to be used mainly by those with a college degree, with only 9% of Americans with a high school diploma or less using it. In terms of age, 18 to 29-year olds used social media platforms the most, followed by 30 to 49-year olds (Smith & Anderson, 2018).

When looking at New Zealand it appears that using social media is the norm for New Zealanders (Thompson, 2018). Around 95% of New Zealanders report being online everyday with the top platforms being used including YouTube and Facebook (“Leading social networks”, 2018). With the changes in technology the internet is more accessible than ever with 3.44 million New Zealanders accessing the internet on mobile devices (Thompson, 2018). The amount of time people spend using social media is expected to increase which could provide many opportunities for organisations and businesses, with the amount of money spent on online advertising overtaking that spent on TV advertising (“Social Media Usage,” 2018).

Type of Platforms

Most social media platforms are free to use and include well-known sites such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and LinkedIn (Whiting & Williams, 2013). Each platform has different features and varies in different options for public visibility (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Facebook for example

has a default setting which allows the users of the same friendship network to view all personal information and this setting has to be changed by each user individually if they want more privacy.

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) categorise social media platforms into six categories based upon the amount of social presence, media richness and self-presentation they offer users. Social presence refers to the amount of social influence a platform has on its users and is influenced by how personal the content being created is as well as how quickly it can be engaged with. Media richness is based upon the assumption that communication aims to reduce uncertainty and resolve ambiguity, such that richer media will have less uncertainty and ambiguity. Self-presentation refers to how users can use social media to curate their identity and influence the impressions others form of them.

1) Collaborative Projects

These are platforms which enable the creation of content by many users instead of one individual. This is based upon the notion that the joint effort of many will be better than the output of one. This includes sites like Wikipedia is an online encyclopaedia where entries are created and moderated solely by users of Wikipedia, so that a great deal of information and knowledge can be shared publicly.

2) Blogs (Weblogs)

Blogging sites are platforms which display time stamped and usually text-based entries by users. Blogging sites are generally managed individually, however users have the ability to engage with one another through posting comments. This form of social media can provide users with real-time updates on how others are feeling, what they're doing and where in the world they are. An example of this is Twitter, which is a form of a micro-blog site as posts, or 'Tweets', are limited to 140 characters. Twitter can provide a level of anonymity to users as users are referred to by their nicknames or 'handles' (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre, 2011). Users of Twitter can also post photos and follow other users such as celebrities to keep up with what is happening in the world. In addition, users can search for particular topics to follow and find out

what is popular or ‘trending’. The main ways in which user can interact with each other are by ‘liking’ others’ Tweets, leaving comments and sending direct messages to other users.

3) Content Communities

These are platforms which involve the sharing of media content such as photos and videos. Instagram is one of the widely used photo-sharing sites and allows users to upload their own photos as well as browsing other users’ photos. On Instagram users can search and follow people or topics, and all posts from users that they follow will be displayed on a news feed to browse through. Users can interact with each other by liking posts as well as leaving comments or sending direct messages. In addition, Instagram also has a live feature where users can post real-time photo or video updates of what they are doing for their followers to view.

For video sharing, YouTube is one of the most popular platforms. YouTube users do not need to be a member of the platform to view content, membership is only needed to upload content. This allows YouTube content to reach a wide audience, as anyone can view it. Additionally, YouTube videos can be shared across other social media platforms, further increasing its visibility. Similar to other social media platforms YouTube also allows users to interact with each other through liking or commenting on videos.

4) Social Networking Sites

Social networking sites are the form of social media that people are most familiar with. Social networking sites function to let people connect with each other through creating personal profiles and inviting their friends and family to join up and be part of their contact list. Social networking sites combine several features into one platform, such as micro-blogging and content sharing. Facebook is one of the most popular examples of a social networking site and is used to create and share personal information as well as to connect with other users (Hughes, Rowe, Batey, & Lee, 2012). Users can post content to their timeline which can be viewed by friends or extended to include friends of friends depending on privacy settings. Content can include text-based ‘status’ updates, photos or videos as well as links to other websites. Through Facebook’s newsfeed, users

can see what their contacts are posting and sharing, as well as what any ‘pages’ they follow share. For example, users can follow celebrity pages, news pages, or pages which only post content for particular interests or hobbies. Users of Facebook can interact with each other through liking or commenting on posts as well as sending direct messages and ‘tagging’ other users to share content.

A different social networking site is LinkedIn, which was designed with a more professional audience in mind than Facebook and allows professional networks to be created and maintained (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre, 2011). Users first set up a profile which includes their most recent employment. This lets LinkedIn recommend contacts within the same industry in order to build a network. LinkedIn provides users with a news feed which displays articles relevant to the users’ job or industry as well as job opportunities to match their interests. LinkedIn also allows users to directly message one another. While it is a free platform to use there is an option to upgrade and pay a monthly fee for extra features, with four different upgrade plans to choose from (<https://premium.linkedin.com/>). The first is a career plan which lets users find more opportunities within their industry to help build their career. The second is a business plan and is targeted at business owners to promote their company. The third is a sales plan and allows users to find leads and accounts in their industry’s market. The last plan is a hiring plan which allows users to seek out potential candidates and contact them directly allowing them to build a relationship with potential employees.

5) Virtual Game Worlds

These platforms replicate a three-dimensional environment in which users create an avatar to interact with other users. These generally have rules which users need to follow in terms of the type of behaviours they can enact but typically allow for rich social connections.

6) Virtual Social Worlds

These are similar to virtual game worlds as users of virtual social worlds also create an avatar to interact with each other, but these platforms offer more behaviours and interactions to engage in than virtual game worlds.

Social Media Uses

1) Maintaining Connections

Social media lets individuals connect with each other through creating personal profiles and inviting others to view and access the profiles (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Whitling & Williams, 2018). Sites such as Facebook provide users with a way to keep in touch with friends or family from anywhere in the world. Interactions are not just limited to friends and family but can be among co-workers and acquaintances. Many social media platforms are designed specifically to foster communication and conversation among users (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre, 2011).

2) Identity

Social media is designed in a way that personal information can be revealed and shared across members, including age, gender, location and occupation (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre, 2011). Facebook is a good example of this as it allows people to create a profile where personal information can be shared such as occupation, religious background, political views and family status (Hughes, Rowe, Batey, & Lee, 2012).

3) Pass Time

Social media is also used to pass time and provide entertainment (Whitling & Williams, 2013). This can include using social media to play games as well as watching videos to provide general entertainment.

4) Trolling and Cyber Bullying

Social media also provides individuals with an outlet to express opinions and can even provide some anonymity to people wanting to criticise and vent about others (Whitling & Williams, 2013).

5) Information Seeking

Information seeking is also a key use of social media, which can be used to find information about a variety of topics, to learn new skills, or find out about sales or promotions for various companies (Whitling & Williams, 2013). Similarly, social media can be used for information sharing about oneself to others, such as between consumers and businesses, with 40% of respondents reporting using social media in this way. In addition, 32% of respondents reported using social media to seek out information about individuals and to watch what others were doing (Whitling & Williams, 2013).

1.2 Motivations for using social media

Whitling and Williams (2013) outline some of the motivations for people to engage in and use social media platforms from a uses and gratifications approach. Uses and gratifications theory originated within the communications literature and proposes that individuals seek out media to meet their needs, which leads to gratification. The focus of this theory is on how people use media rather than the effects the media have on people. Uses and gratifications theory holds several assumptions for peoples' motivations to use social media (Katz, Blumer, & Gurevitch, 1973). First, it assumes that the medias' audience is active, and the audience's use of media is directed by goals. The second assumption builds on the notion of the audience as active, in that media choice is up to the audience. Third, sources of media compete with other sources of need satisfaction. And fourth, people are aware of their media use and can report their own interests and motives in its usage. Overall, it emphasises that people actively choose to social media.

Social media users are not limited to just one platform. Instead there is a wide variety of media to choose from, with each platform providing users with different forms of information which can fulfil different communicative needs. The different platforms become integrated as part of peoples' communicative repertoire, as people may use a combination of Facebook, Twitter and Instagram (Quan-Haase & Young, 2010). For example, in terms of understanding why people prefer some platforms over others, uses and gratifications theory proposes that people will keep using a form of media as long as it provides or exceeds their expected level of gratification

(Palmgreen & Rayburn, 1979). If a media form does not meet the gratifications people are seeking then they will cease to use it and find a different platform.

Quan-Haase and Young (2010) explored the motivations for students using Facebook. After conducting a factor analysis from data collected in surveys and interviews, they found six factors which had eigenvalues greater than 1.0 and explained 77% of the variance, which were pastime, affection, fashion, sharing problems, sociability and social information. Pastime involved getting away from responsibilities as well as entertainment. Affection centred on Facebook as providing a way to express concern and friendship to others. Fashion related to using Facebook to appear fashionable to others. Sharing problems involved using Facebook to talk to others about personal concerns. It was also used for sociability to meet new people and improve ones' social connections. Finally, social information related to students feeling involved in others' lives. Overall, students used Facebook to meet a need for social inclusion.

Motivations for why students initially joined Facebook were also explored. Quan-Haase and Young (2010) identified three main motivations. The first was peer pressure, which included having friends recommend joining it as well as feeling pressured to join due to the overall popularity of Facebook. Social connectivity was the second motivation and related to Facebook being used to maintain networks. The third motivation was curiosity, which included being curious to see what Facebook itself was like, as well as having curiosity about what others were posting.

Chapter 2: Social Media and Staff Selection

2.1 Person-Job and Person-Organisation Fit

Person-job fit refers to the match between an employees' knowledge, skills and abilities and the knowledge, skills and abilities that are needed to perform the various job tasks and demands (Nolan, Langhammer, & Salter, 2016). Information about person-job fit is one of the key aspects of selection processes, as it can be used to predict future work outcomes such as job performance and tenure. In addition, good person-job fit can decrease work stress and turnover intentions as well as increasing job satisfaction and organisational commitment, when applicants have the ability to meet work demands (Thompson, Sikora, Perrewé, & Ferris, 2015).

Person-organisation fit refers to the match between a person and the organisations' values and culture (Nolan, Langhammer, & Salter, 2016). Person-organisation fit is also related to job satisfaction and organisational commitment, but also to positive co-worker relationships. In evaluating person-organisation fit, human resource professionals can hire applicants who will be satisfied with their job and co-workers they will enjoy working with.

Schneider's (1987) attraction-selection-attrition theory is one theoretical foundation for the relation between person-organisation fit and work attitudes. This theory is based on the notion that people within an organisation are attracted to the organisational environment in the first place and are then selected to become an employee. As more people become attracted to an organisation similar types of behaviour and values become evident across employees, which solidify the organisational culture. When employees are able to interact with like-minded individuals, there can be an increase in positive outcomes such as job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Arthur, Bell, Villado, & Doverspike, 2006). However, when an individual is initially attracted to an organisation but, once selected, they find that they do not fit, they may leave the organisation, which is the attrition side of Schneider's (1987) theory.

Work adjustment theory is another foundation for understanding the interaction between individuals and their work environments (Dawis & Lloyd, 1976). This theory focuses on the

premise that individuals and work environments are responsive to each other, with work adjustment as a continuous process through which individuals aim to achieve a connection with their work environment. Under work adjustment theory, person-environment fit is the interaction between an individual's work personality and the work environment, with each needing to meet the other's requirements (Rounds, Dawis, & Lofquist, 1987). A successful work relationship occurs when adjustments are made that create a match between the needs of the individual and the needs of the work environment (Bretz & Judge, 1994).

Fit is important for organisations to consider in selection, as when applicants perceive higher levels of overall person-organisation fit they are more likely to be attracted to and accept job offers from the organisation (Swider, Zimmerman, & Barrick, 2015). Ensuring candidates fit the organisation also has several impacts on outcomes such as job seeking intentions, satisfaction, psychological strain, organisational citizenship behaviours, job performance, knowledge acquisition and sharing, as well as turnover (Bertz & Judge, 1994; Morley, 2007). In addition, those who are a good fit are more likely to be more favourably evaluated by other organisational members, as well as displaying greater work motivation and performance.

2.2 Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment

The hiring process starts with recruitment and the initial process of attracting potential candidates through advertisements, job vacancies or individual head-hunting. The main aim of recruitment is to identify individuals who are likely to have the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities for a role and to attract them to the organisation (Ployhart, Schmitt, & Tippins, 2017). Recruitment can influence whether candidates will decide to apply for a role and is an important aspect in maintaining a candidates' interest in an organisation throughout the process (Breugh, 2008). Throughout recruitment, a great amount of information sharing is conducted, with organisations needing to convey job related and organisational information to candidates. This can either be through phone or email conversations, site visits to give candidates a feel for the organisational

culture, values and environment and through online searches for information (Swider, Zimmerman, & Barrick, 2015).

One key avenue for recruiting is through advertising job vacancies. Organisations use a wide range of media in order to reach a large pool of potential candidates (Breugh, 2008). For example, roles can be advertised through job searching websites, government employment agencies or radio commercials. A job description is generally included with a vacancy advertisement and can be highly influential in whether applicants decide to apply for a role (Bogen & Rieke, 2018). In order to ensure their job descriptions are targeting the right candidates, organisations can use computer-based programs such as Textio which assess the linguistic content of job descriptions. The programs can assess the wording in terms of, for example, complexity and potential gender or other biases and suggest changes. This is particularly important as the New Zealand Human Rights Act 1993 makes it unlawful for any advertisements or job notices to be displayed which could indicate an intention to discriminate, such as use of a job description with gender connotations advertising for a waiter or waitress instead of waitstaff.

In order to attract the right candidates, for example, organisations need to consider the type of information that they are conveying. Organisations should provide potential candidates with sufficient information to ensure candidates are aware of what the job tasks, work hours and pay will be like before they make a formal application (Breugh, 2008). A greater amount of information is perceived positively by candidates and viewed as being more trustworthy which can lead to an increased interest and higher perceptions of person-organisation fit.

Social Media and Recruitment

As most social media platforms are free to use, social media provides organisations with an effective method to attract job seekers (Doherty, 2010). One of the main recruitment methods is to directly advertise job vacancies (Bogen & Rieke, 2018; Nikolaou, 2014). The use of social media as an advertisement platform means that a wide range of job seekers can be targeted (Bogen & Rieke, 2018; Nikolaou, 2014; Kashi, Zheng, & Molinaux, 2016; Ployhart, Schmitt, & Tippins, 2017; Sylva & Mol, 2009). This can include both passive and active job seekers locally and

internationally. Passive job seekers are individuals who may be browsing for new jobs or opportunities but may not be spending a lot of time or effort in job seeking as they are usually already employed. Active job seekers on the other hand may have a more invested interest in job seeking as they may not have current employment. This can widen the range of candidates to include those who may have strong qualifications for a role but may not initially be looking to change jobs or locations, but who could become interested in an organisation through positive advertising.

Predictive technology similar to that used for internet search engines can be utilised to target job advertisements to particular candidates and send out notifications about job vacancies (Bogen & Reike, 2018). An example of this is Seek (<https://www.seek.co.nz/>), a New Zealand based job-search board which allows job seekers to search jobs by category and sign up to receive email notifications about vacancies in industries they are interested in. This type of technology can also be used to advertise roles on social media platforms such as Facebook. Advertisements can be targeted to potential candidates through a range of personal characteristics such as demographic information and personal interests. For example, if a user has listed on their profile that they are a university student they may receive advertisements for part-time weekend work as these roles would be considered suitable for students.

Social media can also be used as a recruitment tool by building the organisational image, showing that an organisation stays relevant and embraces changes in technology (Doherty, 2010; Holland & Jeske, 2017; Kashi, Zheng, & Molinaux, 2016). Promoting the organisational name through social media can lead to candidates exploring organisational websites, which can provide more job-related information than on social media. Organisational websites can generate large numbers of applicants at a low cost, however websites need to have strong navigational features which are easy to use, as candidates may lose interest if they find it too hard to navigate the platform and find the information they want (Breagh, 2008).

Improvements in technology and the internet have also opened up more opportunities for individuals to be headhunted. Headhunting is a practice in which recruiters reach out to specific

candidates who are qualified and well-suited for a particular role. This can be particularly beneficial for passive job seekers who could be approached and offered job opportunities that they may not originally think to apply for. Recruiters can utilise computer programs to search sources such as LinkedIn and public social media profiles to find potential candidates who have the right skills and qualifications for a role and to assess overall fit in the organisation. From a job seeker's perspective, technology advances in the 1990's have led to the growth of online job listings for job seekers to browse (Bogen & Rieke, 2018). Job seekers can now apply for jobs directly online making job seeking more convenient and allowing applications to a wide range of jobs. Overall, social media has made the job seeking process easier and more time efficient.

Selection

The aim of selection is to hire the best candidate from a pool of applicants (Berkelaar, 2017; Konradt, Garbers, Böge, Erdogan, & Bauer, 2016; Truxillo, Bauer, & McCarthy, 2015). Following the recruitment process, candidates are assessed in terms of their skills, experiences and characteristics (Bogen & Rieke, 2018). Applications are reviewed and unqualified or unsuitable applicants removed in order to short-list strong applicants for consideration. Selection tests such as work sample tests or ability tests which may be used to evaluate criteria to predict later behaviour and job performance (Nolan, Langhammer, & Salter, 2016; Ployhart, Schmitt, & Tippins, 2017). Applicants are then interviewed to provide interviewers with an insight into candidates' personal attributes and potential person-organisation fit. Employers may then conduct background checks on the candidates before making their final hiring decision. Overall, if organisations are successful in their selection practices, they will hire applicants who can increase productivity and have high engagement and satisfaction as well as reducing the likelihood of turnover (Berkelaar & Buzzanell, 2014).

Selection Methods

Interviews

Interviews aim to assess candidates' knowledge, skills and abilities as well as their personality in order to predict future job performance (McDaniel, Whetzel, Schmidt, & Maurer, 1994). This can

provide assessors with insight into person-job and person-organisation fit. Structured interviews have specific questions which are used for every candidate and are generally determined from the results of a job analysis (Schmidt & Hunter, 1998). These also involve strict scoring schemes in terms of rating a candidates' interview performance. In addition, the same interviewers are also generally used for each interview. Structured interviews are associated with higher validity than unstructured interviews as they are more consistent with the individual attributes that are assessed. Unstructured interviews do not use a set criteria of questions and questions can vary across candidates which may appear more relaxed and conversational but risks reducing consistency and validity (McDaniel, Whetzel, Schmidt, & Maurer, 1994).

Interviews can also be conducted either by an individual assessor or a panel of assessors. Individual interviews are generally more cost effective for organisations as only one assessor is needed, but panel interviews can be more reliable as assessors must come to an agreement for each candidate which can minimise biases (Huffcutt, Culbertson, & Weyhrauch, 2013; McDaniel, Whetzel, Schmidt, & Maurer, 1994).

Work Sample Tests

Job skills can be assessed using simulated realistic job conditions. These can be valid assessments as they assess the job skills that employees will need, so they can predict later on the job performance (Schmidt & Hunter, 1998).

Biodata

Biodata includes information on previous jobs, education, training, and personal history (Schmidt & Hunter, 1998). Biodata information is generally collected through an application blank which applicant fill out when making an application. Validity of biodata information may be affected by socially desirable responses and applications need to be designed with care to address discrimination laws prevent asking for information about marital status, religion or ethnicity.

Ability tests

Standardized ability tests can include measures of cognitive ability, personality, values, skills and knowledge. Speed tests have strict time limits which most test takers will be unable to complete in time, while power tests have no strict time limit and can generally be completed. Tests can be completed by paper-and-pencil, or online and onsite or remotely. While validity is generally high, and these tests are good predictors of job performance and job training success (Bertua, Anderson, & Salgado, 2005).

Online tests of cognitive ability, personality and psychomotor ability tests can allow for the direct transmission and scoring of tests, reducing the amount of cost, time and effort in scoring and assessing tests. Applicants can also find out their scores and the selection decision quickly which can be positive in reducing applicant withdrawal as there is no lengthy wait for results. (Sackett & Lievens, 2008)

Social Media in selection

Cybervetting is a term which refers to the use of social media in selection (Berkelaar, 2014; Berkelaar, 2017; Holland & Jeske, 2017). In general, this practice is used as a background check to supplement information gained by other selection methods and can provide organisations with a greater amount of content to evaluate candidates on. Cybervetting involves viewing candidates' social media profiles to gain an insight into what an individual is like, including personality characteristics and job-related information such as knowledge, skills and abilities they may have (Berkelaar, 2017; Holland & Jeske, 2017; Roth, Bobko, Van Iddekinge, & Thatcher, 2013). As social media is used so much in society, cybervetting can provide organisations with a cost-effective tool that also reduces the amount of time taken in selection processes (Berkelaar, 2014; Berkelaar, 2017; Bogen & Rieke, 2018; Doherty, 2010; Jeske & Shultz, 2015; Kashi, Zheng, & Molinaux, 2016). This is because a large number of applicants can be screened in a short amount of time and from any location (Van Iddekinge, Lanivich, Roth, & Junco, 2016; Zide, Elman & Shahani-Denning, 2014).

Different social media platforms contain different information. LinkedIn can contain a range of job-related information such as experiences and qualifications (Zide, Elman, & Shahani-Denning, 2014), whereas more personal platforms like Facebook contain more information on personality (Berkelaar, 2017; Holland & Jeske, 2017; Van Iddekinge, Lanivich, Roth, & Junco, 2016). As personal profiles generally include more personal information, employers may find information that candidates do not include in their application.

Stoughton, Thomspson and Meade (2013) investigated whether personality characteristics are linked to online postings of information revealing negative behaviours such as badmouthing, which involves criticisms of superiors and colleagues, and drug and alcohol use. Participants provided self-report information on their online content relating to badmouthing and drug and alcohol use, which could include text-based or photo-based posts. The self-report data was then compared to traditional personality assessments. The researchers found that extraverted individuals were more likely to report having posted content with drug and alcohol content, and that those who were low in agreeableness and conscientiousness were more likely to report having engaged in bad-mouthing behaviour. While the links with personality were not strong, location online information on negative behaviour may help avoid hiring employees who may be problematic for the organisation.

Social media can also be useful to verify information provided by applicants (Berkelaar, 2017; Doherty, 2010; Guillory & Hancock, 2012; Jeske & Shultz, 2015; Thomas, Rothschild & Donegan, 2015). The public nature of social media means online content created by applicants can be verified by social media contacts, allowing recruiters to identify deceptions contained in a CV. Guillory and Hancock (2012) examined deception on LinkedIn profiles and found that participants creating a public LinkedIn profile lied less about information that could be verified publicly by others such as work experience, but lied more about information that was harder to verify such as interests. In contrast, they found that participants who created traditional CVs lied more about information that could be verified compared to those with a LinkedIn profile.

Chapter 3: Issues in Social Media use for recruitment and selection

3.1 Relevance

The use of social media in background checks assumes that an applicant's online behaviour is related to their professional persona (Berkelaar, 2014; Bogen & Rieke, 2018; Slovinsky & Ross, 2012). For non-professional social media platforms, people often upload personal information targeted to friends and family. The content available for organisations to assess may therefore not be very job-relevant. Applicants may post content which could lead to missing out on job offers if they are posting content deemed inappropriate by organisations, such as photos depicting drinking or drug use, or posts with derogatory or discriminatory comments (Brown & Vaughn, 2011; Clark & Roberts, 2010; Parks-Yancy & Cooley, 2018). Social media as a screening tool may also provide assessors with information that is protected against discrimination such as race, sexuality or disability status (Bogen & Rieke, 2018). This can mean that qualified applicants could miss out on job and career opportunities and organisations may miss out on hiring the best candidate for a role (Black, Stone, & Johnson, 2015).

The practice of cybervetting social media profiles can breach media platforms' terms and conditions (Bogen & Rieke, 2018). One tool called Predictum is used to assess social media profiles such as Facebook and Twitter and generate reports on applicants' likelihood of engaging in negative work behaviours such as harassment and bullying as well as drug abuse. However, Facebook and Twitter have now revoked Predictum's access to media posts due to violating each platforms' user policies. For Facebook, the policies state that information cannot be used to inform eligibility decisions such as selection and hiring decisions, and for Twitter information cannot be used for surveillance which includes background checks (Bogen & Rieke, 2018).

3.2 Reliability

Reliability refers to the consistency or stability of a measure. A measure needs to be predictable and constant across time and assessors. The nature of social media can make it difficult to structure and standardise its use among assessors, as there is no standard method for how social

media should be assessed (Aguado, Rico, Rubio, & Fernandez, 2016; El Ouiridi, Pais, Segers, & El Ouiridi, 2016; Roth, Bobko, Van Iddekinge, & Thatcher, 2013). Individuals vary in terms of their privacy settings and therefore the amount of content that assessors can access. In addition, people vary in their day to day use of social media: some post updates each day and others may never post updates at all. Assessors may also not use social media to assess every applicant (Van Iddekinge, Lanivich, Roth, Junco, 2016). Not everyone has a social media profile, so for some applicants cybervetting is not a possibility and they can only be assessed in more traditional ways. Given the inconsistencies in information available and approaches to its use, the reliability of social media information in selection is debatable.

3.3 Predictive Validity

When assessing test data, validity refers to the accuracy of inferences made by an assessor. Validity is also concerned with whether a measure accurately measures the intended trait or ability that it is designed to measure. Predictive validity is the ability of a test to predict later performance. Van Iddekinge, Lanivich, Roth and Junco (2016) explored the predictive validity of social media as a selection procedure. They used the Facebook profiles of college students applying for full-time work. Recruiters from various organisations reviewed the profiles and provided evaluations, and later followed up on applicants in their new jobs. Recruiter ratings of Facebook information were unrelated to ratings by supervisors of job performance and turnover, and Facebook ratings did not contribute to these predictions beyond more traditional predictors such as cognitive ability tests and personality. This suggests that social media evaluations may have very little predictive ability in assessing candidates' future job performance.

3.4 Content Validity

Content validity relates to how the content of selection procedures is relevant knowledge, skills and abilities relevant to job performance. However, social media functions as a tool for social interactions rather than for sharing job related information. As social media is generally used for personal reasons it is generally perceived as being separate from one's work identity (Berkelaar, 2014; Bogen & Rieke, 2018; Slovinsky & Ross, 2012). People will generally post and share

content that is aimed at their friends or family and usually do not post job related content. Organisations may therefore find it difficult to demonstrate the content-related validity of social media for selection (Van Iddekinge, Lanivich, Roth, & Junco, 2016).

Cybervetting also presents new challenges in terms of the type and amount of content that is available to be assessed. Social media profiles may present either too little or too much information. Roth, Bobko, Van Iddekinge and Thatcher (2013) suggest incomplete information can lead to uncertainty in making assessment decisions which could result in less positive assessments and lower evaluations. On the other hand, as different platforms have different purposes, the volume and content available to recruiters will also differ across platforms. For example, LinkedIn is likely to have more information in terms of job-related content such as qualifications than profiles like Facebook. However, Facebook profiles generally contain a range of content, from text-based posts by the applicant to uploaded photos, as well as content that other users have linked to the applicant. When provided with such a large amount of information there are limits to the amount of information that can be processed by assessors in determining what is and isn't relevant (Roth, Bobko, Van Iddekinge, & Thatcher, 2013; Van Iddekinge, Lanivich, Roth & Junco, 2016). In addition, applicants can potentially be linked to content which they may not have chosen to post or share (El Ouiridi, Pais, Segers, & El Ouiridi, 2016; Roth, Bobko, Van Iddekinge, & Thatcher, 2013; Van Iddekinge, Lanivich, Roth & Junco, 2016).

This suggests a new take on content validity as assessors need to determine from a range of information what is relevant to evaluate, as well as making job-related inferences from incomplete information. Assessors also need to account for the potential mis-association of content with applicants. This includes applicants being tagged by their contacts in photos or posts, as well as applicants having their contacts post inappropriate content on their home-pages. In addition, as many social media platforms have been around since the early 2000's, many profiles have been active for a long time. If assessors are evaluating applicants on content that was posted to their profile from years before it may not be relevant to the applicant currently. This means that the

content being assessed may not accurately reflect an applicant's current behaviour, influencing the validity of using social media as a selection tool.

3.5 Impression Management

Impression management is a process in which people try to manage or control the impressions formed of them (Leary & Kowalski, 1990). This can include acting in certain ways to create particular impressions on people, as the impressions others form can influence how one is perceived, evaluated and treated. With social media, people may create an image of themselves to influence how their friends perceive them, or they may portray themselves differently to how they are in person in order to have a distinct online persona.

As the use of social media as a selection tool becomes more commonplace, applicants may become more conscious of how their social media presence appears to potential employers. People may begin to engage in online career management and curate their profiles for potential employment (Berkelaar, 2014; Harrison & Budsworth, 2015; Jeske & Shultz, 2015). In addition, as applicants begin to expect organisations to engage in screening social media, it is possible that postings on social media will become more targeted to a professional audience through portraying general work and career aspects. This can influence the impressions formed by recruiters when viewing applicants' profiles (Harrison & Budsworth, 2015). Information posted online could be fabricated to present a better image for employers and certain information could be removed from profiles (Jeske & Shultz, 2015; Thomas, Rothschild & Donegan, 2015). This can mean more job-related information for employers to view and assess, which could improve social media's content validity.

On the other hand, one reason why employers use social media in selection is to gain an insight into what a candidate is like personally. In curating their profiles, applicants may provide less personal content for employers to view which reduces the inferences that can be made about an applicant's personality. Assessors often look for the presence of faux-pas or inappropriate postings by candidates that could be red flags (Roulin, 2014). As more people begin to engage in impression management, the amount of inappropriate or red flag posts may be minimised as

people remove negative content. This was highlighted in Roulin's (2014) study examining employers' use of social media in selection decisions and applicants' likelihood of faux-pas postings. There was a lower likelihood of faux-pas postings when participants knew that employers use social media for selection, suggesting applicants may change their behaviour to match an employer's selection procedures. It was also found that participants who used social media to engage in self-promotion towards their friends were more likely to post faux-pas as well as participants who had lower concerns for privacy. This suggests that some applicants are beginning limit the amount of information that is available to be viewed and used in selection decisions.

Root and McKay (2014) also explored students' attitudes around the possibility of employers viewing their social media profiles. While the students did not report actively engaging in impression management in curating their profiles, they strongly agreed that they had removed content that they didn't want to be viewed and wouldn't post content that they wouldn't want a potential employer to view. Students were less aware that what other people post to their profiles can also reflect on them to recruiters, and considered what they get tagged in as unimportant. Overall students were generally aware that employers may view their profiles and that they should take care with the content that they post and share. This also suggests that the information available for employers to assess may lack content validity as people are more aware of social media's potential to impact on their career. While people may not post job-related information, they are more aware about posting content that could harm their chances.

3.6 Legal Issues

Under the New Zealand Human Rights Act 1993 anything done or omitted by an employee is treated as done or omitted by the employer as well as the employee, whether or not it was done with the employer's knowledge or approval. Therefore, employers can be legally responsible for their employees (Madera, 2012). Should an employee cause harm to a third party such as a customer, it is up to the employer to prove that they have taken reasonable steps to prevent the employee from committing the act. It may be in the organisation's best interests to gain as much

information as possible about applicants to avoid hiring an applicant who could be a liability. Social media may thus reveal behavioural tendencies or past examples of committing harm to a third party which employers need to be aware of.

3.7 Discrimination

The New Zealand Employment Relations Act 2000 protects certain groups from employment discrimination. This includes discrimination on the grounds of sex and sexual orientation, marital and family status, religious and ethical beliefs, race and ethnicity, disability, age, political opinion and employment status. The Act outlines that an employer cannot refuse to offer an employee the same terms of employment, conditions of work, benefits, or opportunities that are available for other employees of similar qualifications, experiences or skills, upon grounds of discrimination. In addition, under the New Zealand Human Rights Act 1993 it is unlawful for an employer to refuse to employ an applicant who is qualified for work or to offer them less favourable terms of employment by reason of any grounds of discrimination.

The use of social media in selection practices can potentially lead to discrimination (Bogen & Rieke, 2018; Brown & Vaughn, 2011; Deros, Perpermans, & Ryan, 2016; Holland & Jeske, 2017; Nikolaou, 2014; Slovensky & Ross, 2012). This is mainly due to the vast amount of content that can be viewed on social media (Chamorro-Premuzic, Winsborough, Sherman, & Hogan, 2016; Roth, Bobko, Van Iddekinge, & Thatcher, 2013). For instance, applicants can choose not to include age, gender or other information on a CV but social media profiles may provide this information regardless. Being exposed to this information may lead recruiters to have biases that could affect their selection and hiring decisions.

An example of bias was highlighted by Van Iddekinge, Lanivich, Roth and Junco (2016). In their study it was apparent that sub-group differences existed in recruiter ratings of Facebook profiles. They found that recruiters' ratings of applicants' Facebook profiles tended to be higher for female applicants than males and also higher for White applicants than Black or Hispanic applicants. Organisations will need to be able to prove that demographic characteristics such as these did not

affect the hiring decision and instead demonstrate the validity of social media in terms of its predictive and content related validity.

In addition, organisations may not be required to disclose what information on social media was used for the decision making, which could conceal potential discrimination (Brown & Vaugh, 2011). To highlight potential discrimination on social media, Derous, Perpermans and Ryan (2016) examined the effects of job context characteristics such as client contact and personal characteristics on job suitability ratings. They found that equally qualified applicants with a darker skin tone received lower job suitability ratings than those with a lighter skin tone, especially when applicants were screened for high client contact positions.

3.8 Privacy

For organisations, privacy is an important issue and individuals' perceptions and beliefs around privacy need to be taken into consideration (Stone-Romero, Stone, & Hyatt, 2003). This is particularly important when considering how or if selection procedures are perceived by applicants as invading their privacy. If applicants believe that a selection procedure is invasive of their privacy it can lead to stress and applicants withdrawing from a selection process.

Selection processes put applicants in a position where they feel obliged to give up personal information in exchange for a job (Stone-Romero, Stone, & Hyatt, 2003). In their study, Stone-Romero, Stone and Hyatt (2003) examined workers' beliefs about the perceived invasiveness of privacy in a number of selection procedures. The procedures that were viewed as having low levels of privacy invasion were application blanks, interviews and work sample tests. The procedures that had the highest privacy invasion were lie detectors, drug tests, medical examinations and background checks.

There are several negative outcomes when organisations use selection procedures that are perceived as more invasive of privacy (Stone-Romero, Stone, & Hyatt, 2003). First, applicants may be put off from continuing in the process as they may perceive the organisation to be collecting personal information rather than job related information. Second, applicants could also

be given the impression that the organisation doesn't trust them, which could lead to negative perceptions of the organisation in terms of organisational attractiveness. Lastly, more invasive procedures may cause negative impacts for applicants who are members of protected groups. These applicants could become distressed over concerns that the private information they give could lead to unfair discrimination in the selection process.

While privacy can be understood as an individual right, the features on many social media platforms can make privacy difficult to achieve and sustain (Marwick & Boyd, 2014). Privacy settings can be confusing and do not always ensure full privacy due to the ability to be tagged and shared in posts beyond an individuals' control. However, there are many strategies that can be utilised to gain control over what information is viewed by others and how that information is interpreted (Marwick & Boyd, 2014). One way in which individuals can do this is through blocking certain social media contacts from viewing particular posts. This allows individuals to post the content they want but keep it hidden from those who may judge or make fun of them. Another method is to post content in a coded way so that it can only be understood by certain contacts. This could for example include inside jokes or messages. This strategy differs from simply blocking certain people from accessing a post as it instead blocks others from accessing the meaning of content.

Many people keep their social media profiles settings private, which limits the amount of information that can be viewed. In addition, most social media platforms require users to have a password to login. Keeping profiles private and secure with a password login is generally viewed by employers in a positive light as it displays a degree of online professionalism (Berkelaar, 2017). However, some employers may want to gain access to applicants' protected information as part of their assessment (Berkelaar, 2017; Jeske & Shultz, 2015). One strategy employers may use is 'shoulder surfing' during interviews. This involves asking applicants during interviews to login to their social media profiles and show the interviewer what is on their account. Another strategy is for employers to send friend requests to applicants so that they can gain access to information protected by privacy settings which only allow for social media contacts to view.

Some employers may directly ask applicants to provide their social media usernames and passwords so that all of the applicants' social media information can be assessed (Barnett, 2012; Fitzhugh, 2014). These strategies highlight some of the issues of cybervetting and the power difference between applicants and employers, with applicants having to choose if they are willing to give up their privacy for potential employment.

Chapter 4: Organisational Justice

4.1 What is Organisational Justice

Organisational justice is a concept that focuses on what people believe to be just and is composed of three different factors: procedural, distributive and interactional justice (Cropanzana, Bowen, & Gilliland, 2007). Organisational justice helps people work effectively together and defines the relationship between employees and an organisation. It is a personal evaluation of the ethical and moral standing of an organisation and justice is perceived as the appropriate way to treat others. Research on applicant reactions and fairness perceptions of selection procedures have largely been shaped by Gilliland's (1993) model of organisational justice which focuses on procedural and distributive justice. Gilliland's (1993) model also outlines potential outcomes that can occur if applicants' have negative perceptions of organisational justice. These include influencing applicants' test-taking motivations and decisions to withdraw from a selection process, accept a job offer, recommend the organisation, and to pursue litigation.

Procedural justice is concerned with how just applicants perceive an allocation process such as a selection procedure to be, and is composed of three factors, each made up of a number of facets (Cropanzana, Bowen, Gilliland, 2007; Gilliland, 1993). The three factors and their facets are composed into Gilliland's (1993) ten procedural justice rules which must be met for applicants to perceive a selection process as just. However, various conditions can influence the perceived extent of these justice rules being met, including human resource policies, prior experiences of selection processes, and the type of selection procedure such as social media screening.

The first factor is the formal characteristics of the selection process and consists of the facets of job relatedness, opportunity to perform, opportunity for reconsideration and consistency. As social media is generally used for personal reasons, the information that is available to be assessed may not always be job-relevant and may not provide applicants with an opportunity to demonstrate their skills and knowledge. The second factor relates to explanations during the process, such as feedback, selection information and honesty. When social media is used for

selection processes, it is not always clear to applicants that it is being used. As a result applicants may not receive sufficient selection information or feedback about the process which could affect their perceptions of procedural justice. Interpersonal treatment is the third factor, and includes the interpersonal effectiveness of the administrator, two-way communication and propriety of questions. Social media assessments may not provide applicants with the ability to engage in two-way communication or the opportunity to explain social media content to assessors. This could also influence how applicants perceive procedural justice as they have a limited ability to communicate with the organisation.

Distributive justice focuses on the perceived justice of the outcome of a decision, which for selection is the hiring decision (Cropanzana, Bowen, Gilliland, 2007; Gilliland, 1993). Distributive justice is also composed of three factors. The first factor is equity and refers to people receiving rewards for an output that matches their inputs, such as having the skills or qualifications needed for a job and receiving a job offer. If they do not receive a job offer but believe they have the right skills, then they are more likely to perceive the decision as unfair. Social media does not generally display work skills and attributes, therefore an applicant who does not receive a job offer may perceive the outcome as being unjust if they know that social media was used. Equality is the second factor and refers to all applicants having an equal chance at receiving an outcome. This factor is often salient when people miss out on a job offer due to gender or racial background as opposed to skills or qualifications. The use of social media for selection may impact applicants' chances as not everyone has social media and those who do may differ on their personal social media use. In addition, profiles generally reveal information such as gender and racial background that can be easily accessed in profile photos. The third factor is needs and refers to rewards or outcomes being distributed based upon individual needs, such as support needed by disadvantaged or minority groups.

Gilliland's (1993) organisational justice model also addresses two organisational justice facets that had previously been overlooked. The first facet is ease of faking and can refer to modifying information in order to present oneself in a socially desirable manner. The second facet is

applicants' perceived invasion of privacy during the selection process. Each facet can influence how applicants react to a selection procedure, and their overall perceptions of fairness. For example, if individuals can fake their answer, they may perceive a procedure as less just for the organisation in that they are not receiving honest answers. Perceived invasion of privacy can also influence overall perceptions of justice as applicants would want to trust that their personal information will be treated with respect and dignity, so an organisation perceived to have breached privacy rights will be perceived as less just. Perceived privacy invasion may be particularly salient for the use of social media in selection as social media profiles generally contain personal information such as age, family status, and religious backgrounds which applicants may want to keep private.

4.2 Justice Expectations

Expectations also play a part in applicant perspectives of organisational justice. Expectations are what people think will happen about future events, which can shape how people behave and can have cognitive, psychological and affective impacts (Bell, Ryan, & Wiechmann, 2004). Justice expectations are an individual's belief that they will experience fairness in a future event or social situation. Expectations provide a sense of control over an uncertain situation and come from direct experience, other people's experiences, or personal beliefs. For selection processes, applicants may have a pre-formed set of expectations about what the process will be like, which can influence their perceptions of organisational justice. For example, an applicant may expect that a selection process will be procedurally just and evaluate job-related characteristics. If expectations are met then perceived organisational justice will be higher and applicants will be more likely to form a positive impression of the organisation (Bell, Ryan, & Wiechmann, 2004).

When expectations are not met applicants may be more likely to experience negative affect such as anxiety or low satisfaction during the selection process as well as having negative outcomes for the organisation (Bell, Wiechmann, & Ryan, 2006). In their study, Bell, Wiechmann and Ryan (2006) examined the organisational justice expectations of 1832 job applicants prior to participating in a selection process. They assessed how justice expectations influenced pre-test

attitudes and intentions as well as overall perceptions of the selection process. They found that those with higher organisational justice expectations reported higher pre-test motivation, higher job acceptance and recommendation intentions, as well as higher perceptions of justice in the selection process. When expectations were not met, applicants had high levels of perceived injustice, reported higher negative affect and psychological withdrawal from participating in the selection process, as well as being more likely to withdraw an application and less likely to recommend the organisation to others (Bell, Ryan, & Wiechmann, 2004).

Many people may not have had experience with social media being used for selection. As a result, job seekers and applicants may not expect that it will be used to screen them. This means that the expectations that individuals form about the selection process will be expectations based upon traditional selection methods such as ability tests or interviews. Therefore, applicants' expectations may not be met if they learn that social media is part of the selection process. This may lead applicants to form negative perceptions of the organisation and negative perceptions of organisational justice if they perceive the use of social media as being an invasion of privacy or not job-related.

Parks-Yancy and Cooley (2018) examined the expectations of college students about what employers want from workers and how they screen applicants. They found that when resumes were expected to be the main screening method, students were less likely to believe that internet searches, recommendation letters and referrals would be used. They also found that when interviews were expected to be the main screening method, then social media and internet searches would be less likely to be used. Interviews were viewed as being important for applicants to showcase their personality, while social media was viewed as being the least important in terms of employers finding the best applicants.

4.3 Justice and Selection

As selection processes are usually the first point of contact people have with an organisation it is important that applicants can form a positive first impression. This can be influenced by how just they perceive their treatment to be, as this signals how they will be treated as an organisational

member. Applicants' perception of justice have many impacts for the organisation including perceived organisational attractiveness, pursuing litigation, applicant motivation, employee well-being and job performance.

If applicants are treated justly, they are more likely to view the organisation positively and recommend the organisation to others (Cropanzana, Bowen, & Gilliland, 2007). In addition, if applicants see an organisation as attractive, they are more likely to continue with an application and accept a job offer if they are successful. If, on the other hand, applicants perceive the organisation as unjust then they will have a negative perception of the organisation and may believe that they will continue to be treated unjustly as an organisational member (Gilliland, 1993; Reeve & Shultz, 2004; Truxillo, Bauer & McCarthy, 2015). Negative reactions to the selection process can lead to applicant withdrawal (McLarty & Whitman, 2016; Reeve & Shultz, 2004). Applicant withdrawal is a significant factor for organisations to consider, as it can decrease the size and quality of the applicant pool (Guimetti & Raymark, 2017). However, Guimetti and Raymark (2017) found that when applicants had high perceptions of procedural justice, high engagement in the selection procedure, higher perceptions of job and organisational fit, and higher expectancies of receiving a job offer there were lower intentions to withdraw. This suggests that by ensuring selection processes are seen as just and ensuring the process is engaging, organisations can reduce intentions to withdraw.

Konradt, Garbers, Böge, Erdogan and Bauer (2016) conducted a six-wave longitudinal design to explore applicant procedural justice perceptions before, during and after a selection procedure. They found that perceived post-test fairness and pre-feedback perceptions were related to job offer acceptance and job performance. Procedural justice was related to formal characteristics such as job relatedness and opportunity to perform. This suggests that these factors are beneficial for organisations in providing selection processes that applicants perceive as fair and are related to job acceptance and job performance.

An organisation may gain a reputation for being unjust which can impact on their ability to attract future job applicants. If an applicant feels that they have not been treated justly during selection

there is a potential to pursue a litigation claim against the organisation for unjust treatment (Gilliland, 1993; Reeve & Shultz, 2004; Truxillo, Bauer & McCarthy, 2015). This is particularly relevant if applicants believe they have been subject to discriminatory treatment if they are a member of a protected group. In addition, perceived injustice has been linked to ill-health and psychological strain (Von Bonsdorff, Von Bonsdorff, Zhou, Kauppinen, Miettinen, Rantanen, & Vanhala, 2014), as well as reduced job satisfaction, work performance and productivity (Gilliland, 1993; Reeve & Shultz, 2004; Truxillo, Bauer & McCarthy, 2015). Employees who are treated justly are more likely to comply with work policies and engage in organisational citizenship behaviours, as well as sustaining job performance and loyalty (Cropanzana, Bowen, & Gilliland, 2007; Otto & Mamatoglu, 2015). Having a just selection procedure can signal a just organisation.

Schinkel, Van Vianen and Van Dierndonck (2013) examined the combined effects of selection outcomes and applicants' perceived procedural and distributive justice on personal and organisational reactions. They found that for procedural justice, selection outcomes had a greater influence on organisational perceptions when the procedure or outcome was perceived as unjust. For distributive justice, it was found that individuals who were hired but perceived the outcome as unjust had lower perceptions of organisational attractiveness. Hired applicants also reported greater well-being and organisational attractiveness when they perceived that the outcome was just, and unsuccessful applicants reported highest well-being when they perceived the outcome as unjust. They also found that selection outcome and procedural justice interacted for organisational attractiveness with higher procedural justice leading to higher attractiveness for rejected applicants. Procedural justice seemed more important for rejected applicants compared to hired applicants who were more influenced by distributive outcomes.

Among the facets of procedural justice, job relatedness is considered to have the greatest influence on overall perceptions of justice (Zibarras & Patterson, 2015). Zibarras and Patterson (2015) explored the roles of job relatedness as well as self-efficacy in fairness perceptions using data from immediately after selection testing and one month after receiving the outcome of selection. It was found that self-efficacy positively predicted justice perceptions, with applicants who

reported higher self-efficacy being more likely to perceive selection processes as procedurally just following outcome results. For overall perceptions of justice, the selection outcome better predicted perceptions of justice rather than procedural factors such as job relatedness, which could be due to the final stage of selection having a greater influence on justice perceptions as more time and effort had been invested at this stage. Organisations may be able to improve justice perceptions early in the selection process by clearly communicating how the selection tests are job relevant from the beginning of the process.

4.4 Justice Perceptions and Social Media in Selection

Building upon Gilliland's (1993) model, Bauer, Truxillo, Weathers, Bertolino, Erdogan and Campion (2016) present an updated model which takes into account modern hiring processes and the changes they have embraced. Following on from Gilliland's (1993) model, they predicted that privacy concerns would be related to perceptions of procedural justice, which would then influence applicant reactions such as perceived organisational attractiveness. This was supported as it was found that lower privacy concerns were related to higher perceptions of procedural justice. Perceptions of procedural justice were also related to applicant perceptions of organisational attractiveness, intentions towards the organisation and test-taking motivation. For social media, perceived privacy invasions could be a salient factor in applicants' perceptions of procedural justice due to the amount of personal information available to assessors.

Stoughton, Thompson and Meade (2015) also examined applicants' privacy reactions to social media being used as a selection procedure. Participants took part in a realistic selection scenario which included a selection battery and a questionnaire about their social media use. Participants were assigned to one of three conditions: a) no social media screening, b) consistent social media screening, and c) inconsistent social media screening. Participants in conditions where social media was screened were informed that the hiring organisation had screened their social media profiles to assess their professionalism. They found that those in the conditions where social media had been used felt that their privacy had been invaded and perceived the organisation as less attractive than those in the condition with no social media screening. Stoughton, Thompson

and Meade (2015) conducted a second study to replicate their findings and added two moderating conditions of the hiring decisions and applicants' intent to pursue litigation. Participants also viewed social media as an invasion of privacy and had higher litigation intentions than those who did not have their social media screened.

Priyadarshini, Kumar and Jha (2017) explored job seekers' experience and perceptions of their own use of social media in selection procedures and how it influences perceptions of organisational attractiveness. Social media was viewed as being a time saving tool for job seekers to seek information about potential employers in order to help them determine their level of fit within an organisation before applying. In addition, participants viewed the use of social media as being positive for reliability and timeliness as it allowed for them to send and receive application information quickly and easily. Social media was also viewed positively for organisations to use to advertise job vacancies or organisational events, which also helped create awareness about organisations that job seekers may not have initially been interested in. However, there were also concerns around privacy, with participants believing social media should not be used to gather personal information. If social media was used it was perceived to be an invasion of privacy, as well as being intrusive and discriminatory. Overall, job seekers did not think that social media should be used by organisations to find information about applicants and would perceive organisations that used social media for this practice negatively. This finding also corresponds to Gilliland's (1993) model further highlighting the impact perceived privacy invasion has on perceived organisational justice and outcomes such as perceived organisational attractiveness.

As different social media platforms have different purposes, applicants may have a variety of reactions to the use of different platforms being used in selection assessments. Aguado, Rico, Rubio and Fernandez (2016) examined applicant reactions to the use of professional social media sites such as LinkedIn and non-professional sites such as Facebook in selection processes. Overall, reactions and attitudes were more positive when professional sites were used. The content posted on professional sites was perceived as being job-relevant and more valid for selection than

non-professional sites. This is an important aspect to consider, as job related characteristics are one of the more salient facets in Gilliland's (1993) procedural justice rules. If applicants are aware that social media is used during selection they may have negative procedural justice perceptions if it is not clear which job relevant characteristics are being assessed.

4.5 Improving Justice Perceptions

Understanding the ways applicants react to selection procedures can help organisations to make improvements to their selection procedures. There are several strategies that organisations can implement to help improve how applicants experience and react to selection procedures.

Providing information and explanations to applicants is a cost effective and simple strategy (Guitmettie & Raymark, 2017; McCarthy, Bauer, Campion, Van Iddekinge, & Campion, 2017; Truxillo, Bauer, Campion, & Paronto, 2002; Truxillo, Bodner, Bertolino, Bauer, & Yonce, 2009). For Gilliland's (1993) procedural justice, information and explanations relate to providing job-related information and for interpersonal justice information and explanations relate to the amount of feedback applicants receive about a selection process. Providing information can therefore improve fairness perceptions and perceptions of the organisation. This was found in Truxillo, Bauer, Campion and Paronto's (2002) study examining whether providing information about the selection procedure to applicants was related to applicant perceptions of justice, organisational attractiveness and test-taking self-efficacy. They found that providing information can improve justice perceptions as well as perceptions of the organisation.

McCarthy, Bauer, Campion, Van Iddekinge and Campion (2017) tested a set of interventions designed to improve applicant reactions and focused on the use of pre-test explanations to promote positive reactions. Two experimental studies were conducted with working adults, using a control condition and four experimental pre-test explanation groups consisting of an informational fairness condition, a social fairness condition, an uncertainty reduction condition and a combined explanation condition. They found higher perceptions of fairness for those in the combined explanation group than those who were not given an explanation. In addition, the effects of the test explanations were influenced by the test-takers' perceived organisational

support and the quality of leader member exchange relationships with supervisors. These results suggest that pre-test explanations improve reactions through providing procedural information and well as promoting positive interpersonal treatment between applicants and assessors as outlined in Gilliland's (1993) model.

Providing explanations could also be beneficial when social media is used in selection by providing applicants with information that follows Gilliland's (1993) procedural justice rules. This can include information about the selection procedure to explain why social media is used. Langer, Konig and Fitali (2018) tested whether providing procedural information on new technology would positively influence applicant reactions. They found that information had a positive impact on the overall organisational attractiveness, but also that receiving large amounts of information may have been overwhelming for applicants. The results of this study suggest that providing information to job seekers and applicants around the use of social media in selection could improve how applicants perceive it. This aligns with Gilliland's (1993) procedural justice rules with explanations and feedback being influential in applicants' perspectives of organisational justice.

Information and explanations could also come in the form of advanced notice that social media will be viewed. This could improve perceptions of organisational justice as applicants may perceive that they are being treated with honesty, one of Gilliland's (1993) procedural justice rules. Advance notice could also provide applicants with a sense of control over their personal information (Black, Stone, & Johnson, 2015), and reduce applicants' perceived privacy invasion. Black, Stone and Johnson (2015) built upon Stone and Stone's (1990) privacy model to create a model specifically for social media. Stone and Stone's (1990) model suggests that an individual's values will influence their beliefs about the consequences of a lack of control of information. For social media, it was proposed that when an individual place more value on controlling information, they will have a stronger belief that a lack of control will lead to negative consequences. Therefore, when information is collected without permission such as in a selection process, individuals are more likely to perceive an invasion of privacy and may be more likely to

have negative reactions such as lower job pursuit intentions and decreased perception of organisational attractiveness

Recruitment and selection are characterised by a great deal of information sharing and trust building between an organisation and job seekers (Klotz, Veiga, Buckley, & Gavin, 2013). Each interaction between the organisation and job seeker provides opportunities for perceptions of trust to develop or weaken. The job interview is usually the first point at which job seekers and the organisation meet, and provides an opportunity to examine perceptions of trustworthiness that may have been developed prior to the interview. The ability to have a two-way conversation gives job seekers and interviewers the chance to strengthen their perceptions of trustworthiness and can give job seekers the chance to discuss any information organisations may find through online sources that weaken the organisation's perspectives of trustworthiness. Having the opportunity to engage in two-way conversation can help improve applicants' perceptions of organisational justice (Gilliland, 1993). Social media does not generally provide the opportunities for two-way conversation, and if applicants find out that their profiles have been used, their trust in the organisation can be decreased. Organisations could improve applicant justice perspectives by being open about the use of social media which can provide applicants with the opportunity to ask questions or explain their social media content.

The Present Study

The present study set out to explore how New Zealanders experience social media in job seeking and personnel selection. At the time of searching for literature there was a lack of empirical research into the use of social media for selection within a New Zealand setting. For the present study it is hoped to fill a void in research into New Zealand's use of social media against a backdrop of research primarily based in the United States and Europe. In addition, as New Zealand is often perceived to have a very laidback and carefree attitude this study set out to explore if this attitude would be reflected in perceptions around social media as a selection tool.

Chapter 5: Method

The present study was evaluated by peer review and recorded as low risk in the Annual Report of the Massey University Human Ethics Committee.

A qualitative approach was chosen for this study, so that the research question ‘how do New Zealanders experience social media in job seeking and selection?’ could be explored in depth. A qualitative approach was chosen for a variety of reasons. The main reason was that through thematic analysis and the use of a conversational-style interview, participants were able to express themselves in detail, which could provide information beyond what was originally expected (Braun and Clarke, 2006). In addition, thematic analysis can reveal similarities and differences across participants. Braun and Clarke (2006) highlight several other advantages of using thematic analysis which are worth mentioning. First, the results of thematic analysis can be presented in a way which can be interpreted by the general public, as well as being used to produce analyses for policy development. Also, thematic analysis is described as a flexible approach, which can provide a variety of options for analysing data, reducing any restrictions around what conclusions can be made.

To explore the main research question of “How do New Zealanders experience social media in job seeking and selection?”, a structured interview was constructed (Appendix B). First, participants were asked about how they use social media for job seeking as well as which platforms they prefer to use and why they prefer certain platforms over others. When discussing job seeking, we also wanted to explore what strategies job seekers use to find opportunities and job-related information. Participants were also asked whether their social media profiles had been discussed during interviews and if they had ever been asked to provide passwords to their profiles as well as what their perceptions of organisations that did this would be.

Participants were also asked about how they believe organisations are using social media, in terms of how organisations might be attracting applicants as well as whether they believe organisations use social media as a screening tool or not. In addition, the study explored participants’

perceptions of organisations that did use social media for screening and their opinions around its' use.

A total of eight participants were recruited. Six one on one interviews were conducted and one focus group. Interviews were primarily conducted through Skype, with three being conducted over the phone and the focus group being held in person. The face to face interviews provided a conversational style setting which allowed for a more in-depth discussion of participants experiences. A ninth participant was interested but couldn't attend the arranged focus group and was unable to arrange a one on one interview. Half of the participants (n = 4) were recruited through two university contact courses on campus. Students were shown a power-point slide and the research project was outlined. The criterion for taking part in the research was having experience in using social media for job seeking or selection, or if they had used social media on the recruiting side. Students who fit the criteria were invited to get in touch with the researcher if they had any questions or if they wanted to sign up and the researcher's contact email was given out. The other half of participants (n = 4) were recruited through the researcher's social media profile, in a status post on Facebook outlining the research project and inviting anyone who was interested to get in touch via private message. Those who got in touch via Facebook were then given the researchers' contact information. The same criteria for participation were used.

After participants had reached out via email or private message on Facebook, they were sent an information sheet (Appendix C) to read through and invited to ask any further questions. The information sheet outlined the aims of the study and participants' rights during the study including being able to decline to answer any particular questions and to ask for the sound recorder to be turned off. After reading through the information sheets and agreeing to be a participant, participants were sent a consent form (Appendix D) and demographics survey to look through and fill out. For the interviews via Skype or phone, participants were asked to give verbal consent for interviews to be audio recorded. The participants consent form included having the interview being sound recorded and confirms that participants had read the Information Sheet and had the

details of the study explained to them and that they could ask questions at any time. All participants agreed to the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

All of the participants (n = 8) had experiences with using social media in job seeking and three participants had recruiting experience with social media and had used it as a screening tool. This opened up the study to explore experiences and perceptions from an organisational perspective. The recruiters' experiences were explored in terms of the types of platforms they use and how they use it in terms of advertising or screening candidates as well as the type of information they share or gather. In addition, recruiters were asked about how information gained about applicants is used during the selection process as well as how fair they perceive its use to be as an assessment tool.

All of the interviews were recorded to make transcribing easier. Each interview was transcribed by hand to become more familiar with the data, with each interview being listened to five times to ensure nothing was missed out. Interviews ranged in length from 22 minutes to 50 minutes, with the focus group taking 50 minutes.

After all interviews were transcribed initial coding began. Braun and Clarke's (2006) guide to thematic analysis was used to guide each step in the analysis. Each interview was reviewed to find points relating to the study aims and each point was given a code. This included points such as social media type, social media use, and job search strategy. For some points multiple codes were used to reflect different meanings. Once all interviews were coded, researcher and supervisor brainstormed potential themes including privacy, fairness, ease of use, and strategies. A process of mind-mapping then started, by going through each interview and mapping out various themes and sub-themes from the coded data. At this point similarities and differences began to emerge across participants, as well as contradictions within interviews of participants' opinions.

Chapter 6: Results

Three over-arching themes emerged: practicality, impression management and trust. Each of the main themes had within it several sub-themes, located within three main processes of the job seeking process. These were the job-search phase, the application phase and the interview phase. Each phase had distinct sub-themes of experiences and strategies that participants engaged in with social media. During the job-seeking phase participants emphasised the practicality of social media afforded to both job seekers and organisations. The application phase centred around the theme of impression management through strategies job seekers engage in to curate their CVs and organisations strategies to protect their organisational image. Finally, for the interview phase, trust was the central theme emerging as both job seekers and organisations aim to establish trust between each other.

6.1 Phase 1: Job Search. Baiting the Hook

During the initial job search phase, social media was often used as a tool for researching information by both job seekers and organisations. During this phase the practicality social media provided was a key underlying theme. Job seekers used social media to seek out potential job opportunities, and to research what different organisations have to offer before applying for a role. Organisations utilised social media as a tool to advertise role vacancies as well as to boost their organisational reputation and image to attract potential applicants.

The Job Seeker

Two main types of strategies were identified: active and passive, with job seekers having different job seeking motivations for each strategy. Passive job seekers found social media to be a practical tool that made job seeking an easy and time efficient process. Active job seekers, on the other hand, saw greater value in the usefulness of social media to target their job seeking strategies and find specific types of information.

Passive Job Seekers

Passive job seekers were not actively searching for a new job, instead they were interested in opportunities that might have better pay and conditions than their current role. As most passive job seekers were currently employed they wanted to see what other organisations could offer them and also check that they were not applying for jobs that had a lower salary than they currently earned. This enabled passive job seekers to avoid applying for jobs that they would later withdraw from when finding out about the expected salary.

See what other, um, what other I guess, businesses can offer me with regards to my skills and looking at different salaries and things like that.

Participant 7.

I don't apply for jobs if they're below what I'm on at the moment, even though some of the jobs sound interesting and I think oh I'd enjoy doing that ... I don't know if it's going to pay enough, so I don't know if I want to waste my time applying for it. Participant 6.

In terms of fit, passive job seekers emphasised person-values fit more than person-job fit. This meant they were able to be more selective in their job seeking practices and could pick and choose from jobs that interested them. In particular the culture of an organisation was important for most passive job seekers, and they could browse for jobs based upon their perceived values and culture fit within the organisation.

I want to understand what their company values are ... what kind of environmental or community involvement they have ... I'm looking at that big picture around it. Participant 3.

I heard of a job that was going at Griffins ... I went on LinkedIn and found it and looked at personnel specification ... It did fit what I was looking for. Participant 5.

Facebook was a useful platform for seeking out this type of information, with Participant 7 browsing the Facebook pages of schools she was interested in applying for to find out what the environment of the school would be like based on the type of posts and photos shared.

Being a teacher schools are now moving to social media so a lot of things being posted for parents, so you can get a really good gauge of what a school is about from seeing their Facebook ... you can see what kind of school you get into. Participant 7.

However, for passive job seekers who were interested in opportunities within an organisation they were currently employed in, company values could occasionally be over-emphasised as they were already familiar with the organisation.

... you go in and they kind of throw their core values at you ... so you kind of expect those ethical values to be there, I don't need to see it in and open up a webpage. Participant 6.

Passive job seekers did not want to use sites that required much effort. LinkedIn was found to be too difficult to use, as it was difficult to login to and took too much time to filter through relevant jobs. Seek however allowed passive job seekers to easily filter searches and access job vacancies without having to log in. In addition, Seek provided easy access to company websites which provided a larger database of information and additional job vacancies to browse. This suggests that passive job seekers value platforms that are simple to use, and make job seeking more time efficient, as they may be less persistent in using platforms that need effort to search for specific roles. As passive job seekers would likely already have employment they would not need or want to put a lot of effort in finding new jobs as there is less urgency for them.

I'm not actively searching so I don't want to spend a lot of time looking. I just want to 'oh that's interesting' and one click have a look. Participant 6.

Active Job Seekers

Active job seekers on the other hand were prepared to use a wider range of platforms, including those that were perceived as trickier to use such as LinkedIn. LinkedIn was viewed as a professional platform, through its function as an online C.V. Users of LinkedIn could search for information by categories, and had the option of allowing their profiles to be viewed by potential recruiters, giving job seekers the added benefit of directly messaging organisations about jobs or companies they were interested in. While also focused on pay and conditions, active job seekers were more interested in finding job related information such as the role and relevant skills needed, which was primarily found through job descriptions. Overall LinkedIn was perceived to have good accessibility for job seekers and was viewed favourably as a job seeking tool.

I think it's easier to use LinkedIn for jobs ... the role they're looking for ...
looking for category of what they're looking for. Participant 1.

This reflects the different needs that passive and active job seekers have, suggesting passive job seekers place more value on platforms that allow them to easily satisfy their curiosity, letting them be more particular about jobs they apply for. While it may seem contradictory for passive job seekers to be more particular, they would have greater flexibility in waiting to find better opportunities or the perfect job and to match their needs compared to active job seekers who by definition are seeking work and are thus concerned with finding a job that they can perform.

The Organisation

Organisations had a relatively active approach to using social media to attract potential applicants and used social media in a way that attracted both active and passive job seekers. Both job seekers and those within an organisation shared their perspectives on the ways organisations are making use of social media as a practical tool in the recruiting process. This included the visibility social media provided organisations as well as cost and efficiency savings.

Job Seeker's Perspective

Organisations were perceived to be making use of the visibility they can have through social media in building their reputation by posting about company successes even if there were no job vacancies being advertised. This strategy allowed organisations to present interesting bait to draw in potential job seekers. Social media provided organisations with a way to showcase the best and create a positive image. LinkedIn was perceived to be particularly useful for organisations in reputation building, as it provides organisations with a platform to share articles about their company achievements. This helped job seekers stay “fresh and up to date” (Participant 3) and keep in touch with what was going on in the wider industry.

I have found that people have been posting about some of what they perceive would be successes and posting that on their LinkedIn profile try and build up the perception of the company. Participant 3.

Social media was also perceived positively as a cost effective and highly accessible tool to actively advertise roles. Participants believed organisations were taking advantage of social media's visibility in attracting both active and passive job seekers through posting job advertisements. Facebook in particular was viewed positively for organisations to advertise through as it allows them to target both specific audiences such as young people seeking casual work who are “quite active on social media” (Participant 7), as well as being used to reach a range of potential applicants.

Because we are always accessing it, we have that cost and availability to access it, that they find it easier, I've noticed, it's easier to put it out there on Facebook. Participant 7.

Organisation's Perspective

Only one participant, a recruiter, talked about the organisation's perspective on using social media as a recruiting tool to attract potential applicants. Participant 6 had experience with their organisation using Facebook as a tool for recruitment drives to attract both active and passive job

seekers. It was used primarily to target active job seekers through advertising vacancies and careers, as well as promoting core values of the organisation and benefits for working for the company. This was a useful tool for the organisation as they could keep a record of people joining the Facebook group in order to expand connections and send out surveys to find ways in which they can improve their recruiting practices. This also allowed organisations to attract passive job seekers, as it made the organisation visible to a wider audience, reaching out to applicants who may not initially think to search or apply for a particular role.

They do advertise vacancies and encouraging people to pick up a career ...

it gives a lot more detail about what we're doing ... goes into their core values ... as an avenue to get people in, who wouldn't normally look.

Participant 6.

Conclusion: Baiting the hook.

During the initial job search phase there was a lot of distance between job seekers and organisations, but there was also an interplay between the two as they began to try to figure each other out and draw each other in. Organisations attempted to attract potential employees by 'baiting the hook' through utilising social media to get their name and career opportunities out to job seekers, by posting job vacancies and organisational information, as well as promoting their organisational image even if there were no job vacancies.

Job seekers could find the information organisations put out and use it to decide if they want to 'take the bait' or not. At this phase, job seekers have a greater amount of choice and control than organisations do in the job search process. Social media provides job seekers with a practical tool to assess organisations that they are drawn to and figure out what they are like before applying. At this point, there is little direct contact with the organisation, with the main interactions being one-way from the organisation to the job seeker.

Job seekers are motivated to use social media for various reasons. For both active and passive job seekers, career-related social media platforms acted as a useful tool to collate information about

different job vacancies based upon personal preferences. This was particularly valued by passive job seekers, as the platforms would send email alerts of jobs matching their specifications allowing them to explore their options without having to continuously input their preferences to search engines. Both active and passive job seekers were motivated to use social media to assess their perceived level of fit within an organisation. However, active and passive job seekers place differing amounts of emphasis on particular aspects of fit. Active job seekers emphasised seeking information about person-job fit, while passive job seekers placed more value on values fit. Overall, social media was described as a tool that they would use for finding out more information before ‘taking the bait’ and putting in an application.

In their social media strategies, organisations need to be aware of active and passive job seekers, including those internal and external to the organisation. Yet there were indications that the social media strategies were not always well matched to what job seekers want. While organisations may believe that job seekers want to know about particular roles and task information, they may be excluding information such as what their organisational values and culture are like. On the other hand, an organisation may put too much emphasis on its core values and culture which could be off-putting for job seekers who want more information about pay and conditions. Organisations also may not be considering passive job seekers who are searching for new opportunities within their organisation, and who may be very aware of the cultural side of the company but, who want to know what different salaries for roles may be. Organisations may not be posting and sharing good enough bait to draw in a range of job seekers and strong applicants.

Social media has the potential for organisations to widen the applicant pool from a small pond to a large lake, or even a whole ocean of applicants, including international job seekers. However, the choice of sites that organisations use may inadvertently limit the range of their audience. Passive job seekers value sites that are easy to use, so to primarily use trickier sites like LinkedIn may limit the amount of passive job seekers finding the opportunities. In addition, LinkedIn may not be suited for younger job seekers entering the job market as they may not have had as much exposure to using this platform and may not have a wide professional network to make use of.

These factors may result in a limited audience and could lead to organisations missing out on hiring the best applicants if they use a platform that is perceived as too difficult to use.

6.2 Phase 2: Application. Catch or Release?

After job seekers decide that they want to take the bait they begin to circle the bait in preparation to ‘bite the hook’ and apply for a job. In this phase, job seekers and organisations are closer together, with organisations having more control now than they had in the job search phase. Now, job seekers want to take the bait in applying for a role, but organisations can control whether they will let job seekers move on to the next phase.

The main theme that emerged here was the tension between job seekers wanting to present themselves in the best possible light, and organisations wanting the maximum possible information about applicants to enable them to shortlist candidates. A central theme in this process was the impression management that job seekers engaged in through curating their social media profiles and CV’s. During this, social media was utilised to determine what type of information organisations may be looking for, helping job seekers curate their online image. For organisations during this phase, social media was a useful tool which allowed recruiters to engage in their own impression management through identifying potential red flags in candidates that may threaten an organisations’ image.

Job Seekers

Curating profiles

Job seekers prepared to take the bait by presenting themselves in the best light through impression management, by ensuring that their profiles were “clean” and a “good snapshot” (Participant 2). While they wanted to create a professional image, changes mainly consisted of removing or privatising posts or photos that could be perceived as ‘red flags’. Red flags included photos of partying and drinking, as well as comments or posts with disparaging content about past employers.

Comments that are full of swear words, and things like that it's just a red flag ... what kind of photos you have going up, and photos I think are the most accessible because photos circulate so easily. Participant 7.

Going out partying, drinking all that sort of stuff that kind of puts under their radar, are they going to be committed to this role, are they going to be mature enough to have this role? Participant 1.

For social media, most participants would only adjust the contents of career-related profiles like LinkedIn to ensure the information was relevant and up to date to reflect their skills and work experience. LinkedIn was perceived positively for creating a good employee picture as it is all about creating a professional image. However, this was only useful when participants actively updated their profiles, with several participants reporting their profiles were no longer relevant.

I don't keep mine up to date, I think my work experience section is definitely not up to date. Participant 4.

More personal platforms were perceived as a poor way to create an employee picture. This was largely due to the information not being job relevant and a lack of active social media use limiting the amount of information. In general, personal social media profiles such as Facebook were perceived as only a facet of life and not representative of participants as employees.

We all know what we post isn't representative of real life it's representative of 30 seconds of real life. In the moment stuff. Participant 3.

Making sure their social media profiles were "clean" was not seen as a strenuous process, and while most participants did tailor their profiles it was acknowledged that not everyone would think to do so. This suggests that job seekers are more concerned that organisations are viewing their profiles to find negative information rather than to evaluate their employee characteristics.

I don't think it's a very strenuous thing I don't think it should be a very strenuous thing either. Participant 2.

Choice

When it came to impression management it was seen as a matter of choice in what to share and post on social media. As a user of social media, it was believed that users choose what content to post, and that it is up to the individual to portray themselves in the best way they can. This was particularly important as they emphasised that social media posts “live forever” (Participant 3) and that they have the potential to spread beyond what was originally intended.

I don't think that's how people are intending their information to be used but whatever they post is exposing them to employer perception ... I'm just really aware that the internet lives forever and anything I post up anywhere has the potential to outlive me. Participant 3.

Most of the applicants were aware of this and were mindful of their online presence and the impression it may give. Even when discussing being unable to control what friends on social media post, one participant stressed the need to be aligned with the values of any organisation applied for. For these participants, this was an obvious way to engage in impression management, as they knew that once it's online it spreads and could have potential implications they may not think of at the time of posting.

If you're buying in to the values of a company then you should be living them every day ... so if you're getting tagged and things like that ... I think that it's up to you, you have to make better choices. Participant 7.

Privacy Settings

Another impression management tactic that some participants employed involved keeping their privacy settings “locked down like something you can't take the lock out” (Participant 3), actively limiting the type and amount of information that organisations could view. This came from believing that private life should stay private, as well as having an awareness of the potential of social media to affect their future career prospects. Tight privacy settings would be employed for personal social media accounts, leaving only professionally oriented profiles to be viewed. This

ensured that they would only be evaluated on information that was perceived as job relevant, providing potential employers with a picture of what they would be like as an employee.

I'm kind of aware of people looking at Facebook and it could get back to somebody or it could have a negative effect on career prospects later.

Participant 6.

On the other side, there was also an awareness that social media could be used to show employers a different side of them by opening up privacy settings on more personal profiles. This would provide employers with more information about their personality and interests and was perceived to be another source of information that could be used to distinguish them from the rest.

Never thought about opening up my privacy setting to show a side of me.

It's going to show my hobbies and interests. Participant 5.

Curating the Application

Part of impression management was the picture job seekers created as a potential employee. Participants viewed their CVs, cover letters, references and interviews as the best way to present themselves as an employee. CVs were described as highly curated but were seen as more personal than a LinkedIn profile. Overall participants felt that CVs don't always show their full range of experiences, particularly older participants who had a wider range of work experiences. They all emphasised the need to tailor and plan what to include on their CVs to highlight specific skills that are relevant for particular jobs, and to keep their CVs up to date. For most participants the first source of information used in tailoring their CV was the job description.

If there was a particular job I saw on LinkedIn that I liked, and they have like your job description and job roles, I'd tailor my CV for that, so, all my skills for example would be based around the skills and competencies that they want. Participant 4.

Participants believed the main sources of information that organisations used to assess applicants were CVs and referees. However, they also believed that referees provided by applicants are likely

to have been chosen to only have positive comments. Social media was seen to expand on the amount of information available to organisations in assessing applicants and was perceived as a particularly good tool because it “gives you an idea of what people are like socially, and the general day to day attitude.” (Participant 6). Social media was also perceived to be a useful tool to help organisations verify information such as knowledge, skills and abilities, through checking listed qualifications and work experience. It was also perceived to be helpful in evaluating applicants with similar abilities.

... if you've got candidates of very similar capabilities, or capacity, I wouldn't have a problem with that cause I've put the stuff on social media, I've put it out there for people to look at. Participant 6.

For most participants social media was perceived as a good tool for organisations to use, as it allows them to see “all info that's relevant” (Participant 8) such as daily attitudes, personality and behavioural attributes which may not be included on CVs. Therefore, it was perceived as fair for organisations to want to find out more about the ‘real’ person behind the CV. Social media was thus seen as an extension of their CVs and it was expected that organisations would view it to do a background check to ensure applicants meet all their requirements. In addition, if they learnt that their social media profiles led them to miss out on a job they felt that they would be curious as to what was on their profile that was incompatible with the organisation and use the experience as an opportunity to ‘fix’ their profile.

... if I missed out on a job and it was due to social media I don't think I'd feel sad ... obviously I've put something out there that's not, um, compatible with what they're wanting, ... maybe I should, yeah, sort my own social media out ... Participant 7.

I hope for their sake its competency based about work or do you want to know about my mosaic collection. Participant 3.

However, while most participants thought it was fair for organisations to view their social media, Participant 3 also stated that it “would set alarm bells ringing.” Participant 3 and a few others, felt that social media shouldn’t be used over their CV or cover letter as social media doesn’t contain as much information. Further, social media was not perceived to be representative of them as an employee. Social media was described to have a limited view and “doesn’t show the real you” (Participant 1) in addition to lacking any job relevant information about competencies to be assessed. The exception to this was LinkedIn, as it was perceived primarily as a career tool and therefore gave a fair representation of them as an employee.

While it was believed that currently organisations use social media to screen candidates but “they don’t tell you” (Participant 1) participants wanted to receive feedback about the use of social media. This was a way for participants to ensure that they were being assessed based on valid and competency-based reasons. If participants were turned down because of their social media information such as their hobbies or profile picture it was perceived as grounds for discrimination. This reflects the lack of trust participants had that their social media profiles would be viewed in a bias-free way.

If they’re gonna use social media over my CV or cover letter to show that then yeah, they’re not doing a very good job. Participant 1.

Organisation perspective

Red flags

Job seekers are prudent to pay attention what they show on social media, because the recruiters who discussed this issue emphasised that organisations are looking for ‘red flags’ to be used to ‘screen out’ applicants from the early part of the process.

You’re going to see inappropriate behaviour, or behaviour that you don’t want to see in your organisation, so you’re screening that bottom half off or that bottom 10% off. Participant 5.

A red flag might be information about behaviour or values that a recruiter feels wouldn't match the organisation. Searching social media for personal information was perceived as a good tool to use as social media posts were believed to be representative of real life and would be used to find "a reason not to hire someone" (Participant 2). In terms of the content that organisations were looking for, participants with recruiting experience emphasised "red flags" as the main type of information, which included derogatory comments, as well as drinking and partying, and was often evident in photos that are available on social media.

It's around your comments ... it's a huge red flag someone who's gone and had a whinge and a moan ... how much they share as well, cause if you can't keep a secret you can't work for government ... even boozy weekends ... a general sense of the person. Participant 8.

For me, I look at the photos and again I'm looking for types of behaviour in those photos ... if they've got more to their life to just having drunken stupors and parties... if people are going to share inappropriate behaviour on Facebook I probably don't want them in our organisation. Participant 5.

Protecting reputation

In addition, recruiters also looked at applicants' social media privacy settings. If settings were tight it was seen as a positive, as it showed that applicants were aware of the ability for information on the internet to spread around, and that they understood how privacy settings worked. In the "social media age of living" (Participant 6) there is the implicit awareness that once something is posted on the internet its out for all the world to see, and if it contains potentially damaging material and can be associated with an organisation then it's something to be concerned about. When people don't know or don't care about the damage their posts can cause then issues can arise within an organisation. Whether it is embarrassment or litigation, the posts that employees are putting out in the world have the potential to cause great harm. Checking social media was a way to ensure that applicants weren't posting information on inappropriate or criminal

behaviours, and checking that applicants were at least aware that their profiles could be set privately.

If somebody's very, very tight on social media, very tight privacy and no one can look at them then we approve. Participant 6.

However, very tight privacy settings could also be taken as a red flag in itself, with applicants having very tight privacy settings being perceived with suspicion that the applicant could be hiding something.

I haven't had much success in doing that, people are not putting inappropriate behaviour on Facebook, and a lot of people have good privacy settings as well. Participant 5.

Potential for discrimination

Recruiters were all aware of employment discrimination laws. However, there was the view that "what you think is your own business" (Participant 5) implying that a reason for not hiring someone was only discriminatory if you chose to share it. It was also emphasised that you can't discriminate against someone based on what they do in their private life, but because of the nature of the organisation and its reputation, being depicted with red flags would be detrimental to job chances. While personal life is not usually considered to be part of the recruitment and selection process, there was a general view that social media information is all relevant as it would reflect what applicants were like on a personal side and that it is open to view, being on a public platform.

To be honest what I'm doing's not necessarily fair to the applicant cause I'm doing it without their consent but it's a public domain so I don't need their consent. Participant 5.

Interestingly, only one recruiter reported being aware that not everyone has social media and that this would put people without social media at a disadvantage, which may unintentionally be a discriminatory factor. This could be particularly important when using professional platforms such as LinkedIn to assess job-related characteristics. Firstly, not everybody has a LinkedIn

account, and secondly, participants who did have a LinkedIn profile differed in the amount of relevant information that they had updated. This leads to different amounts of information to be assessed, putting those without a profile or without an active profile at a disadvantage.

If somebody doesn't have a social media profile we'd be a bit suspicious. Are they actually tech savvy? ... But then if somebody doesn't have Facebook, there are people who probably don't use social media at all so you could be disadvantaging them. Participant 6.

In addition, another potential factor for applicants with little or no social media presence could have been age. Recruiters found that younger applicants had profiles that were easy to access and may have been more likely to use more than one social media platform.

I think we sort of put it down to age a little bit, the older candidates were a bit more shut down. Participant 8.

Conclusion: Catch or release?

This stage highlights the contest described as a "double-edged sword" (Participant 6) with job seekers needing to have some form of social media profile in order to show that they can understand technology, but not display any red flags, while still needing to have a sufficient amount of personal information for organisations to evaluate.

Job seekers curated their social media profiles in various ways depending upon whether they were curating personal or professional profiles. Professional profiles were curated by updating relevant job information such as skills and work experiences. Personal profiles such as Facebook were curated by removing content perceived by job seekers as unacceptable, with no consideration for including more acceptable information or job relevant characteristics. As organisations continue to use social media as a selection tool, job seekers may continue to curate their profiles by keeping them clean, but it may also be beneficial for job seekers to curate their personal profiles for a professional audience, creating a picture of what they are like as an employee. This could help

ensure they do not get screened out for having minimal information available, and improve their chances of moving through to the next stage.

However, tension arises as organisations want to make sure that they are hiring the best candidate possible. Organisations want the most detailed information they can get about the public and private lives of applicants. This means that organisations often want to know what the ‘real person’ is like beyond the managed persona applicants create in their CV, so that they can begin to screen out unsuitable applicants. This was for a variety of reasons, such as ensuring person-organisation fit, to protect the organisations’ reputation as well as to verify information provided in CVs. When job seekers engage in impression management to remove their ‘red flags’, organisations may be less able to screen candidates out. In addition, with job seekers becoming smarter about privacy settings, organisations can have difficulty in accessing profiles to find out information. Job seekers’ curating practices limit the amount and type of information that organisations can access, which can impact the way social media is used as a selection tool.

Organisations may also view highly curated profiles or profiles with tight security settings with suspicion, as they cannot discern if an applicant is cautious and conscientious about their profiles or if they have something to hide. Further, if organisations are less able to use social media to gauge an idea of what the real person is like then this could mean that viewing social media for assessment becomes redundant. As most social media platforms do not contain job related information there is not a lot to be gained by viewing profiles on platforms such as Facebook if organisations cannot assess what a person is like socially. Interestingly this was also perceived as being unfair to organisations as they are being presented with a curated profile that could be as sterile as the CVs that they are trying to supplement.

Organisations therefore control which applicants are allowed to take the bait and progress to the next phase by screening out and removing the hook from unsuitable candidates, releasing them from the application process and catching applicants who meet their criteria.

6.3 Phase 3: Interview. Landing the Catch

After organisations have decided to let applicants take the bait, job seekers and organisations are now in the same boat. This takes job seekers to the interview phase. At this phase job seekers and organisations can interact and communicate to clarify or gain further information. The central theme at this stage is the desire for trust each party has. Both parties want to avoid nasty surprises. Organisations want to trust that they are hiring the best applicants and that they won't be caught out with any negative consequences later. Job seekers want to be treated fairly and with respect throughout the selection process.

Job seekers' perceptions

Having done preparation by learning about the organisation, job seekers are now in a position to answer and also to ask questions to further explore fit. Job seekers wanted to look good for the interview by using social media to prepare themselves. Participants prepared for the interviews by Google-searching particular information such as company size and industry type, as well as using social media like Facebook and LinkedIn for more general information including values, organisational goals and what was generally going on in the organisation. Participants sought out this information so that during the interview they could ask questions and talk about their familiarity with the organisation, showing that they had made an effort. This also enabled them to present themselves as an employee, by seeking out information which would reflect their own job practices and values.

Partly it's showing I've bothered to do some research about them ...

Showing that I've taken the time, I'm interested in them enough to go and find more information. Participant 3.

Passwords and privacy

Recent media attention has highlighted situations where interviewees have been asked to provide social media passwords to allow an interviewer to view information on personal profiles (Barnett, 2012; Fitzhugh, 2014). Participants had a range of responses when asked questions about this

situation. Most said that they would not give up their passwords even while acknowledging it could cost them a job opportunity.

I guess you're always on the back foot in an interview situation ... And at the risk of giving the wrong answer that they're looking for I would probably be unwilling to give up my password. Participant 6.

However, this strategy may be context specific, as one participant said they would be likely to give up their password if it was for a highly desired role; "If it was a dream job I'd be like yeah I'll give you my password." (Participant 4). In addition, other participants would consider compromising with the interviewer, allowing them to view social media profiles on the spot during the interview without handing over passwords. This suggests job seekers want to be able to have control over the amount of information that can be viewed and the duration of viewing, showing interviewers their profiles for 10 minutes in person compared to giving up their passwords and having the interviewer browsing their profiles for an unknown period of time.

If you wanna have a look at it then we'll sit down and have a look at it now.
Participant 1.

Others were concerned with their own security and safety concerns, and saw it as crossing a line with access to private messages breaching the privacy rights of others.

... I think it crosses that line, because you've got your private messages and things like that, and I mean that is private ... Participant 8.

Although participants wouldn't expect to be asked for their passwords in an interview situation, it would not surprise them if this changed over time. However, this would only be perceived as acceptable if job seekers were aware that it would be a part of the application process so they had the choice before applying as to whether they would want to work for an organisation with an open social media policy.

Maybe in the future it might be because of the way social media is being used more and more but I think it would have to be part of the application process before you even get to the interview. Participant 6.

One job seeker had experienced an interview where their social media profile was discussed. Participant 7 had improved her privacy settings and changed her social media name as a security measure and as a result could not be found online by the interviewer. As it was brought up in the interview, she was able to pull up her social media profile and show the interviewer what they needed to see. This participant perceived that social media should be an essential part of the application process due to the nature of her work in the teaching industry, which has security concerns with working with children.

When I had my interview for my current job he said to me ‘oh I couldn’t find your profile’ and I said ‘If you’re interested you’re more than welcome to have a look’ ... I think it should be an essential part of actually looking at applicants ... Because I think it does show an insight into peoples’ lives and it’s up to you what you put out there. Participant 7.

Organisation perspective

Recruiters recognised the need to bring up any concerns that they had from viewing applicants’ social media profiles and to give applicants the chance to explain any content that could have been perceived as a red flag.

... in part of an interview situation it could be used as like a “hey look we’ve had a look and we’re seeing that you do this quite often, you’ve had a boozy weekend drinking ... that’s not really what we’re trying to portray is this something that will happen regularly?” Participant 8

None of the participants who spoke from a recruiters’ perspective said that they had ever asked an applicant for their social media password. At this stage recruiters already knew a lot of

information about the applicants, as social media was used in order to screen out applicants before they reached the interview phase. Social media was perceived as off limits for final decision making, for which a candidate's skills, qualifications and references would be used instead. Social media was only seen as appropriate for the shortlisting stage, where it made cutting a large candidate list down a lot easier by screening profiles for "red flags" to eliminate the less desirable candidates.

I don't use it for the final decision I use it for the coarse first cut. Participant

5.

They believed that disclosing to applicants that their social media would be used as part of the assessment process would help make it fairer for the applicants. This could be in the form of advertising at the application stage, by explicitly making it clear to applicants that social media would be screened in making selection decisions to avoid the current uncertainty around its use. This was seen as particularly important as the use of social media grows in New Zealand and the wider world, as the more people use social media to share information about their lives the more organisations are going to take advantage of this rich source of data.

I think to be fair to the applicants ... it's always something that should be disclosed, if you're going to use information say in an interview. Participant

8.

Recruiters did want to know what lay behind the privacy settings, to avoid getting caught out with a poor fitting employee. To this end, one strategy was to ask questions about applicants' social media profiles in a round-about way which would prompt applicants to disclose information about their personal life that may have already been discovered through screening social media. This provided applicants with the chance to disclose both relevant skills that may not have been included on their CV but also gave them the chance to disclose and explain any other information that may have been available on their social media, opening up the opportunity for two-way communication.

Wouldn't actually question what was on their Facebook page ... Ask very open-ended questions and let them raise stuff that you probably know they do anyway. Participant 6.

Conclusion: Landing the Catch

During the interview stage job seekers and organisations have the last chance to gain further information or explain information to each other before forming their final impressions and 'landing the catch'. Tension arises here with organisations continuing to seek out information on job seekers' personal lives and job seekers perceiving organisations in a negative light due to the lack of job-relatedness of this information. This tension is further amplified with the possibility of organisations requesting social media passwords from applicants, which was largely perceived negatively as a breach of personal privacy rights.

In addition, job seekers emphasised their desire for organisations to disclose that they will use social media, and their preferences for social media to be viewed only in terms of job-related content. This caused tension as many participants acknowledged that their social media profiles did not contain any job relevant information, and that what they are like socially is completely different to their work life persona. In addition, organisations mainly use social media with the purpose of gaining an idea of what a person is like socially, as more traditional sources of information such as CVs tell them what they need to know about job related characteristics. Therefore, it is difficult for organisations to evaluate job relevant characteristics if there are none available to assess through social media, which can mean applicants may not be assessed in the way that they wish.

Organisations need to consider how job seekers are perceiving the fairness of their selection procedures, as when selection procedures are perceived as unfair then the organisation is also perceived unfavourably. This can lead to applicant withdrawal as well as negative recommendations to other job seekers. While organisations may wish to ask for passwords to find out more information they should consider the impact it has on job seekers' perceptions of job

relatedness as well as privacy, as even participants who viewed using social media favourably perceived asking for password information as crossing a line.

Communication during the interview could lessen the tensions between job seekers and organisations. Opening up the opportunity for two-way communication can allow each party to seek further information in making their final decisions on whether to make or accept a job offer. Job seekers have the chance to ask questions about the organisation to gain more information as well as to create a positive image that they have put in effort and done some research into the company. In addition, organisations can ask applicants questions to clarify any questionable information found online, giving applicants a chance to explain their content the same way in which they would explain content in a CV or cover letter.

Chapter 7: Discussion

Gilliland's (1993) model of organisational justice focuses on distinct factors of organisational justice. Distributive justice focuses on the outcome of an organisational decision such as a hiring decision. In the current study, participants were not aware of their social media profiles being used in selection decision making. Therefore, participants did not have strong perceptions of distributive justice for social media and selection. One participant (Participant 6) with recruiting experience, on the other hand, acknowledged that assessing social media for decision making could be unfair as not everyone has social media profiles. This relates to the equality facet of Gilliland's (1993) distributive justice which states that all applicants should have an equal chance of receiving an outcome. However, if applicants differ in their social media use then they will be assessed differently as they may not all have the same type or amount of information to be accessed if any at all. This suggests that when using social media, applicants may not have equal opportunities to receive a job offer.

Procedural justice focuses on aspects of the selection process itself (Gilliland, 1993). When discussing how organisations use social media as a selection tool, participants believed organisations use social media to seek applicants' personal information such as posts and photos to find red flags and cut down candidate lists. Yet when discussing their own profiles, most participants wanted their social media to be used in the same way as traditional assessment information, and for recruiters to focus on job-relevant characteristics rather than photos. This suggests a tension surrounding how job seekers perceive organisations using social media. On one hand, job seekers are aware that organisations use social media to find out about what applicants are like on a personal level but at the same time only want their profiles to be assessed based on job-relevant characteristics. Overall, participants wanted their social media to be assessed in a way that was perceived as procedurally fair.

A key component of Gilliland's (1993) procedural justice is explanations, which includes receiving information about the selection process. In the present study, job seekers wanted organisations to disclose that social media would be viewed and used as a selection tool. Job

seekers also wanted organisations to be honest and upfront about their use of social media which also relates to the explanation aspect of Gilliland's (1993) procedural justice. The desire for disclosure that social media would be used could also suggest that job seekers want to be able to control what information is used to assess them. This control could be through job seekers being able to provide consent for their profiles to be viewed. Participants generally perceived the use of social media for screening as just if they could first give consent to the organisation. Disclosure could also allow for job seekers to have a chance to adjust their profiles and control what type of information organisations can access. This could enable job seekers to engage in impression management to portray themselves in the best light and include information they want to be assessed on such as job-related content.

Interpersonal treatment is the factor of procedural justice which refers to how applicants are treated during the selection process (Gilliland, 1993). The main facet which participants were concerned with in the use of social media for selection processes was the inability for two-way communication between job seekers and the organisation. This was mainly emphasised in the desire for job seekers to be able to have a chance to explain any social media content that organisations might deem inappropriate as there may be old content available on their profiles which may not be currently representative of them.

Gilliland (1993) also proposed that perceived invasion of privacy could affect procedural justice perceptions. Several participants actively managed their privacy settings and worked hard to keep them 'right' so that they could control who saw what content. This was mainly influenced by participants wanting to keep their work life separate from their private life, and consciously keeping a boundary between the two. In their view, what they did in their private life was not relevant to their work life, as their social media content did not impact their ability to do their job. For most of these participants using social media as an assessment tool was perceived unjustly and as an invasion of privacy, as their online image was not perceived as job-relevant and therefore its use was not perceived as procedurally just.

Recruiters were aware that the practice of using social media to screen applicants may not be perceived as just to applicants as they are viewing profiles without consent. However, recruiters had several justifications for using it as a tool. First, social media was considered “public domain” for which consent was not needed, unlike getting consent from applicants to complete reference checks. Second, recruiters would use interviews to ask potential employees questions about what they found through social media in a roundabout way, so applicants would disclose information that may have been found earlier. Lastly recruiters emphasised that social media was not used for final decision making and only used for the initial screening process, relying instead on traditional sources of information and an applicant’s qualifications and experience to make the final hiring decisions. Recruiters were also aware of the potential for discrimination against applicants, but in general social media was still perceived as a useful tool to use and there was an overall belief that as social media keeps developing, that the use of it within selection practices and organisations will continue to grow.

Practicality

Social media was a practical tool to use for both job seekers and organisations. Both active and passive job seekers found it useful during the job seeking phase in finding job opportunities and organisational information. Social media was particularly useful in finding organisational information, as this information often shaped job seeker’s decisions to apply for a role and was also useful for job seekers to later engage in impression management during the application phase. For organisations, social media was a useful tool to advertise job vacancies and to generally promote the organisation to job seekers. Social media also provided recruiters with a tool to screen out potential candidates through searching for ‘red flags’ and getting a general sense of a candidate.

Impression Management

Participants described using information gained from social media to curate their CVs during the application phase. However, there was less emphasis on the curation of social media profiles, with the exception of LinkedIn. For other social media platforms there was a general sense of cleaning

up one's profile but little emphasis on including additional information for a potential employer to see. This potentially came down to the view that social media platforms such as Facebook were not job-relevant and thus shouldn't be used in selection practices, as well as participants having their privacy settings such that little to no information could be accessed. However, a few participants were aware of the potential for their profiles to be accessed and noted making a conscious effort to not share or post anything that could potentially affect their career regardless of their privacy settings.

Organisations also used social media to engage in impression management to portray the organisation in the best possible light. Organisations made use of social media profiles to let job seekers know about their organisation and what it is like to be a member there, with the hope of drawing in strong candidates. In addition, social media was also used as a tool to get around job seekers' impression management strategies. As many job seekers curate their CV's, social media provides organisations with an insight into what applicants are like on a more personal basis.

However, as recruiters all stated that one of the reasons that social media is used as a selection tool is to gain an idea of what an applicant is like, recruiters likely do not want applicants to be making a great deal of effort in curating their online presence. In addition, the process of carefully curating ones' social media profile for a professional audience in some ways defeats the intended purpose of social media as it is designed for people to use to have some fun with.

Trust

Trust became important in the interview phase for both job seekers and organisations. Job seekers wanted to be treated and evaluated justly throughout the process. However, for many job seekers the use of social media was perceived as unjust as it violated many expectations around procedural justice such as having their job-relevant characteristics evaluated. Organisations wanted to trust that they were hiring the best applicants. Social media was a useful tool to cut out applicants with 'red flags' who may be a liability to the organisation. However, recruiters were also aware that people are becoming more aware that social media will be viewed by potential employers and are starting to manage their online images accordingly. This suggests social media may begin to be

less practical for organisations to use with job seekers engaging in more impression management to control their online image and present themselves in the best light for employers.

7.2 Implications for research

Little research has been conducted looking at social media experiences from New Zealanders' perspectives. Most social media research for employment related decisions is based in the United States, the United Kingdom or Europe. The present study contributes to the literature on social media and selection by exploring both job seeker and recruiter perspectives and experiences. In addition, the present study explores experiences and perceptions for a variety of selection and job seeking stages. Future research could expand on the use of social media in each aspect of the selection process such as the job seeking stage, preparing for an application and the interview.

Future research could also look into the experiences of people who are aware that their social media has been used in a selection decision. Participants in this study were unsure if their social media had been used or not in the decision-making process. It would be interesting to see if people's organisational perceptions would change if they were aware that their profiles had either secured them a job offer or been detrimental to their chances. In addition, it would be interesting to see if they would adjust their social media activity to reflect their knowledge of its use, for example if they would alter their profiles' content or even stop using social media if it had caused them to miss out on a job offer. This would also provide the opportunity to explore perspectives of distributive justice in greater depth than the present study was able to do.

As applicants become more aware that their social media could be used in selection decisions it would be interesting to see if their social media behaviours change over time in terms of the type of content created and shared. Job seekers may begin to get more savvy about their social media profiles and begin including more job relevant information with the intent of being viewed and assessed by potential employers. Research could benefit by continuing to explore applicant perspectives as perspectives and expectations around procedural justice may begin to change alongside changes in technology.

This study did not set out to explore the experiences of recruiters using social media as a selection tool but three participants had recruiting experience that they were willing to share. Future research could focus on recruiters' use of social media as a selection tool to further explore motivations for using it, justifications for using it and recruiters' perceptions of fairness in using it. In addition, there may be differences in recruiters' use of social media for screening and selection based upon the type of organisation. For example, in this study, one participant's organisation had tight alcohol and drug policies and another's was highly security conscious. These factors influenced their adoption of social media in order to screen out applicants who might either violate organisational policies or pose a threat to security. Further study of recruiters' perspectives would expand on the findings from this study as information from only three participants with recruiting experience may not be generalizable.

As technology continues to evolve and the use of social media changes, future research could look into how perspectives of this as a selection tool also change. As more and more data is put onto social media it would be interesting to see if people become more open to the idea of it being used in selection decisions, or whether they become less willing for it to be used if there is more personal than job related information. In addition, it would be useful to know whether recruiters would still want to use it if applicants become more aware and open to it being used.

7.3 Implications for practice

For Job Seekers

While applicants are unlikely to be asked for their passwords in an interview, they should be aware that this may happen and be prepared accordingly. While job seeking, applicants should always be aware that their social media presence is likely to be scrutinised. Therefore, care should be taken to manage their online presence and attempt to minimize the number of red flags that could potentially screen them out of a candidate list. However, students who attend university before seeking full-time employment may not be conscious of how their social media image appears to employers until they have finished their studies. This means that applicants may have

to take time in fixing and removing content from their profiles as well as proactively managing the content they are associated with.

For Organisations

Organisational Attractiveness

Organisations need to consider how they present themselves online to appeal to both active job seekers, who may have broad search strategies, and to passive ones who are likely to be more selective and to search more narrowly. This also includes considering which platforms to present themselves on, as different platforms vary in their perceived ease of use which could limit the audience organisations can reach out to. In addition, the type of information that is included on social media needs to be able to cater for a range of job seekers who may value various types of information. Organisations should consider informing job seekers about both person-job and person-organisation fit while being mindful not to exclude specific job-related information such as pay and conditions as well as what the job will entail.

Applicant Reactions

Organisations should also consider how applicants react to online screening. While some view looking at social media information as fair, others do not see it as being job relevant. Understanding and taking into account the different aspects of procedural justice can influence how applicants perceive the fairness of a selection process. One of the findings from the current study was that applicants wanted to be assessed on job-relevant information and to be informed that their social media profiles would be assessed. To reduce the likelihood of the use of social media being perceived as unfair, organisations could disclose to applicants that their social media will be viewed as well as explaining why it is used as a selection tool and what criteria will be assessed.

While organisations may want to know what is behind applicants' privacy settings, they need to consider how people will react to being asked for passwords and whether this would breach the terms and conditions of social media platforms. Applicants in this study generally viewed being asked for passwords negatively and most would not hand them over. During the application stage,

organisations could disclose that passwords will be asked for, which would give job seekers the opportunity to decide if they want to apply for an organisation with an open social media policy. This way, applicants are not left feeling unprepared if asked for password information during an interview. Additionally, applicants generally viewed being asked about passwords as a breach of their privacy rights and privacy laws and as a result would perceive the organisation negatively as not a place they wanted to work. Organisations should consider how they will be perceived by applicants in terms of organisational attractiveness as asking for passwords could reduce recommendation intentions as well as potentially leading to applicant withdrawal. Many social media platforms also state in their terms and conditions that passwords should not be disclosed to anyone which means that asking for passwords could be a breach of these conditions.

Organisational Policies

For organisations that do want to use social media as a selection tool, policies could be developed to outline exactly how to engage in cybervetting. One participant (Participant 2) in the current study provided a few suggestions for how organisations could make cybervetting fairer. This included having a set list of criteria to be assessed which needed to be agreed upon by all evaluators, which could help minimise any biases in viewing social media. In addition, evaluators could collect evidence of any posts deemed inappropriate to keep as evidence of why an applicant was unsuccessful. This would improve the consistency of applicant evaluations as every applicant would be assessed in the same way on pre-determined criteria which would be free of bias.

These ideas are consistent with literature on social media and selection outlining potential policies and strategies for the use of social media (Brown & Vaughn, 2011; Doherty, 2010; Holland & Jeske, 2017). These include having clear strategies for how social media is used with clear frameworks and policies that need to be approved by management members. This is so that those in recruiting will have specified characteristics to evaluate which will provide more consistent screening across all applicants. In addition, the type of information that is being evaluated should also be linked to characteristics and competencies that are identified in a job analysis.

The implementation of organisational policies could also help prevent unintentional discrimination. While social media assessment methods can reveal some job-related information, they can also provide information that is job-irrelevant such as physical appearance (Nolan, Langhammer, & Salter, 2016). Therefore, as social media opens up applicants' private lives it may be difficult to ignore information that is protected under legislation (Jeske & Shultz, 2015). Policies which outline set criteria or characteristics to be assessed could minimise this as hiring professionals would have to show that they have eliminated candidates based upon pre-determined data.

Policies could also be implemented to address applicants who may not have a social media profile. Many people may not have access to the internet let alone social media (Brown & Vaughn, 2015; Doherty, 2010; Slovensky & Ross, 2012; Thomas, Rothschild & Donegan, 2015). This could reduce standardisation across applicant assessments and those without a social media profile risk not being selected as recruiters could perceive that they know more about applicants who do have a profile. In addition, internet access and therefore access to social media can differ across ethnic and age groups (Roth, Bobko, Van Iddekinge, & Thatcher, 2013). As a result, assessments of social media may inadvertently lead to assessing characteristics that are not job relevant such as computer literacy, concern for privacy, levels of sociability or extraversion, and age. Policies need to be brought in to acknowledge that applicants will differ on whether or not they have a social media profile as well as how much information is available to be viewed.

As technology is always changing, organisations need to re-evaluate any social media policies created and make changes accordingly. This would ensure that policies are up to date with changes in social media features as well as changes in privacy legislations. This would also ensure that policies remain fair for applicants.

It would also be practical for students studying Industrial and Organisational psychology or human resources to be introduced to the use of social media in organisations at the early stage of studying. When learning about various selection processes, curricula could be expanded to include social media as a selection tool which could cover the benefits and issues associated with

social media's use in selection. This would ensure that those entering the human resource profession or practicing industrial/organisational psychologist have a strong background in the knowledge around social media's use. This means that social media could be implemented efficiently and effectively within organisations as well as improving its use in assessing social media profiles consistently as there would be more awareness around the issues to avoid such as potential discrimination.

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Appendix A



Date: 09 March 2018

Dear Kirsty McPherson

Re: Ethics Notification **4000019091 Experiences with social media in job seeking and selection.**

Thank you for your notification which you have assessed as Low Risk.

Your project has been recorded in our system which is reported in the Annual Report of the Massey University Human Ethics Committee.

The low risk notification for this project is valid for a maximum of three years.

If situations subsequently occur which cause you to reconsider your ethical analysis, please contact a Research Ethics Administrator.

Please note that travel undertaken by students must be approved by the supervisor and the relevant Pro Vice Chancellor and be in accordance with the Policy and Procedures for Course Related Student Travel Overseas. In addition, the supervisor must advise the University's Insurance Officer.

A reminder to include the following statement on all public documents:

"This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named in this document are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you want to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Associate Professor Tracy Riley, Acting Director Ethics, telephone 06 3569099 ext 84408, email humanethics@massey.ac.nz.

Please note, if a sponsoring organisation, funding authority or a journal in which you wish to publish requires evidence of committee approval (with an approval number), you will have to complete the application form again, answering "yes" to the publication question to provide more information for one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. You should also note that such an approval can only be provided prior to the commencement of the research.

Research Ethics Office, Research and Enterprise

Massey University, Private Bag 11 222, Palmerston North, 4442, New Zealand T 06 350 5573 06 350 5575 F 06 355 7973
E humanethcis@massey.ac.nz W <http://humanethics.massey.ac.nz>

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tracy Riley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'T'.

Associate Professor Tracy Riley, Dean Research
Acting Director (Research Ethics)

Appendix B

GENERAL

- 1) First, I'd like to hear about your experiences in using SM for job-seeking.

Prompt: For example, for finding jobs or for finding out about organisations

- 2) What kind of information would you be looking for?

Prompt: what might make you decide it's a good/bad organisation to apply to?

- 3) How did you use this information to shape your C.V? To prep for interviews?

ORGANISATIONS' USE OF SM

- 4) How have you found organisations are using SM to attract job applicants?

Prompt: for example, for advertising vacancies

- 5) Which organisations are most likely to use it?
- 6) How might organisations get information about applicants from SM?

Prompt: Sources of information to decide who to shortlist for interview?

- 7) What types of information are they looking for?
- 8) How might you expect this SM information to be used to assess applicants?
- 9) Different people have different types of information on their SM. How would orgs deal with this?
- 10) How can orgs use applicants' SM info in a way that's fair to applicants?
- 11) What sources of information give a fair picture of you as an employee? How does SM fit in?

Prompt: CV/Resume, references, qualifications

- 12) How fair do you think it is for organisations to use your SM information?
- 13) How can organisations make things fair?

Prompt: e.g. advance notice so you can prepare, explain why they're viewing it.

- 14) How much weight should be given to SM information in making hiring decisions?

APPLICANTS' SM

- 15) Do you expect a potential employer to view your SM?
- 16) How do you think your SM would look to an employer?

Prompt: what picture would it give them of you as an employee?

- 17) Do you adjust your SM profiles or privacy settings when you are job seeking?

Which profiles? (Prompt: Personal, work-related e.g. LinkedIn).

- 18) What changes would you make?
- 19) When would you do this?
- 20) Has your SM been discussed during an interview?

Prompt: If so, what were they trying to find out? Were you able to explain context?

- 21) Have you ever been asked for your SM password in an interview?
- 22) What did you do? Why?
- 23) Would you want to work for an organisation that had used your SM information during selection but didn't tell you?
- 24) If your SM was used in selection, how did this affect your perception of the outcomes (hired/not hired)?

Appendix C

Social Media and Selection: Are New Zealanders Prepared?

Information Sheet

My name is Kirsty McPherson and am conducting this study as my thesis project for a Master of Arts degree in Psychology. I am interested in people's experiences of the use of social media for job-seeking and personnel selection.

I would like to learn about your experiences with the use of social media for job-seeking/selection. I will be carrying out focus group interviews or online skype one-on-one interviews. Focus groups will take about 90 minutes and individual interviews may take up to an hour.

Participation is completely voluntary. Interviews and focus groups will be recorded for ease of data analysis, but no information that could identify participants will be released. Recordings will be stored on password protected devices and cleared from the audio recorders at the end of the study. All transcripts will remain anonymous to ensure each participants confidentiality. Data will be analysed to examine each participants' experiences and find common themes among them.

At the end of the study, if you would like a summary of the findings, you can contact me and I will send you out a copy.

Your Rights

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation.

If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question;
- withdraw from the study within one month of the interview;
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;
- be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.
- ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview.

Please contact me via email at [REDACTED] or Dianne Gardner (my supervisor) at d.h.gardner@massey.ac.nz if you have any questions about the project.

Best regards,

Kirsty McPherson

“This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University’s Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact A/Prof Tracy Riley, Acting Director, Research Ethics, telephone 06 356 9099 x 84408, email humanethics@massey.ac.nz”.

Appendix D

Social Media for Selection: Are New Zealanders Prepared?

Participant Consent Form

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree/do not agree to the interview being sound recorded.

I wish/do not wish to receive a copy of the study's findings.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

| | | | |
|----------------------|--|-------|--|
| Signature: | | Date: | |
| | | | |
| Full Name: - printed | | | |