Using social networking websites as a selection tool: The role of selection process fairness and job pursuit intentions

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1. Introduction

Social networking websites, such as Facebook and Twitter, have been increasingly popular over the past years. A recent study found that 90% of respondents between the ages of 18–24 reported having a Facebook account (Withiam, 2011). Individuals can often share personal information, such as pictures, music, videos, blogs, displaying interests and personal demographic information (e.g., age, ethnicity, religion, sexual-orientation, marital status) using these sites. Given the popularity and availability of accessing such personal information, many US employers have started to use social networking websites to screen job candidates. In particular, a study found that 45% of US employers were using social networking websites to screen applicants, and 11% of employers had plans to start using them for screening future applicants (Shea and Wesley, 2006). A similar study found that 50% of human resource professionals used an internet search (e.g., Google) to screen applicants and reported that 20% of the searches led to disqualifying applicants based on the searched content (Zeidner, 2007). Human resource professionals have indicated that using social networking websites to screen applicants is both an acceptable and increasingly important practice to carefully screen applicants (Clark and Roberts, 2010).

Research in the hospitality industry has shown a similar trend. For example, in a study of hospitality recruiters, Madera and Chang (2011) found that although the recruiters reported that the initial purpose for developing a social networking account was for customer service and marketing, the recruiters reported that they use social networking sites for recruitment purposes. Moreover, 54% reported using social network sites to screen applicants. Large hospitality employers are openly encouraging applicants to join their social networking sites as part of their recruitment process (Dolascinski et al., 2010). By joining hospitality organizations’ social networking sites, applicants are providing employers with access to their accounts.

Although this phenomenon has become increasingly popular, there is a dearth of studies examining how applicants perceive and react to the use of social networking websites in the recruitment and selection process. Therefore, the purpose of the current study was to examine how applicants react to the use of social networking websites as a selection tool. Using experimental methods, participants attending a career fair for hospitality jobs completed a questionnaire after reading about a hospitality company that does or does not use social networking sites in the selection process. The results showed that perceived fairness and job pursuit intentions of applicants were lower for an organization that used social networking websites as a selection tool than an organization that did not use social networking websites as a selection tool.

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ABSTRACT

A growing trend in the hospitality industry is openly encouraging applicants to join their social networking sites as part of their recruitment process (Dolascinski et al., 2010; Madera and Chang, 2011). However, there is a dearth of studies examining how applicants perceive and react to the use of social networking websites in the recruitment and selection process. Therefore, the purpose of the current study was to examine how applicants react to the use of social networking websites as a selection tool. Using experimental methods, participants attending a career fair for hospitality jobs completed a questionnaire after reading about a hospitality company that does or does not use social networking sites in the selection process. The results showed that perceived fairness and job pursuit intentions of applicants were lower for an organization that used social networking websites as a selection tool than an organization that did not use social networking websites as a selection tool.

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potentially react to using social networking sites in the selection process. Second, research examining applicants' perception of the selection process shows that applicants make organizational attributes based on the selection process, such that organizations that have selection systems that are perceived to be invasive are also perceived to be less attractive. As such, organizational attractiveness is lower when the selection process is negatively perceived (Rynes and Cable, 2003). Third, applicant reactions are also related to legal complaints; particularly when applicants perceive a selection system to be invasive or inappropriate (Smith et al., 1993).

Fourth and last, hospitality industry has been slow in a researching recruitment and selection methods that are widely used in other industries (Hinkin and Tracey, 2010; Lucas, 2002; Lucas and Deery, 2004). In fact, there is a scarcity of research in hospitality examining applicant reactions to selection methods.

2. Literature review and conceptual development

2.1. Social networking websites as a selection tool

Social networking sites, such as Facebook and Twitter, allow individuals to post and share personal information, which has led to many US employers to use social networking sites to screen job applicants (Shea and Wesley, 2006; Witham, 2011). A reason for using social networking sites to screen employees is that employers might want to verify information provided by applicants. For example, ADP Screening and Selection Services found that applicants do falsify their information on applications, such as their employment record, education, and credentials or licenses (Levashina, 2009). Other reasons for using social networking sites for selection purposes is that social networking sites have some advantages over traditional human resource tools, such as being accessible without costs (Jacobs, 2009) and are perceived to be reliable sources by users (Kluemper and Rosen, 2009). Thus, social networks provide employers with additional information they can use to screen applicants.

Another possible factor that drives employers to search for negative information of applicants on social networking sites is negligent hiring; that is, employers can be legally responsible for employees who cause harm to the third party (i.e., customers). Employees represent an important resource for organizations and selection of employees plays a key role in developing a competitive advantage. The information that job candidates post on social networking sites might be evaluated by how positive and negative the information is perceived. One study found that 35% of employers reported rejecting a candidate based on the content the candidate posted on their social networking profile; however, only 18% of employers reported hiring an applicant based on the positive content posted on their social networking profile (Careerbuilder.com, 2009).

Hence, the employers' best interest is to gain as much information of the applicants as possible to avoid negligent hiring. In the selection process, different laws (e.g., Title VII, the Americans with Disabilities Act) limit information that might be necessary for employers (Byrside, 2008). In fact, past employers are often afraid to provide negative information, because of the increasing litigations in which employers are accused of defamation for providing negative information about employees to their new employers. Employers' lack of information from traditional selection tools and fear of negligent hiring can be reasons why employers use social networking sites to look for additional information of the applicants (Sprague, 2007).

2.2. Perceived process fairness

Organizational justice theory (Greenberg, 1987, 1990) provides a theoretical framework for examining how applicants react to organizations using social networking websites as a selection tool. Organizational justice is concerned with the perceived fairness of procedures and outcomes in organization, such as workplace policies, interactions, and procedures used that affect outcomes (Cullen and Sackett, 2003; Schminke et al., 2000). Although organizational justice has been commonly divided into three categories: distributive (i.e., the fairness of what one receives based on the distribution from decisions), procedural (i.e., the perceived fairness of formal decision-making practices), and interactional justice (i.e., to quality of interpersonal treatment received during implementations of a procedure), recent research suggests that an overall sense of fairness is more predictive of reactions than the individual fairness perceptions (Ambrose and Schminke, 2009; Greenberg, 2001; Shapiro, 2001). That is, overall perceived fairness "provide a more complete understanding of justice in organizational settings" (Ambrose and Schminke, 2009, p. 491).

Fairness heuristic theory explains how individuals make overall fairness judgments, as well as why people use fairness judgments (Lind, 2001); this theory states that individuals create a general heuristic about the fairness of an organization. This general fairness heuristic is formed during the first encounter with justice-relevant events, such as the recruitment and selection process. Over time, as individuals encounter other types of justice judgments, they create fairness heuristics for each organizational context.

One major component of the theory is the idea that individuals create a fairness heuristic when they are first confronted with justice-relevant information, and once made this heuristic is hard to change (i.e., primacy effect). This first process creates a fairness heuristic based on the first specific justice encountered (e.g., a procedural fairness heuristic) and at the same time a general fairness heuristic is formed. This suggests that the first relevant information exerting the greatest influence on feelings of overall fairness, creating a primacy effect. The general fairness heuristic influences subsequent judgments of justice.

In the context of employee selection, research shows that when making fairness ratings of selection tools, applicants examine the policies, decisions, and procedures used to make hiring decisions. The perceived validity of a selection tool is particularly important in the context of examining applicant reactions because research shows that applicants have favorable reactions to selection tools that are strongly related to the job content, such as work samples or simulations, as opposed to personality inventories and tests of cognitive ability, which are perceived to be less related to the job (Ryan and Ployhart, 2000).

Procedures and decisions are perceived to be fairer when they are consistent, free from personal bias, and based on accurate and relevant information (Anderson, 2003). Research has also examined how the interpersonal treatment received during the process of a selection procedure affects fairness perceptions (Chapman et al., 2005). In particular, providing knowledge, adequate accounts, and explanations about the procedures is how informational justice is formed (Bies and Tyler, 1993). In addition, the applicants' perceived job relatedness of a selection tool is an important reaction to selection systems (Rynes and Cable, 2003).

Invasion of privacy is an important procedural dimension that is relevant to selection techniques that are internet-based (Harris et al., 2003). That is, in the context of using social networking websites as a selection tool, privacy is a relevant concern for applicants’ perceived fairness. Applicants’ privacy concerns involve the process of how information was collected, if unauthorized information is obtained, and if improper access is used to obtain personal information (Smith et al., 1996). Research has shown that privacy concerns are significantly related to the perceived fairness of selection tools, such that perceptions of fairness were higher when invasion of privacy was perceived as low (Alge, 2001; Bauer et al., 2006; Eddy et al., 1999). Thus, research suggests that
applicants are likely to perceive the use of social networking websites as a selection tool as less fair, because social networking websites contain personal information that is not necessarily related to the job.

**Hypothesis 1.** An organization that uses social networking websites as a selection tool will be perceived as less fair than an organization that does not use social networking websites as a selection tool.

2.3. Job pursuit intentions

In addition to fairness perceptions, selection tools also influence job pursuit intention, which is the intent to apply to a position or continue in the application process (Rynes, 1991). Extensive research shows that the selection tools or methods that organizations use also play an important role on applicant job pursuit intentions (e.g., Bauer et al., 1998; Saks et al., 1994; 1995; Smith, et al., 1996; Truxillo et al., 2002; Turban et al., 1998). Like perceived fairness, the literature suggests that the perceived validity of a selection tool and the privacy concerns related to a selection tool are particularly important for job pursuit intentions (Gilliland, 1993; Ryan and Ployhart, 2000).

**Hypothesis 2.** Job pursuit intentions will be lower for an organization that uses social networking websites as a selection tool than an organization that does not use social networking websites as a selection tool.

2.4. Selection purpose

Selection tools and methods are used for two general purposes, usually for selecting new employees or for promoting current employees (Rynes and Cable, 2003). Reactions to selection tools and methods are not the same for new employees as they are for current employees who are participating in a promotion process (Hausknecht et al., 2004). Using social networking websites as a selection tool for promotion might be perceived as more of an invasion of privacy and less job-related than when it is used for new employees for several reasons. First, an organization has more knowledge of their current employees than of applicants who are new and therefore using social networking sites might be perceived as less fair and job related. That is, promotions or hiring from within grants an organization a pool of applicants who are known to the organization because of the employee’s history with an organization (Snow and Snell, 1992; Wright and Snell, 1991). Second, employees form psychological contracts, or employees’ perception that their employers have their best interests at heart, which can be violated when employees perceive their employers are invading their privacy (Cullinan and Dundon, 2006). In the context of new employee selection, the applicants are not known and therefore there is an expectation that an employer would be more thorough in a selection process, even if they are perceived as invasive (Rynes and Cable, 2003). Thus, perceived fairness and job pursuit intentions will be lower for an organization that uses social networking websites for promotion purposes than for selecting new employees.

**Hypothesis 3.** The purpose of the selection process will moderate the relationship between using social networking websites as a selection tool and perceived fairness.

**Hypothesis 4.** The purpose of the selection process will moderate the relationship between using social networking websites as a selection tool and job pursuit intentions.

2.5. The mediating role of selection process fairness

Research suggests that job pursuit intentions are influenced by the perceived fairness of a selection tool or method (e.g., Chapman et al., 2005; Smith, et al., 1996; Truxillo et al., 2002).

In Gilliland's (1993) theoretical model of applicant reactions, the relationship between components of the selection practices and applicant reactions, such as job pursuit intentions, is mediated by fairness perceptions. Building on this framework, the current study examined if the effect of using social networking websites as a selection tool on job pursuit intentions is because of the perceived fairness of using social networking websites as a selection tool. This mediation effect might be due to the fact that social networking websites contain information that is personal and not necessarily related to the job, leading to applicants to perceive the use of social networking websites as a selection tool as less fair. The lower perceived fairness will in turn lead to lower job pursuit intentions, as suggested by past research (Chapman et al., 2005; Smith, et al., 1996; Truxillo et al., 2002).

**Hypothesis 5.** Selection process fairness will mediate the relationship between the use of social networking websites as a selection tool and job pursuit intentions.

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

The participants were 171 (100 women, 71 men) college students majoring in hospitality management attending a career fair for hospitality positions. The participants’ average age was 23.02 (SD = 3.45); 54.7% reported working part-time in the hospitality industry, 23.3% reported having a full-time job in the hospitality industry, and 22.1% reported as not currently employed. Approximately 38% identified as Caucasian, 28% as Asian, 14% as Hispanic, 9% as Black/African–American, and 11% as “other.” The current study focused on college students attending a career fair because (1) college students are more likely to have social networking websites network accounts than older populations (Withiam, 2011) and (2) all the participants were actively seeking employment at a career fair and therefore provided an opportunity to examine how the use of social networking websites as an HR selection tool influences job decisions.

3.2. Design and procedure

The study employed a 2(social networking websites use as a selection tool: yes or no) × 2(purpose of use: employment selection or promotion) between-subjects, experimental design in which participants were randomly assigned to read one of the four conditions. All the participants were contacted via email by the career fair organizer. The email contained a link to the manipulated information and the survey measuring the dependent variables and demographic information. Following similar procedures used in prior applicant reactions to selection procedures research (e.g., Avery et al., 2004; Elkins and Phillips, 2000; Highhouse et al., 1999; Ployhart and Ryan, 1998), the participants were asked to read a job advertisement that included information about the selection procedures that a hospitality company uses (e.g., “using resume screening to evaluate applicant fit and face-to-face interviews”). The first independent variable (social networking websites use as a selection tool: yes or no) was manipulated by including a statement that the company “uses social network sites available on the internet, such as Facebook, to recruit and assess the candidates.” This statement was not included for half of the participants. This manipulation reflects the trend of hospitality organizations openly...
encouraging and inviting applicants to join their social networking websites for recruitment purposes (Dolanski et al., 2010; Madera and Chang, 2011; Smith and Kidder, 2010). To manipulate the second independent variable (purpose of use: employment selection or promotion), the job advertisement described the hospitality company as “a large foodservice distributor in the U.S. recruiting new employees” or “promoting current employees” for a position in a sales department.

After reading the job advertisement, the participants completed a survey that included the measures of interest (i.e., job pursuit intentions and selection process fairness) and completed demographic questions. After completing the survey, the participants completed manipulation check questions. First, the participants were asked if the “organization uses social network media to assess the candidates” and second, if the job advertisement was for “selecting a new employee” or “promoting current employees.”

3.3. Measures

Selection process fairness. The overall selection system process fairness was measured by six items from Ambrose and Schminke (2009). Example items included “In general, this organization’s selection process is fair to applicants,” “In general, the treatment applicants receive from this selection process is fair,” and “Overall, the selection process is not fair.” The responses were assessed on a 7-point scale ranging from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree.” The scale reliability was .94.

Job pursuit intentions. Three items from Macan et al. (1994) and Smither et al. (1993) were used to measure job pursuit intentions: “I would pursue employment at this company,” “I would participate in the application process,” and “I would accept a job if one was offered.” The responses were assessed on a 7-point scale ranging from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree.” The scale reliability was .97.

4. Results

4.1. Manipulation checks

To examine whether the manipulations were effective, a t-test on the two manipulation check items were conducted. This analysis indicated that the organization depicted as using social networking websites as a selection tool condition was correctly perceived to use social networking websites as part of the selection process than the organization depicted in the control condition (t(170)=22.9, p<.05). Similarly, the results indicated that the organization depicted as selecting new employees as opposed to promoting current employees was correctly perceived as selecting new employees than the organization depicted as promoting current employees (t(170)=23.3, p<.05). Overall, these results suggest that the two manipulations were successful.

4.2. Test of hypotheses

A 2(social networking websites use as a selection tool: yes or no) x 2(purpose of use: employment selection or promotion) Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) with selection process fairness and job pursuit intentions as the dependent variables was conducted to test Hypotheses 1–4. The results showed a significant main effect of social networking websites use as a selection tool on the selection process fairness, F(1, 168)=40.97, p=.001, η² = .19, such that the organization that used social networking websites as a selection tool was perceived as less fair (M=4.9, SD=1.1) than an organization that did not use social networking websites as a selection tool (M=5.9, SD=1.0), thereby supporting Hypothesis 1.

The results showed a significant main effect of social networking websites use as a selection tool on job pursuit intentions, F(1, 168)=68.03, p=.001, η² = .28. Job pursuit intentions were lower for an organization that used social networking websites as a selection tool (M=4.3, SD=1.5) than the organization that did not use social networking websites as a selection tool (M=5.8, SD=1.3), thereby supporting Hypothesis 2. Fig. 1 depicts the results for Hypotheses 1 and 2.

The results did not show a significant interaction between social networking websites use and the purpose of the selection process on the selection process fairness, F(1, 168)=1.65, p=.19, η² = .01, thereby not supporting Hypothesis 3. The results did not show a significant interaction between social networking websites use and the purpose of the selection process on job pursuit intentions, F(1, 168)=.67, p=.41, η² = .01, thereby not supporting Hypothesis 4.

Preacher and Hayes’ (2008) tests of indirect effects was used to test Hypothesis 5 that the selection process fairness would mediate the relationship between the use of social networking websites as a selection tool and job pursuit intentions. In this mediation test, the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable are tested with and without the addition of the mediator. The test of the indirect effect examines whether the total effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable is significantly reduced with the addition of the mediator to the model. Preacher and Hayes’ (2008) Sobel test and bootstrapped formula were used to test the indirect effect with a 95% confidence interval.

The results showed that the use of social networking websites as a selection tool (i.e., the independent variable) significantly predicted selection process fairness (i.e., the mediator), β = .40, p = .01. The selection process fairness predicted job pursuit intentions (i.e., the dependent variable), β = .59, p = .001. The direct effect of the use of social networking websites as a selection tool on job pursuit intentions (β = .49, p = .01) was reduced with the mediator in the model (β = .26, p = .02). The results of the Sobel test and bootstrapped formula showed that the reduction (i.e., indirect effect) was significant, Z=5.05, p = .01, with a statistically significant 95% confidence interval (.14 to .35). Thus, Hypothesis 5 was supported (see Fig. 2).

5. Discussion

The purpose of the current study was to examine reactions to a hospitality company using social networking websites as part of the selection process. The results showed that an organization that used social networking websites as a selection tool was perceived as less fair than an organization that did not. Similarly, job pursuit intentions were lower for an organization that used social networking websites as a selection tool than an organization that

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did not. These results are consistent with past research for two reasons.

First, the perceived validity of a selection tool is particularly important for applicant reactions because applicants have favorable responses to selection tools that are perceived to be job-related (Ryan and Ployhart, 2000; Rynes and Cable, 2003). Although job-related information, such as current and past employers, can be posted on social networking websites, the majority of the content on these sites are not related to work content, such as pictures, favorite music, movies, and books (Withiam, 2011). Second, privacy of personal information is an important concern for applicants (Harris et al., 2003; Smith et al., 1996). This is particularly relevant for using social networking websites for selection purposes because these sites might contain information that was not intended for employers to access.

The results of the current study also build on the theoretical models and literature reviews that suggest that the relationship between components of the selection practices and applicant reactions is mediated by fairness perceptions (Gilliland, 1993; Hausknecht et al., 2004; Ryan and Ployhart, 2000). Participants perceived the organization that used social networking websites as a selection tool as less fair, which led to lower job pursuit intentions. Although perceived fairness and job pursuit intentions have been examined empirically, no research to date has examined these variables within the context of social networking websites as a selection tool. This is particularly important considering that 45–50% of employers used social networking websites to screen applicants (Shea and Wesley, 2006; Zeidner, 2007), including employers from the hospitality industry (Madera and Chang, 2011).

The results did not support the notion that the selection purpose would moderate the effect of social networking websites use as a selection tool on perceived fairness or job pursuit intentions. Instead, the results showed that regardless of the purpose of the selection tool, participants rated the use of social networking websites as a selection tool as less fair, which led to lower job pursuit intentions. This finding suggests that social networking websites might be perceived as not having any information that is relevant for work for either new or current employees. Thus, hospitality employers should be aware that using social networking websites to screen applicants will be perceived negatively.

5.1. Theoretical implications

Theoretically, these results can be understood within the organizational justice theory framework (Greenberg, 1987, 1990). In the case of using social networking websites to screen applicants, the results suggest that fairness perceptions influence job intention pursuits from applicant. This is important considering that the recruitment/selection process is usually the first fairness-related event with an organization, which leads to a fairness heuristic of the process and organization (Lind, 2001). The results of this study provide causal evidence that using social networking websites as a selection tool is perceived as unfair and leads to lower job pursuit intentions.

Another theoretical implication of the current study is that justice perceptions are an important psychological mechanism that influences applicant reactions to a selection process that involves social networking websites and what this means for future theoretical models and theory because technology is changing recruitment and selection methods. Fairness-based models have been developed to explain how applicants and employees react to various information-gathering processes that may be perceived as an invasion of privacy or not related to the job content by applicants and employees (Ambrose and Alder, 2000; Grant and Bateman, 1989; Kidwell and Bennett, 1994). A limitation of these models has been a common failure to incorporate the psychological mechanism that explains the fairness effects. The current study demonstrated by manipulating whether an organization was described as using (versus not) social networking websites for selection, that individuals’ fairness perception of a selection process can be negatively influenced. Individuals do recognize that using social networking websites for selection is a fairness-related event, which influences job pursuit intentions; providing a theoretical link between the use of social networking websites for selection and job pursuit intentions.

5.2. Practical implications

The current study suggests that using social networking websites for selection purposes does have a negative impact on the fairness perception of the selection process. As such, organizations should be cautious about inviting or encouraging potential applicants to join their social networking website. Employers should be aware that applicants might have negative reactions if they use social networking websites as part other their selection process. Applicants perceive privacy violations as unfair and often this leads to negative perceptions of the organization (Truxillo et al., 2004). If an organization is going to use social networking sites for recruitment only and not to assess or screen applicants, then the recruitment purpose should be explained to potential applicants as well as providing an official statement that their profiles will not be used for selection or screening. Research suggest that applicants have positive reactions when organizations provide information and explanations about how information is gathered and that the applicant information will be used is a consistent and systematic manner (Hausknecht et al., 2004). In doing so, employers may be able to attract applicants by influencing their perceptions of the selection process, such as increased perceptions of fairness.

In addition, the reliability and validity of using social networking sites to screen and select applicants is unknown. Until the reliability and validity of the information from social networking sites is examined, hiring organizations should be cautious when relying on social networking sites to make selection decisions. Just as
with other selection tools and methods (Madera and Abbott, 2012) focusing on job-related information when using social networking sites should minimize bias in selection decision that might result from job-relevant information.

The current study also provides important legal implications for practitioners because personal information that is often protected by employment laws is available on social networking websites (Withiam, 2011). For example, Title VII, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Pregnancy Discrimination Act restrict the use of religious affiliation, age, disability, and pregnancy when making employment decision. Thus, if employers do use information that is based on religion, age, disability, and/or pregnancy, employers might face disparate impact issues.

5.3. Limitations and future research

Despite using experimental methods and an appropriate sample to balance internal and external validity, there are some limitations that might be addressed by future research. Although the participants were college students attending a career fair with intentions to apply to jobs, they were responding to a hypothetical job description. Future research might address this limitation by examining applicant reactions to organization’s “real” use of social networking sites as a selection tool. In addition, age might be a possible moderator of the effect of using social networking sites on job pursuit intentions. Because younger individuals are more likely to have a social network account than older individuals, older applicants might have different reactions to employers using social network accounts as a selection tool (Withiam, 2011).

Similarly, another possible moderator might be the extent to which applicants have a social network account and the information they include. Not all individuals put personal information on social network accounts and rather focus on career-related information commonly found on resumes (Clark and Roberts, 2010). Related to this point, future research might examine if privacy concerns is a mediator between the use of social networking sites and fairness perceptions. Bauer et al. (2006) found that privacy concerns influences the fairness perceptions of online testing for employment. In particular, participants who had high privacy concerns over their personal information being disclosed to others also perceived online testing to be unfair.

Not all social networking sites are the same; this study focused on Facebook as the example for the participants. The reason for using Facebook was that this is the mostly widely used social network site with over 500 million active users as opposed to the 30 million users on LinkedIn (Shroeder, 2010). LinkedIn is social network site that focuses on job-posting or resume-related information, such as past and current employers and education. While individuals can post job and resume-related information on Facebook, this social network site also allows for the posting of personal and non-job related information. Thus, future research might examine if fairness perceptions vary by the type of social network site an employer uses to screen applicants. In particular, future research might examine if attitudes toward employers using social networking sites varies as a function of the type of social networking site is used (i.e., Facebook versus LinkedIn). Another avenue for future research is Google+, which is the fastest growing social networking site that integrates social life with work life (Ovadia, 2011).

5.4. Conclusions

As hospitality organizations have started to increasingly use technological advancements, recruitment and selection practices have been changed by advances in technology (Madera and Chang, 2011; Withiam, 2011). Yet, research into how applicants react to new trends in recruitment and selection has not kept up with these emerging changes in practices. The current study offers important theoretical and practical insights into applicants’ fairness perceptions of selection tools within the hospitality industry. The results were consistent with Fairness Heuristic Theory’s proposition that individuals make overall fairness judgments using information from justice-relevant events, such as the selection process (Lind, 2001). In the context of employers using social networking websites as a selection tool, fairness perceptions largely drive applicant job intention pursuits. For employers, a consideration of fairness of using social networking sites in the selection process is important when using applicant information to make selection decisions. Moreover, using a selection tool-fairness framework is warranted for enhancing the understanding of applicant attitudes toward using social networking sites for selection purposes.

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