

LITERATURE REVIEW FOR SOCIAL CAPITAL IN SOCIAL NETWORK SITES

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Abstract

The purpose of the paper is to describe a process to identify a research gap and a literature gap in the social capital theory. The paper observed different databases to identify relevant literature for the research field. The method has been quantitative, that means the articles with relevant key words are counted including the number of used keywords for the article as an indication for importance of the article. The qualitative part has been reading the identified articles as “key words” can have different meanings to avoid biases. The results of the paper are analyzed and give an overview about the social capital literature in the research subject. This paper provides an answer to research gaps in the literature and explains difficulties that have to be taken into consideration to avoid biases. The literature review is an important part of the scientific work and helps researchers with their work.

The paper identifies many papers with social capital and human resources. This means social capital provides explanations for the causal mechanism in the scientific field of human resources. A further finding is that social capital and recruiting is a well-prepared field. The research field of social network members who are using their social network sites to identify with their social capital employment opportunities is not available in important databases. The conclusion is that the research gap exists.

Keywords: literature review, social capital, research gap, human resources

Classification: General Review

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper describes a method to identify literature for research topics under consideration of social network sites and social capital as an example. Therefore, this paper gives an overview about the related literature. At the end of the paper is a summary to describe the most important results and findings of the example. The paper should assist researchers who have to identify research gaps or have to evaluate the literature about social capital theory under consideration of social network sites.

Further, the paper provides a framework within which to identify sources and databases for the scientific work. This provides the opportunity to use the framework to get a general overview of the research topic and an idea about the importance of the topic in the scientific world.

This paper concentrates on journal articles in online databases and illuminates a literature gap in the social capital theory regarding social network sites under consideration of the employment seeking process. The literature reviews articles of all available scientific fields and does not exclude any discipline. That provides a broad overview of the topic (Caers et al. 2013).

The identified research gap is described with the missing scientific journal articles, the age of social network sites and the new technologies to create networks. The research in this new field explains phenomena in social network sites under consideration of the social capital theory for the employment seeking process. This means further research in this field is needed because the phenomena of social network sites is new and scientific publications are limited for the research question. One more reason to take this research field under consideration is the permanent technical development which creates new situations and opportunities that deeply influence the society and change the behavior of individuals and organizations. The search in the databases done on the 21st–23rd of December 2013 except the Scopus databases. The Scopus database has been added at 1st of

May to confirm and to expand the result with a further source.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review is the first step to explain a research gap and a scientific method for scientific work. It is one of the most important tasks for scientific work and has to be done in all scientific disciplines (Boell & Cecez-Kecmanovic 2010). The review summarizes existing findings, gives an overview about the research field and related scientific literature. The literature review extends the knowledge about a topic and enables the scientist to get an overview of the research field. The literature review supports the creation of concepts and model, support to explain causal mechanism with the theory and to formulate the research question. It is a summarization of the literature which is needed to explain phenomena (Tziralis & Tatsiopoulou 2007)(Tranfield et al. 2003). The multidisciplinary makes it important to have a search in different research fields to add valuable information to the research and to cover the whole field of research(Webster 2012)(Fawcett 2013)(Randolph 2009). Social capital provides concepts to describe social relations and networks. The concept has different dialects but all concepts explain the exchange of information and resources in a network. Some authors describe the structure and explain the causal mechanism with the structure of the relationship like Burt or Granovetter. Some authors describe the concept of social capital as a relationship and that trust and the resources which an individual owns has a strong impact on social networks as Lin explained and some author describe the social capital effect with the benefits and advantages of the network member or Putnam describes the social capital with similar norms which reduce transaction costs for example(Granovetter 1973)(Lin 2001)(Dika & Singh 2002)(Helliwell & Putnam 1999).

It is useful to use a theory or concept as a basis for the literature review because the theory is important to identify the relevant articles and gives selection criteria for the founded literature. The concept or theory further leads to other interesting authors, concepts, models and theories. The theoretical background supports the identification of keywords and searches terms for the literature review. (Fawcett 2013)(Boell & Cecez-Kecmanovic 2010)(Tranfield et al. 2003)

The result of a review is to demonstrate a gap in the scientific field and to theorize the scientific work. The value of the research is described by the literature review because a new field is explored and this provides society with new knowledge and information. This provides solutions and opportunities to develop the world (Webster 2012)(Randolph 2009).

Another task of the literature review is to scope the research field and to provide borders. The task of the literature review is to specify the research field and to describe research so that it is possible to explore the research field with valuable findings and to concentrate resources. The literature review is further important to avoid “reinventing the wheel” and gives the opportunity to use the existing knowledge to extend concepts or theories (Zorn 2006)(Tranfield et al. 2003).

The literature review started with the year 2002 because Lin describes cyber networks in 2001 and explains that the internet changes social capital. Further under consideration is the public start date of Facebook (2006 open Facebook for everyone <https://www.facebook.com/facebook>) and LinkedIn (2002 source <http://de.linkedin.com/about-us>). This gives the period for the review as LinkedIn is the largest business network and Facebook is the largest private social network site. Of course the history of social capital theory is older e.g. Coleman's paper from 1988 (Coleman 1988) but the focus for the research is social capital, employment seeking and social network sites (Dika & Singh 2002). As mentioned is the theory which is used for the literature review social capital is mainly under the direction of Lin and Coleman (Lin 2001).

3. METHOD TO IDENTIFY LITERATURE AND RESEARCH GAP

The first step is to identify relevant databases with a scientific background in different research fields. The databases are evaluated based on the number of journals, Articles and scientific fields.

Business administration / economics, sociology, information system and psychology journals are mainly under observations as the topic is related to these scientific fields but to get a complete overview without missing any source would it be important that as many journals as possible from different scientific fields are included in the search (Tziralis & Tatsiopoulos 2007)(Randolph 2009)(Provan et al. 2007).

The impact factor of Journals is not under consideration as social capital theory under consideration of social network sites is a multi-complex inter discipline research field. Impact factors concentrate on one scientific field. The impact factor for journals for this literature review is only secondary of interest as it is a multidisciplinary literature review with different scientific fields and different impact factor categories. These categories and standards are not comparable. Literature for the social capital theory is available in many research fields and to concentrate only on one research field or impact factor of a journal would bias the result. This paper starts to concentrate on the relevant research subjects for the human resources and social media sectors and scopes the research to social capital in social network sites. The paper has to concentrate on one topic to give an overview of a specific field. The reason to explore a complete research field with the literature review for the scientific topic is that other research fields can provide valuable input. This input from other related research fields can be transferred and increases knowledge. This can be used to explain the phenomena well and gives further insights in the specific field. The restriction to one topic and to scope the research field is important to create a useful literature review to enable the scientist to use this work as a basis for further steps and to give a frame for the scientific work. Broadening the research fields does not add value as they do not give a specific answer to the research question or are too unspecific.

The next step is to identify relevant articles for the research and to funnel the results. The importance of the research topics are evaluated by the number of sources for this study. To get a broad overview of the completely scientific environment field the literature review has to be started with discipline and general main subject of the research field. The keywords have to be scoped until the relevant literature is visible and accessible. The information to scope the keyword and to identify the keywords is given by evaluation of the first relevant articles and guided by the research question. These steps provide a good overview of the scientific topic (Alvesson & Sandberg 2013).

The search for the relevant literature uses the Boolean variable “and” and “or”. The Boolean variable “or” is used if there are relevant short forms of a word e.g. hr for human resources. Further “or” is used if one or more synonyms for the word gives further results e.g. “human resources” and “personnel management”. The use of social network site company names provides further beneficial results and avoid missing sources synonyms and short forms are recognized by identification in articles on relevant topics that contain the used keywords. The different synonyms are presented separately under the headline of the main word in the results. This gives the opportunity to identify more relevant and related literature. This method also avoids the danger of missing important information. Hair and other authors have done similar research to describe the scientific field for example (Hair et al. 2012)(Boell & Cecez-Kecmanovic 2010).

The search explores sources with publishing periods between 01.01.2002 and 01.12.2013. The first step is a quantitative search that means articles and keywords are counted. The search takes in the full text including bibliography. The second step is a qualitative search by screening the headlines and abstracts to identify relevant literature or to identify research gaps. This step has been done for the mainly important research fields and keywords with only a few positive results in the qualitative search

This procedure gives a good overview of the research field and helps to identify a gap in the research. The final step is to compare the results with other research fields and studies about the literature review for a specific research field.

4. THE DATABASES FOR THE LITERATURE REVIEW

The databases for this paper are available at the University of Latvia or the University of Kufstein. This allows full access to the databases and provides the opportunity to identify relevant articles. The scientific relevance of the databases is given as the University of Kufstein or University of Latvia provides these databases to their students. In addition, the databases for the paper have to be available at other university libraries too. The paper takes under consideration only databases if the database is available at a minimum of three further universities and available in different countries. The databases have to provide double blind review journals and regular published journals. The databases are scientific literature databases with scientific journals and provide the norms for the scientific level of their journals. The number of databases and the ability of the databases increase the number of journals and articles, which increase the likelihood of identifying as many relevant sources as possible. The databases have strengths in different fields and give a good overview of the scientific work in the related disciplines. The number of journals increase the basis for the data and provide a good and representative overview for different research fields.(Boell & Cecez-Kecmanovic 2010).

The databases are categorized as followed:

Table 1

Scientific literature databases

Name of Database	Ebsco – Academic search complete	Sciencedirect	Emerald	SAGE	Scopus
Number of Journals	More than 9 100	More than 2 500	290	700	20 000
Further details	More than 13 690 indexed and abstracted journals	11 Million full text articles and book chapter	Over 2000 books and book series	298 journals published on behalf of learned societies and institutions	5.5 million conference papers
Peer reviewed journals	More than 7 900	More than 2 500	290	700	20 000
Universities	University of Latvia University of Hamburg University of Mainz University of Cologne				University of Latvia University of Hamburg TU Munich Humboldt University Berlin

The information has been selected from the web pages of the databases. The two databases, Ebsco and Sciencedirect are used for the first steps in the paper to get a general overview of social capital, social network sites and human resources. SAGE and Emerald has been used to test the result with the important keywords and to avoid biases in the study. Scopus as one of the largest databases confirms the results and complemented the analysis.

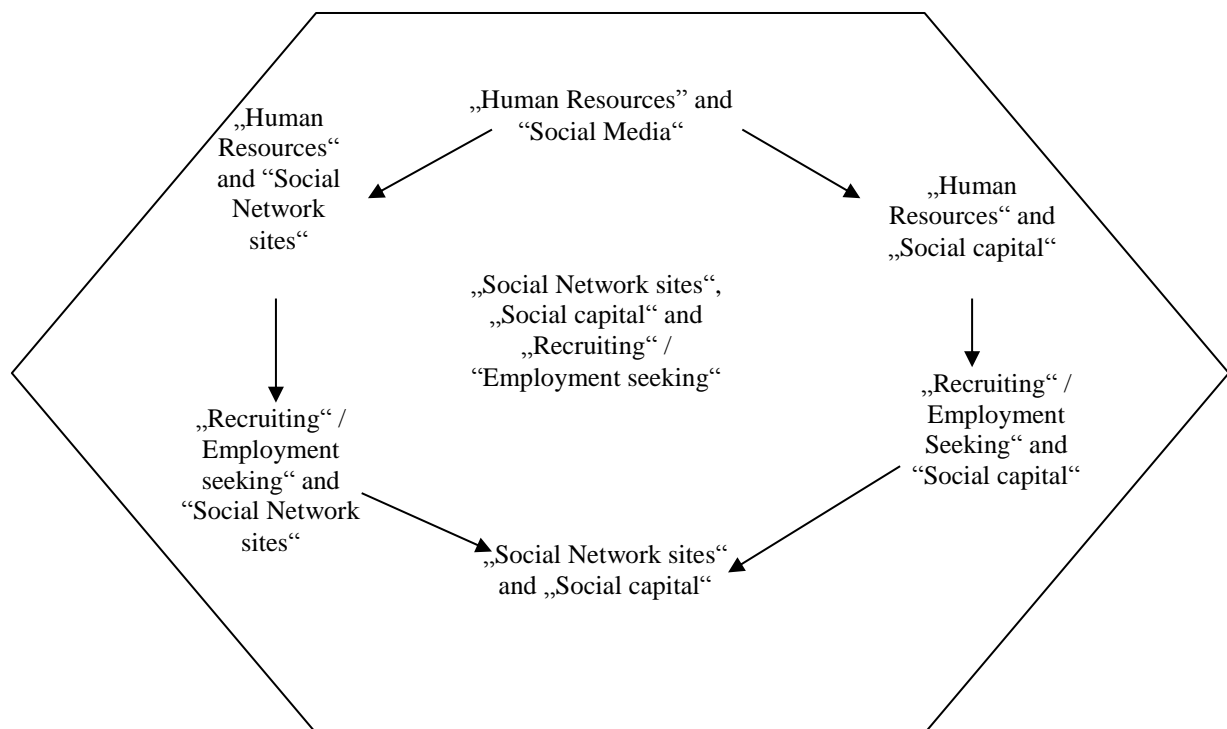
The databases provide different search engines for sources. All databases provide the opportunity to select a period, to search for keywords and to use Boolean search commands. Ebsco further provides the opportunity to search for full text articles and to select only peer reviewed journals. The different databases are important to have five different sources and to get a critical mass to explain the research gap (Zorn 2006).

5. THE SEARCH SUBJECTS TO IDENTIFY THE RESEARCH AND LITERATURE GAP

The search started in the selected databases with a broad subject to get an overview about the possible number of available articles on the research topic. The relevance of the databases and the research topic has been given by the number of articles. This is a first overview to get an impression

of the research field. This paper uses only double blind peer reviewed articles to guarantee the quality of the paper and to make sure that a scientific level is approached. These articles are used to explain the scientific gap (Rumrill et al. 2010). Ebsco has in addition magazines and other public publications. This result is used to explain the importance of the topic for the society. The results of Ebsco are divided in scientific double blind peer review articles and other publications in table 2. The next step is to scope this search to the literature which is needed and gives specific information to the research field. The paper takes articles in English and German language under consideration. The author's language skills are limited to German and English, in addition the most important articles and most journals are mainly in English language. The case social capital in social network sites under consideration of employment seeking process has two paths. The one path is social network sites and human resources, the other path is human resources and social capital and finally to conclude the scientific work we have social capital and social network sites without human resources to complete the overview. The articles of interest are in the middle of the diagram below and give an overview of the specific literature for the required research field. The use of a single subject e.g. social capital would not be under consideration because the search has too many results. High numbers of results makes it difficult to get a valuable overview and to identify important articles or to analyze the result in such a way that the result can be used for further research.

The most relevant articles with content about "social capital", "social network sites" and "employment seeking" / "recruiting" are checked by the headlines and abstracts regarding relevance for the research e.g. to identify further keywords from related scientific fields e.g. human resources. This article should be relevant for the scientific work concerning social network sites under consideration of the social capital theory regarding the recruiting or employment seeking process.



1 Figure. Scientific field and related research fields

The literature review gives an outlook about theoretical and practical issues in the research field and missing topics in the literature review has to be under consideration as a possible research field as long as it is of interest for the society and the results provide a solution to improve or explain the life of humans. Both, practical and theoretical articles in scientific journals are under consideration

to give an overview concerning the research field.

The research starts with human resources and social media as keywords to identify the environment of the research topic social capital, social network sites and recruiting / employment seeking process. After that the search is more and more funneled and categorized under consideration of the research field.

6. RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

The first search has been done with Ebsco and Sciencedirect. Both databases have a high number of sources available. This first step gives an overview for further steps and to scope the search with the databases Scopus, Emerald and SAGE. The bold printed keywords are most important and of interest for the research object.

Table 2

Results Ebsco and Sciencedirect

Name of Database	Ebsco – Academic search complete		Science-direct	Peer reviewed articles in total
Keyword (full phrases)	Number of sources	Number of blind peer reviewed sources	Number of sources	
“Social media” and “human resources”	862	270	499	769
“Social media” and “human resources” and (“recruiting” or “recruitment” or “employment seeking”)	237	66	129	195
“Human Resources” and “social capital”	2263	2084	2795	4879
“Social capital” and “recruiting”	1436	1292	840	2132
“social capital” and “recruitment”	2924	2766	1696	4462
“Social capital” and “employment seeking”	10	10	4	14
“Human resources” and “social network sites”	36	26	78	104
“Human resources” and “social network sites” and (“recruiting” or “recruitment”)	10	10	23	33
“Social network sites” and (“recruiting” or “recruitment”)	142	133	129	262
“Social network sites” and “employment seeking”	1	1	0	1
“social network sites” and “social capital”	251	236	334	570
„Social Network sites“, „Social capital“ and („Recruiting“ or Recruitment)	72	70 – 41 book reviews	55	84
“social capital”, “social network sites” and “employment seeking”	0	0	0	0

The second step has to be to confirm the literature gaps with Emerald and SAGE as two databases that are more specialized and Scopus as one of the largest database. The research will concentrate on the relevant phrases regarding the research question “employment seeking individuals”, “social network sites” and “social capital”. The results of these keywords are in bold in table two. The results of the additional search are summarized in the table below.

Table 3

Results SAGE, Scopus and Emerald

Name of Database	Emerald	SAGE	Scopus	Peer reviewed articles in total
Keyword (full phrases)	Number of sources			
“Social capital” and “employment seeking”	1	8	7	16
“Human resources” and “social network sites” and (“recruiting” or “recruitment”)	5	5	1	11
„Social Network sites“, „Social capital“ and („Recruiting“ or Recruitment)	0	0	0	0
“social capital”, “social network sites” and “employment seeking”	0	0	0	0

After the first analysis of the results, the search has been improved to identify for relevant fields further sources and to test if there is a research gap. The keywords were changed and keywords added to identify more articles of relevance and to reduce the bias of synonyms which have been used for the same relevant field e.g. “employment seeking” and “job finding” The search used for social network sites Facebook and LinkedIn for example. Further the phrase “job vacancy” has been added to the search. The difference between the results is minimized and many articles overlap with the first results. All articles with the bolt keywords have been screened by the abstract(Boell & Cecez-Kecmanovic 2010).

7. ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

The general quantitative result is that social media is a big issue in the scientific field of human resources. The results of the databases Ebsco and Sciencedirect identified more than 769 peer-reviewed articles. In addition Ebsco have 333 magazines, 16 newspaper, 163 trade publications and 79 book reviews on the subject of social media and human resources. The result is scoped with the findings for the keywords “social media”, “human resources” and recruiting / recruitment with 195 articles peer reviewed. This gives an indication that social media is an issue for the recruiting process. The social capital theory gives the opportunity to explain the mechanism in the research fields human resources (4 879 peer reviewed articles) and social network sites are under consideration of the social capital theory (104 peer reviewed articles)(Payne et al. 2010).

The keyword recruiting and recruitment bias the result because articles use “recruiting” or “recruitment” in their method section. These articles describe the recruitment of participants for surveys or experiments for example. Another bias is the research of the full article including the bibliography of the article. That means articles with sources that include “social capital” in their reference are included in the search results for example. This has to be under consideration to analyze the results. This bias further explains the high number of articles and is the reason to explore the identified articles more deeply e.g. with the abstract scan as a qualitative method, counting the number of keywords in the article and searching for missing subjects e.g. articles do not have the word “recruit*” for example(Boell & Cecez-Kecmanovic 2010).

The main issue for this literature review is the question after the existence of a literature gap and a scientific gap to understand the behavior of individuals using social network sites to identify employment opportunities or to gather information about employment opportunities. The interest is to explain the use of individuals of social network sites to identify positions under consideration of the different kind of social network sites and the differences between individuals. This gap is identified by the figures of the quantitative work. The keywords “social capital”, “social network sites” and “employment seeking” are not mentioned in any source in Ebsco or Sciencedirect nor in Scopus, Emerald or SAGE. This means this topic is not relevant in the literature and needs further research efforts to explain the role of social network sites in the employment seeking process of individuals. That social network sites are playing a role in the social capital theory and the

recruitment process is demonstrated by the fact that there exist 84 peer-reviewed articles. These articles are concentrated on the organizations perspective and not concentrating on the individual's or member's perspective. Furthermore some articles in this field are not management or business related e.g. "Factors for Employment: A Case- Control Study of Fully Employed and Unemployed Heroin Users" from Koo 2007. This result is confirmed with the 44 articles for the keyword "human resources", social network sites and recruiting / recruitment.

The second step has been to test the most relevant keywords with Scopus, SAGE and Emerald databases to confirm the results for the relevant fields for further research. The results for this databases confirm the research and literature gap as seen in table three.

The frequency of the keyword counted provides a better understanding of the research field(Rumrill et al. 2010). This procedure has only been done for Ebsco articles. This has been done to get an indication for the quality of the articles and to find out more about the research topic. Here is further expected that an article with many keywords is more relevant. Another positive effect has been to identify biases in the results and to explain the quantitative results more clearly. This helps future research to improve the search for articles with the collected results. This research has been done for the relevant scientific environments where the first results demonstrate a gap. The tables with the results are attached as an appendix. The analysis shows that the word "human resources" and "recruiting" / "recruitment" can be used for many different terms.

The first keywords under consideration have been "social capital" and "employment seeking". The result is 30 article and one book review in the Ebsco database. There are four articles with only on one occasion the keywords social capital and only two articles with social capital as a keyword more than 40 times. All other articles have social capital less than 10 times. The second word employment has a range of between four and 133 hits. The bias is that employment can be used for many situations but again there are four articles with less than 10 hits and two articles with more than 100 hits. The next step to identify any relevance has been to search for Human Resources, recruiting and management related words. All the articles have gaps and do not use these words, which are a further indicator that the articles do not have any relevance. The journals with the identified articles are related to health, psychology and sociology. The abstract has been read and the articles are not in relation to the research topic. An example of the results of the analysis of the articles of the Ebsco databases are in the appendix. The results for the other databases are similar and provide the same impression. The example demonstrates the analysis of the most important keywords and gives an overview about the method to investigate research gaps for scientific work.

The next keywords of deeper interest have been social network sites, human resources and recruiting. There are 10 relevant articles in Emerald and SAGE. Seven articles have social network sites only once, seven articles with only one hit for human resources and one article with recruit* only once. Recruit* has been used as search word to include in the search recruiting and recruitment. None of the articles has human resources more than three times. This means the relationship of the articles to the scientific field to human resources is not mentioned very often. "Social network sites: a starting point for career development practitioners" from Strehlke 2010 and "Examining students intended Image on Facebook: "What were they thinking?!" from Peluchette 2009 do not miss the words "employment seeking" and "social capital" That means these two articles have relevant information in general for the research topic. Further of general interest is "Social Media: a method to recruit students into undergraduate nursing programs" from Lubbe 2013 and "The influence of economic and social factors on the choice of search procedures used by third party recruiters" from Klehe 2012. Both articles show that organizations use social media to identify candidates but the perspective of these articles are of the organization and not of the member of the network. The scientific range of the journals is psychological, legal, medical, sociological, and educational. This gives an indication that the topic is multidisciplinary and of interest for society. The different kinds of journals have to be under consideration for further literature research and scientific work because it would be easy to miss important facts.

The last group of deeper interest for the research are articles with social network sites, social

capital and recruiting or recruitment. Ebsco has 70 sources with this word but 41 of these sources are book reviews. The book reviews are not under consideration. Only "Examining students intended Image on Facebook: "What were they thinking?!" from Peluchette 2009 has had "employment seeking" and "job hunting" as a hit. This article has been mentioned above and has relevance for the research but this article concentrates only on Facebook. The second article of this research field which is identified is the mentioned article above from Strehlke 2010. The research of interest for this literature review has to determine if people use social network sites to seek information about employment. Twenty-four articles have 10 or less than 10 times the phrase "social network sites" included. Only two articles mentioned more than 15 times social capital and the highest number for recruit* is seven. This gives an impression regarding the relevance of the topic in the literature. The journals scientific field also has a wide band and gives the impression that this research fields is of interest.

The sources at Sciencedirect have been screened the abstracts but the results are similar to Ebsco. The main field of interest has been searched in Scopus, Emerald and SAGE to confirm the results and to identify the research gap and gap in the literature.

8. CONCLUSION

The result of the paper is the gap in the literature regarding social network sites, social capital and the employment seeking process. This research field do not have a strong visible presence in the literature. The topic is very important for the future because the importance of social network sites and other new technologies influence the daily life of individuals and has to be more explored.

In detail, the search for the keywords in different databases articles around the research topic provides a clear answer that further steps are needed. Now the research helps to explain the mechanism in social networks but the relationship to the employment seeking process is not given. Further absent is the explanation regarding social capital and social network sites for the management field human resources with the specific topic employment seeking process. It has to be the behavior of social network site members identified for the employment seeking process. This knowledge gives organizations the opportunity to provide the required information to employment seekers and to use their resources in an appropriate way. Furthermore, there is a gap in the social capital theory regarding the area employment seeking and social network sites. There is a lot of information about employment seeking and social capital also for social capital and network sites exist, some literature is available but the merger between social capital, employment seeking and social network sites is not available.

The bias for a search with keywords is that keywords as in recruiting or employment can be used in different ways. This has been under consideration. The use of other terms avoided the bias and gives a deeper view in the research field. The search identified 25 articles (15 at Sciencedirect, 8 at Ebsco and two at SAGE) which are in relation to the research field but there has not been identified an article to give a complete answer to the research field because the perspective of the network member as an employment seeking person or the employment seeking process for example is not under consideration. This information has to be used to fill the gap and to describe mechanism in social network sites under consideration of employment seeking process.

Further the band of journals is very large. The journals are from many different scientific fields and there is a gap in the management / economic literature under consideration of the research field human resources. This interdisciplinary area gives an indication that many research fields are involved in this topic but the different research fields have their own objectives and do not concentrate on management topics or providing explanations for management questions.

The next task is to fill this gap and to merge the different fields of research to answer the research question and to provide organizations with information about the mechanism in social network sites to be more successful and to make decisions. Society needs this information for many fields to understand causal mechanism and to use the social network sites as a valuable tool for their

daily life. The social capital theory is used for social networks extensively but the number of different social network sites, the increasing use of social network sites in society and business and the new behavior observable in social network sites appears to give many further opportunities to research in this field.

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