

SURVEY STUDY ON THE USAGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR CAREER ADVANCEMENT

Dr. P.J. Mathew Martin

Natasha Jacob

Abstract

Social media tools like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn are becoming increasingly helpful to career development. Professionals can use social media platforms as a way to enhance their knowledge of technology, marketing, and news for their industry; network with other professionals; and provide an online space where clients can interact with them and provide feedback about their products or services. LinkedIn, in today's world is considered to be the most popular business networking site. LinkedIn was created in the year 2003 as a networking site for business professionals and job seekers to connect virtually. It has many features one of which is that it facilitates the kind of connectivity that college students must engage in, to find internships, jobs, and make other professional connections. This study is focused on how using the social media platform LinkedIn can prove to be beneficial for career advancement. The study would reveal whether or not LinkedIn can be useful for career advancement in media education. For the study, individuals between the age groups of 18-26 pursuing a media course under media institutions located in Mumbai were considered. For this study, a quantitative research methodology was used and a sample size of 50 was taken. By analyzing the data received using the SPSS statistical software, it was used to derive if LinkedIn can be useful for career advancement in media education. Through this study, we could conclude that LinkedIn could be useful for media career advancement.

Keywords: Social Networking Sites, Social Media Platforms, Social Media, Media Education, LinkedIn, Career advancement, career development, career enhancement.

INTRODUCTION

Social media are interactive computer-mediated technologies that facilitate the creation or sharing of data, ideas, career interests, and other kinds of expression via virtual communities and networks. Social media are interactive Web 2.0 Internet-based applications. User-generated content, or user-shared content, like text posts or comments, digital photos or videos, and data generated through all online interactions, is the lifeblood of social media. Users create service-specific profiles and identities for the website or app that are designed and maintained by the social media organization.

India has 560 million active Internet users as of 2019. India is the second-largest online market, behind China. It is estimated that by 2021 there will be around 560 million active internet users in India. Social media tools like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn are becoming increasingly helpful to career development. Professionals can use social media platforms as a way to enhance their knowledge of technology, marketing, and news for their industry; network with other professionals; and provide an online space where clients can interact with them and provide feedback about their products or services. LinkedIn as compared to other social networking platforms has more to do with career enhancement. LinkedIn recently came up with a new application called LinkedIn learning, that helps candidates build and enhance their skills to make themselves more efficient and skilled so that they have a higher chance of being recruited for the job they desire to have. LinkedIn Learning has turned out to be the leading online learning platform that lends expert-led courses to individuals as per their choice so that they are helped at building the most relevant and applicable skills. LinkedIn is the only social media platform that fulfills all the requirements to be a social networking site but at the same time has huge contributions towards the better wellbeing of an individual professionally.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media refers to websites and applications that are designed to permit people to share content quickly, efficiently, and in real-time. Social media are used as apps on the smartphone or tablet, but the reality is, this

communication tool started with computers. About 2/3rd of Indians online spend time on different social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest, etc. Even the trend of sending personal emails seems to have become obsolete as compared to social media. Interaction, live chat, status updates, image- as well as video-sharing are a few of the major aspects that play a role in the popularity of social media. On the other hand, customer's responses, interaction, and brand awareness is why the companies are using social media in India and across the globe. Thereby, multiple roles played by social media beyond its core role of mere communicating information are leading to its popularity (Pragati, 2019).

LINKEDIN

Networking is a chance to interact with people, build friendships or business partners, identify opportunities, and create value. Technology has made this process easier since individuals can readily contact others who were previously unknown. In the professional world, LinkedIn has become the standard way to build virtual and personal networks. One innovative class exercise had students building profiles, garnering connections, joining groups, posting comments, and obtaining and writing letters of recommendation. The results were overwhelmingly positive, with students exceeding the required mandates, but more importantly, they learned how to use networking tools to improve their knowledge and access to experts, and secured job offers based on their LinkedIn profile and presence (Robert M. Peterson & Howard F. Dover, 2014).

LinkedIn has become one of the most popular and profitable social networking sites on the internet today. It was created in 2003 as a networking site for professionals to connect virtually, without having to be in the same physical location. LinkedIn has incorporated many new features, such as a newsfeed, user content, and the ability to follow professionals, improving user engagement and time spent on the site. LinkedIn has over 675 million members, in over 200 countries. With about 57% of male users and 43% female users on LinkedIn. There are more than 46 million students and recent graduates on LinkedIn. After the US, India stands second with the highest rate of LinkedIn users that are 64 million in number.

Role of Social Media for Student Career Advancement

Some of the useful activities that can happen while using Social Media by students are posing questions and getting answers, asking for expert opinion, adding or updating a profile, etc. Online Social Networking sites are used by students to get connected with their friends, faculties, and professional experts and various collaborative activities happening among the contacts like sharing information and asking for expert help and guidance on grey areas, etc. Social networking plays a very powerful role in the lives of the youth and the students to be precise. Since the existence of various social media platforms exchange of information, knowledge, news has become much convenient. However, lately, social media can also be used for educational and professional purposes. The use of social media has made learning easy, one can sit at home and enhance their skills without having to physically register themselves to a classroom. Social media has thus made life easy for the busy.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The objectives of the research are to identify LinkedIn's usage in media career advancement for students presently under training in institutions located in Mumbai and to analyze the individual's benefits of LinkedIn for career advancement. The method used for this study is Quantitative Research. The sampling methods used are purposive and convenience sampling. To collect the required data, a questionnaire was the research tool used. The study is conducted in Mumbai with a sample size of 50 in the age group of 18-26 and with both the genders (Male and Female).

FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS

4.1 Media Individual's Usage of LinkedIn

Respondents Use of LinkedIn	Frequency	Percent
To look for jobs	37	74.0
To enhance your skills	1	2.0
To network with professionals	9	18.0
Others	3	6.0
Total	50	100.0

In table 4.1 media students were asked their purpose of using LinkedIn, to which 74% claimed that they use LinkedIn to look for jobs, 2% use it to enhance their skills, 18% use it to network with professionals and the remaining 6% use it for other purposes.

4.2 Use LinkedIn for Career Advancement

	Frequency	Percent
Not at all	21	42.0
Sometimes	16	32.0
Neutral	11	22.0
Quite often	2	4.0
Very Often	0	0.0
Total	50	100.0

In Table 4.2 it is noted that about 44% don't use LinkedIn for career advancement at all. 32% use it sometimes, 22% don't use it as much as the 32%, 4% use it most often and finally, there is nobody who uses LinkedIn very frequently for career advancement.

4.3 User's perception of whether LinkedIn can be used to enhance skills for a Media Career

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	19	38.0
No	2	4.0
Maybe	29	58.0
Total	50	100.0

In table 4.3 it is noted that the students were asked whether LinkedIn could be used as an effective medium to enhance all the skills required for a suitable media career. 38% voted ayes while 4% responded a no and 58% claimed that maybe LinkedIn could be an ideal platform to help enhance the skills required for a media career.

4.4 User's perception of LinkedIn is essential for Media Career Advancement

	Frequency	Percent
Not at all Important	1	2.0
Slightly Important	15	30.0
Neutral	25	50.0
Very Important	7	14.0
Extremely Important	2	4.0
Total	50	100.0

It is noted that as per the perception of media students who indeed are users of LinkedIn, 2% don't consider LinkedIn essential in media career advancement at all. 30% feel it is slightly important, 50% are neutral, 14% consider LinkedIn to be very essential at media career advancement and 4% consider it to be the most.

FINDINGS

The main objectives of this research study were to identify the role that LinkedIn plays in career advancement specifically for a media career and to understand whether individuals between the ages of 18 -26 use it effectively as a medium for skill-building or enhancing their skills that could be applicable for a media profession.

The research study was time-bound which could be a reason for not getting a definite result. However, the responses received by the 50 individuals who responded to the survey does give a clear idea of how they perceive other social media platforms and LinkedIn and also talks about the purpose they use each of the social media

platforms for. Not just that, the study also helped find out that LinkedIn in comparison to other social media platforms is the only platform people prefer to use when it comes to seeking employment opportunities or enhancing skills that could in return higher the chances of being offered with a good business opportunity. The study focuses on finding out whether LinkedIn is essential for developing skills or building a new skill in order to advance careers within the media industry.

To gather data for my research study, a survey study questionnaire was virtually circulated amongst 50 individuals. This descriptive analysis method was used as my study is more audience-centric and aims at identifying the impact LinkedIn has over media individuals in guiding them towards a better professional opportunity. And however, conducting a survey was the ideal way to fulfill the purpose of this research and to achieve an authentic result.

Calculating the data gathered by the survey study was not an easy task as the questions ranged from being open-ended questions, multiple-choice questions, and also questions that were answered using a Likert scale. All of the accumulated data was analyzed using SPSS software.

The survey sample size was limited to just the people who are at present pursuing a media course or the ones who already pursued a media course in Mumbai and are looking forward to working in the media field. Although people spend a large amount of their time on Instagram or Snapchat it is solely for the purpose of entertainment and not for an educational purpose. Social media refers to the means of interactions among people in which they create, share, and/or exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks. Nor do any of the social media platforms promote personal/professional growth and well-being by enriching skills. LinkedIn turns out to be the only social media platform that lately came up with an application known as LinkedIn Learning that mainly focuses on career advancement.

CONCLUSION

The findings conclude that people do consider LinkedIn to be a source through which they could enrich their skills, but however, wouldn't consider using LinkedIn as much as a medium to advance their skills or careers. Since, there are many applications that were built widely for the purpose of just skill-building or that allows you to take up a course while at home, it is those applications that people go to when they think of picking up a new skill or pursuing a short term online course that could benefit them career-wise.

People that lie between the ages 18-26, not all were aware of the fact that LinkedIn also offers short term courses that could help them build a skill or two. The research also found out that people spent the most amount of time on Instagram and other applications and spend very little time on LinkedIn comparatively. But when it comes to growing professionally LinkedIn was the most preferred application out of all the remaining social media platforms.

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