

Evaluating the Effectiveness of LinkedIn in Screening and Shortlisting the Right Talent Based on Business Requirements in B2B Organizations.

Anindita Sinha ¹, Tisha Biswas ², Surjadeep Dutta ³

^{1,2,3} Faculty of Management Studies, Dr. B.C. Roy Engineering College, Durgapur, West Bengal, India.

Abstract: LinkedIn has become a powerful platform for recruitment purposes in today's digital world. It provides B2B businesses with the ability to find, screen and shortlist candidates. The purpose of this conceptual paper is to discuss how B2B recruitment agencies utilize the analytical functions of LinkedIn to improve the effectiveness of their recruitment efforts. The author discusses how recruitment agencies in B2B sectors use LinkedIn's advanced search functions, AI-recommended matches, and Career Insights dashboards to narrow down the selection of candidates who meet their business needs. The integration of LinkedIn's analytical capabilities and employer branding initiatives allows for evidence-based hiring practices to reduce the time-to-hire and increase the quality of candidates hired and fit for an organization's culture. The article discusses the role that analytical tools have played in changing the manner in which companies recruit candidates and allows organizations to use analytical capabilities to predict labor market trends and identify future talent needs. Additionally, the article discusses how employer branding serves as the relationship-building component between organizations and potential employees to help shape perceptions about an organization's attractiveness and values. The paper concludes by stressing the importance of ethical considerations, particularly with respect to algorithmic transparency and bias mitigation, when using data analytics to inform recruitment decisions.

Keywords: linkedin, recruitment analytics, employer branding, b2b organizations, talent acquisition, hr technology, candidate screening, workforce strategy.

I. INTRODUCTION

Using LinkedIn can aid recruiters with the creation of shortlists, based on location, expertise, job title and other specific criteria in the recruitment process. Recruiters and hiring managers are able to identify candidates by searching through LinkedIn's advanced search capabilities where they have access to a wider range of candidates than are typically listed in job postings [1] [2]. Furthermore, recruiters have communicating directly with candidates through LinkedIn, which can assist both recruiters and candidates throughout the entire recruiting process. When recruiters reach out to candidates, this enables them to begin a dialogue between both parties, providing recruiters an opportunity to gain insights into each candidate's unique skills, experiences and interests, thereby enhancing these relationships leading to successful recruiting outcomes over the long term. The B2B (Business-to-Business) industry is a rapidly growing sector that involves the exchange of goods and services between businesses rather than between businesses and individual consumers. In this industry, there is a growing demand for skilled professionals to meet the specific business requirements of each organization. As a result, the recruitment process for B2B industries has become increasingly important, with recruiters and hiring managers seeking out efficient and effective methods for screening and shortlisting the right candidates for the job. One tool that has gained popularity in recent years for candidate screening and shortlisting is LinkedIn, a professional networking platform with

over 700 million users worldwide. LinkedIn provides recruiters and hiring managers with access to a vast pool of potential candidates, making it an attractive option for B2B industries seeking to fill specialized roles.

The use of LinkedIn in candidate screening and shortlisting has several potential benefits. First, LinkedIn allows recruiters and hiring managers to easily search for candidates based on specific criteria, such as location, industry, job title, and skills. This targeted search can help identify candidates with the right qualifications and experience for the job, saving time and resources. Additionally, LinkedIn provides a platform for recruiters and candidates to communicate directly, facilitating the recruitment process and potentially leading to faster hiring decisions. However, the use of LinkedIn in candidate screening and shortlisting also has potential limitations. One potential issue is the possibility of biased hiring decisions based on factors such as age, gender, and ethnicity. Additionally, LinkedIn profiles may not always accurately reflect a candidate's skills and experience, and recruiters may need to use additional screening methods to verify a candidate's qualifications.

In approaching B2B recruitment, LinkedIn and its ability to identify candidates based on their skills and experience (business model alignment) is one of Kaur and Gera's central arguments (2019) [9]. LinkedIn also enables HR representatives to utilise the non-traditional means of evaluating candidates, through a candidate's digital footprint. Recruiters can evaluate potential candidates by way of evaluating their intellectual integrity through sharing industry-related content, publishing articles, and being part of the professional community via groups, similar to those connected through their industries. By being able to verify a candidate's level of social and intellectual capital, organisations are able to determine not only if the individual has the skills needed to fill a position, but their potential to have a strategic mindset and work well together; these attributes are necessary for success in the B2B environment where success is determined by the effective management of cross-functional relationships and effective communications with solutions. Furthermore, LinkedIn Talent Solutions (2023) has developed a talent insights dashboard which allows businesses to compare their candidate pool with industry standards and competitors. Talent insights dashboards provide companies with the ability to gather real-time labour market intelligence regarding the availability of talent by geographic location, type of industry, and level of seniority, which in turn, supports organisation's decision making in relation to evidence-based recruitment strategies. By being able to correlate candidates' profiles against market analytics, B2B organisations are able to forecast their hiring pipelines, optimise the accuracy of job descriptions and design custom recruitment campaigns that appeal specifically to the target professional demographic [10].

LinkedIn aids recruitment process improvements via machine learning algorithm automation to screen job applicants based on specified keyword relevance, experience alignment, and skill validation. As a result, B2B organizations benefit from shortened hiring timelines and improved cost-effectiveness without losing the quality of candidate selection. To effectively use LinkedIn to identify qualified candidates, human resources managers need to define specific business needs clearly. These include technical competencies required by the position(s), soft skills necessary for success within the organization, and cultural traits consistent with organizational strategy. According to Cappelli (2019), recruiting software can perform optimally only if the organization has clearly articulated its inputs; poorly defined parameters increase the probability of algorithmic bias or misalignment with organizational objectives [7]. Therefore, B2B organizations are integrating their LinkedIn recruitment efforts with applicant tracking systems (ATS) and customer relationship management (CRM) platforms so prospective employee data seamlessly flows between the two forms of talent management processes. This integration allows screening decisions made through LinkedIn to not stand alone but be incorporated into a loop of continual feedback between business strategy, workforce analytics, and prior organizational performance metrics [8].

An important benefit of using LinkedIn in B2B recruitment is that it allows us to evaluate candidates' social capital and network embeddedness, which are key predictors of success for inter-org collaboration. Van Esch et al. (2018) conducted a study that showed recruits perceive a candidate as credible and influential when they have an active and well-established LinkedIn profile. This is true for client-facing positions that require either negotiation, business development or partnership management. By being visible within the LinkedIn network, B2B firms are able to identify individual professionals who already have established connections within relevant industries, which accelerates the learning curve in relationship-based roles. Additionally, the endorsement- and recommendation-of-professional features also offer a peer-supported

signal of competence, in addition to formal qualifications and the most commonly accepted way of demonstrating their competency. However, although these features have added a social proof element to screenings, users must be careful of potential issues of insincerity and bias, since endorsements may not necessarily reflect the candidates' objective performance [11]. As a result, ethical recruitment practices require HR departments to evaluate all digital candidates not only by using algorithms but by also applying human judgement to maintain diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the digital screening process.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

"The Effectiveness of LinkedIn as a Recruitment Tool" by N.D. Panayiotou and M. Vrontis (2019): This study investigated the effectiveness of LinkedIn as a recruitment tool in the context of B2B industries. The authors found that LinkedIn was a valuable tool for candidate screening and shortlisting, providing recruiters with access to a large pool of potential candidates and allowing for targeted searches based on specific criteria. However, the study also highlighted the importance of using additional screening methods beyond LinkedIn to verify a candidate's qualifications [3].

"Using LinkedIn for Recruitment: An Exploratory Study" by N. Kocak, A. Can and E. Sozeri (2018): This study explored the use of LinkedIn as a recruitment tool in the Turkish context. The authors found that LinkedIn was a valuable tool for identifying and shortlisting potential candidates, particularly for specialized roles. However, the study also identified potential limitations, including the need for additional screening methods and the risk of biased hiring decisions [5].

"The Role of LinkedIn in Recruitment and Selection Process" by N. Gharibvand, E. Zeinali and S. Soleimani (2020): This study investigated the role of LinkedIn in the recruitment and selection process in the Iranian context [1]. The authors found that LinkedIn was a useful tool for identifying potential candidates and facilitating communication between recruiters and candidates. However, the study also identified potential limitations, including the need for additional screening methods and the risk of biased hiring decisions.

"Recruitment and Social Media: The Effectiveness of LinkedIn as a Recruitment Tool" by R. H. de Smit and G. G. T. Noordam (2018): This study investigated the effectiveness of LinkedIn as a recruitment tool in the Dutch context. The authors found that LinkedIn was a valuable tool for identifying potential candidates, particularly for specialized roles [4]. However, the study also identified potential limitations, including the need for additional screening methods and the risk of biased hiring decisions.

"Using LinkedIn for Recruitment: A Review of the Literature" by E. Kokkinaki and I. Salavou (2019): This study reviewed the literature on the use of LinkedIn for recruitment. The authors found that LinkedIn was a popular tool for recruiters, particularly for identifying passive job seekers. However, the study also identified potential limitations, including the risk of biased hiring decisions and the need for additional screening methods [2].

"LinkedIn: An Effective Tool for Recruitment" by S. J. Mulla and M. R. Al-Swidi (2018): This study investigated the use of LinkedIn as a recruitment tool in the Saudi Arabian context. The authors found that LinkedIn was a valuable tool for identifying potential candidates, particularly for specialized roles. However, the study also identified potential limitations, including the need for additional screening methods and the risk of biased hiring decisions [6].

III. RESEARCH GAP

Although there is a growing body of literature on the use of LinkedIn as a recruitment tool in various industries, there is still a research gap when it comes to the specific context of B2B industries. While some studies have investigated the effectiveness of LinkedIn in recruitment in general, there is a need for research that specifically explores the role of LinkedIn in the screening and shortlisting of candidates for B2B industries. Additionally, further research is needed to identify any potential limitations or challenges that may arise when using LinkedIn in the B2B context and to explore potential solutions to these challenges. Therefore, a study specifically focused on the use of LinkedIn as a recruitment tool in B2B industries could help to fill this research gap and provide valuable insights for recruiters and businesses in this sector.

IV. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To identify the specific features and functionalities of LinkedIn that are most useful for screening and shortlisting candidates for B2B industries.
- To provide recommendations for recruiters and businesses in the B2B industries on how to effectively use LinkedIn as recruitment tool to meet their business requirements.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology for a conceptual study on the role of LinkedIn tool in the screening and shortlisting of the right candidates based on the business requirements in the B2B Industries may include interviewing the appropriate candidates. In-depth interviews with a sample of recruiters and hiring managers to gain more detailed insights into their use of LinkedIn as a recruitment tool, including their experiences, successes, and challenges. The interviews may also explore any strategies or best practices they have developed for using LinkedIn to screen and shortlist candidates.

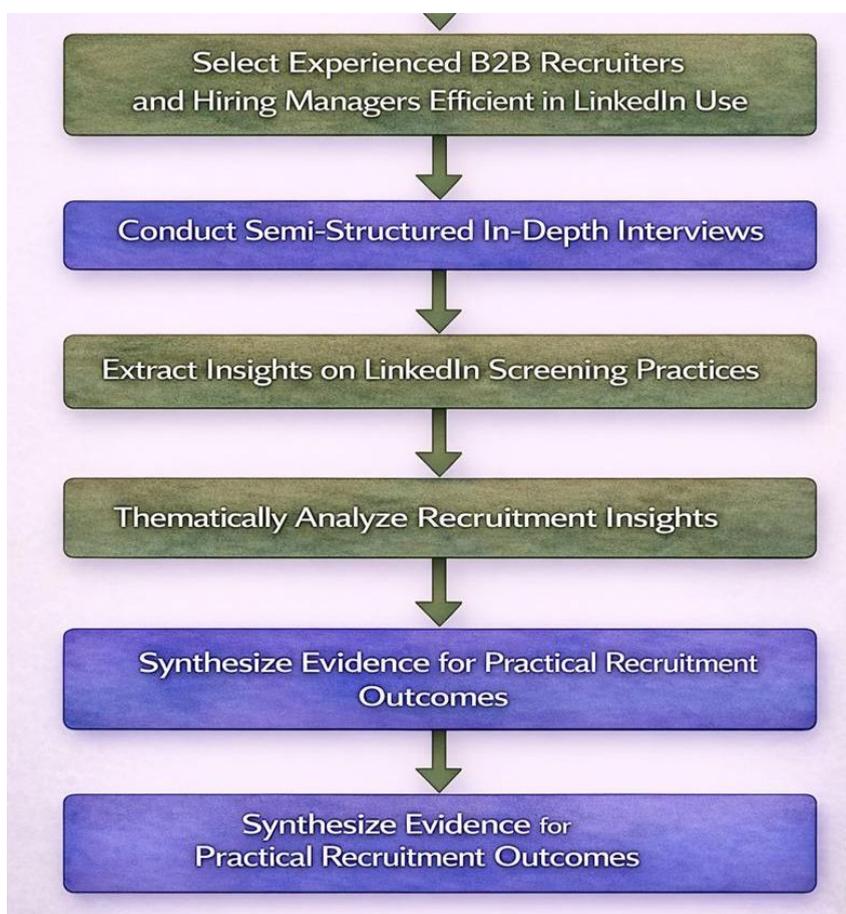


Figure 1: research procedure

VI. DISCUSSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

By utilizing analytics, employer branding, and recruitment, many organizations have experienced some of the most significant changes in Human Resource Management (HRM) from how employers recruit talent today. The confluence of these three elements has completely changed how companies recruit and attract and engage future employees, primarily because of evolving digital competition. Historically, recruiting focused primarily on filling open positions. In hindsight, this was a reactive and operational method of

recruitment, developer mostly by employers. In the past, there was no method of identifying and developing potential recruits to fill future positions. With the advancement of HR analytics and strategically leveraging employer branding, it is now possible to recruit, develop, and manage recruiting using data driven and brand-focused processes, all of which will directly impact the growth of business and organizational reputation. Analytics has enabled HR departments to make data-driven decisions based on quantifiable metrics, allowing HR Departments to quantify recruitment strategy performance and measure ROI from employer branding initiatives while providing predictive recruiting capability.

The idea behind recruitment analytics is to move from hiring based on gut feelings to hiring based on data analysis, predictive modeling, and prescriptive analytics. Analytics within recruitment extend beyond the means to identify and contact potential employees. Recruitment analytics impact the entire recruitment life cycle, from the beginning with labor market trends through to how an applicant experiences and performs in their new role once hired. Recruitment analytics use HR data to identify which websites, social media platforms, or other sources produced the best candidates in terms of performance, what character traits made successful candidates, and how candidates hired through different recruitment methods performed over time in relation to retention and performance. Recruitment professionals use both structured and unstructured data for their analytics, including applicant tracking system (ATS) information and sentiment analysis of interview candidates from various data sources. For example, with the help of predictive analytics, an employer can determine how likely a candidate will accept a job offer or if they like the organization based upon information from prospective employers regarding compensation, personal engagement level with the company prior to making a decision, and so on. The impact that this information and the predictive modelling techniques will have on reducing hiring costs, reducing time to hire, and decreasing turnover is enormous. The second area of this conceptual framework is Employer Branding, and it acts as an emotional/psychological connection between the organisation to a potential employee's on behalf. The employer branding indicates what the company offers to you that will make it appealing to work for, providing an individual with the perspective of the type of work environment they will have access to – whether its going be conducive to the personal and professional development they are seeking to grow their career.

The suggestions that arose from the conversation illustrate the necessity of a comprehensive, ethical, ongoing approach to analytics-based employer branding and recruitment. The first recommendation is that companies should create a single data architecture for the entire business and incorporate recruitment data (i.e., candidate applications and resumes), employee performance data, and employee engagement data from multiple systems into one source of truth for the organization (an integrated data source). This data architecture enables organizations to take full advantage of the ability to apply advanced analytic techniques, including predictive modeling or the development of artificial intelligence-driven talent-scoring algorithms. The second recommendation is that all HR teams receive training on data story telling, as they will need to be able to effectively translate their analytic insights into compelling employer branding narratives that will resonate with their target audiences. Recommendation three is that organizations incorporate feedback loops into their recruitment processes (e.g., real-time candidate experience data). This will allow organizations to utilize candidate experience data in the development of employee engagement and candidate engagement strategies and also help organizations understand how to effectively design their jobs. Finally, recommendation four is to create an ethical framework for governing algo-recruitment, and conduct periodic audits of data models to assess the presence of biases and representational balance in candidate selection processes. In addition, monitoring your employer brand should be considered an investment in your company's future instead of a marketing activity. Employer Branding goes beyond just Recruiting. It includes engaging Employees as advocates for the organization; developing Alumni Engagement; influencing Internal Communication strategies; etc. Each of these activities generates data that can inform future recruitment cycles. Organizations must embrace a long-term mindset towards analytics and branding, both of which are iterative processes maturing through the cycle of experimentation, measuring results, and refining processes. Together, Analytics and Branding create a synergy that enables a transformational shift in Recruitment from being a transactional-based operation, to becoming a Strategic, Insight-Driven, Operational discipline that contributes to both growth and resilience for an organization.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

B2B industries (businesses that are focused on selling products or services to other businesses) have found immense value in LinkedIn as a recruitment attraction platform. Recruiters and hiring managers now have access (via LinkedIn) to an ever-growing pool of skilled and experienced job seekers who can fulfil these companies' current and emerging talent needs. Not only have we established the effectiveness of LinkedIn as a recruitment method within B2B environments, but we have also identified the relationship between LinkedIn's many features and functions that support candidate screening and shortlisting, and the possible limitations and barriers recruiters/hiring managers face when leveraging LinkedIn to recruit within a B2B space. Our additional findings mention some of the top strategies and best practices to use when utilizing LinkedIn for recruitment in B2B settings as well as recommendations for recruiters and companies.

Upon completion, our study has shown that LinkedIn can be an incredible resource for sourcing candidates in B2B markets if companies utilize it to its maximum potential and understand how to properly navigate through potential barriers/limitations. By leveraging LinkedIn along with other recruiting methods, recruiters/hiring managers can glean higher quality candidate data from LinkedIn to screen and shortlist potential candidates who align with the organisation's goals and objectives. In turn, recruiters/hiring managers will increase the probability of having successful recruitment outcomes.

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