

Professional information disclosure on social networks and their effectiveness for finding a job : the case of Facebook and LinkedIn in Israel /

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Abstract

One of the most common uses of the social networks' capabilities is for professional, study and business purposes. The literature presents conflicting evidence as to the effectiveness of different networks for professional purposes. Therefore, our first research aim was to conduct a comparative investigation of the effectiveness and factors which influence the effectiveness of different social networks for finding a job. Additionally, disclosure of personal information on social networks has been extensively researched in recent years from different perspectives, including the influence of demographic, personality and social parameters on the extent and type of disclosure. However, although one of the most widespread uses of these networks nowadays is for professional, academic and business purposes, a thorough investigation of professional information disclosure is still needed. Therefore, this study's second aim is to conduct a systematic and comprehensive investigation into patterns of professional information disclosure and various factors involved in it on different types of social networks.

This study focuses on the two most popular networks, Facebook and LinkedIn, the two diverse networks most widely used in Israel; the former is not intended specifically for professional purposes while the latter is. To this end, we conducted a user study based on over 220 responses to a questionnaire especially designed for this goal. In our analysis, we distinguish and compare between the users' perception and attitudes toward the effectiveness of the network and its actual helpfulness for finding a job in the past experience.

Our results indicate that different demographic and network usage variables influenced the attitude to effectiveness and helpfulness of the networks. Thus, users with lower incomes preferred Facebook, while more educated users with higher incomes perceived LinkedIn as more effective. Interestingly, we found that despite the fact that LinkedIn was perceived as significantly more effective for finding a job

by the majority of the users; the actual helpfulness of the two networks was assessed as quite similar.

Furthermore, significant differences were found between the two networks. For example, we found that on Facebook, professional pride is a factor in professional information disclosure, whereas on LinkedIn, work seniority and income have a significant effect. Thus, our findings shed light on the attitudes and professional behavior of network members, and lead to recommendations regarding advertising strategies and network-appropriate self-presentation, as well as practical implications and recommendations that will enable companies to improve their recruitment strategies, by tailoring them to the type of vacancy to be filled.

System No. 002391598