

The Effectiveness of E-Recruitment Software Over Other Online-Based Recruitment Methods

Atyeh Mohammed Alzhrani

Executive MBA, Taif University, KSA

atzhrani@gmail.com

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Abstract: This qualitative research article assesses the effectiveness of e-recruitment apps by focusing on the features that these platforms offer to the employer to make the recruitment process even more productive. To achieve this objective, the study compares the features of an e-recruitment app and a social media-based recruitment platform. A convenient sample of an e-recruitment app (AppliView) and social-media based recruiting platform (LinkedIn) was used, having selected these technologies after a Google Search. It was revealed that AppliView and LinkedIn, while they are effective e-recruitment methods, differ in that AppliView has more decisive features available for the recruiting firm, including live video chat, automated recruitment process (no manual effort is needed), and rapid alerts. Besides, the recruitment cost reduction potential presented by AppliView is well beyond the case of LinkedIn. This study has some limitations, however, including a small sample size and the use of continent sampling. Future researchers might be more comprehensive by adopting other research methods.

Keywords: *e-recruitment; e-recruitment app; social media-based recruitment platform; AppliView, LinkedIn.*



1. Introduction

Recruitment is perhaps the most critical human resource management processes. The nature of the recruitment strategy adopted often determines the kind of workers a company will have, which then has implications for organizational performance or productivity. According to Deb (2009), recruitment is the process of locating, identifying, and attracting capable applicants to a firm. In their seminal work, Wells and Spinks (1989) claimed that proper recruitment usually assists in assuring that the needs of an entity are expressed accurately to the correct people. This, in turn, ensures that inappropriately qualified individuals will not waste their time and energy and the firm's resources. Traditionally, recruitment was performed through one-on-one or face-to-face interaction between the recruiting panel and the candidate. While this is the case, new strategic options have arisen, and this is mainly due to the increasing desire for organizations to save costs and technological advent. A product of these issues has been e-recruitment. According to Deb (2009), e-recruitment is the process of searching for prospective workers using Internet technology. Listwan (2010) supposed that e-recruitment, also referred to as online recruitment, is one of the fastest-growing spheres in modern-day recruitment. Woźniak (2014) adds to this by expressing that the use of e-recruitment has grown in prominence because it is not only a conscious but also directed support with and of the full use of web-based channels.

Different researchers have focused on distinct elements of e-recruitment. Some have attempted to establish the effectiveness (both advantages and disadvantages) of e-recruitment (Ramaabaanu, Saranya, & Phil, 2014, Ventura & Bringula, 2013, Verhoeven & Williams, 2008, and Kapse, Patil, & Pati, 2012). These researchers appear to agree that, insofar e-recruitment is beneficial to the employer because of the efficient use of resources; the strategy is also convenient for the applicants. These researchers have also agreed that e-recruitment has a fair share of problems. Other researchers have investigated the methods of e-recruitment and its potential. These scholars have established that the most common e-recruitment methods include the use of applicant tracking system (Holderman, 2014, Joyce, 2016, and Novak, 2017) and sourcing candidates on professional social media (Gibbs, MacDonald, & MacKay, 2015, Mehta & Sharma, 2016, Madia, 2011, and Doherty, 2010). These studies have mostly overlooked the potency of using recruitment applications as a method of performing e-recruitment. Filling this research gap is an indispensable empirical cause because it will help advance the current research knowledge and improve recruitment practices by employers. Notably, given the newness of e-recruitment, employers are persistently looking for even further ways of doing things. Therefore, this researcher article investigates the effectiveness of e-recruitment apps by focusing on the features that these platforms offer to the employer to make the recruitment process even more productive.

2. Methods

The research article is qualitative, given that it mainly seeks to define the characteristics of e-recruitment software available in the market. The researcher compared one e-recruitment application and one social-media-based e-recruitment method. A systematic process was followed to select these methods. The researcher started by Googling “e-recruitment software/application.” E-recruitment software, in this case, refers to an application developed to help employers in locating, identifying, and attracting capable applicants to fill a given job position. The app is downloadable and installable in a computer or other related devices, for example, the iPad. Alternatively, a human resource manager or recruiting personnel can use the software online (from the website of the developer) without downloading and installing it on the computer. The researcher selected the very first application that appeared in the search, provided that it fitted the profile or definition of e-recruitment software. Next, the researcher searched for a “social media recruitment platform” using Google Search. Again, the investigator selected the first platform produced by the search engine. A social media recruitment platform, for the purpose of the study, was taken to mean a website designed for companies to search through the database to find people whose listed skills might fill up a given position. However, for a sample to be deemed appropriate for the study, the researcher checked its credibility. This was done by checking the credibility of the publisher or developer and then the review of other people regarding the essence of the e-recruitment technologies. If an e-recruitment social media website or app did not meet these requirements, the researcher reviewed the succeeding results until the right samples were evident. AppliView (e-recruiting app) and LinkedIn (e-recruiting social media) were selected as they met the respective inclusion criteria. Having found the two samples, the researcher then analyzed the two systems using content analysis. This process started off with the researcher familiarizing with the two products/services by scrutinizing their characteristics or features. After installing the AppliView, the researcher clicked on each prompt on the app including “manage job requirements,” “candidate tracking system,” “manage and customize,” and “jobs management and e-recruitment.” For each feature, the researcher noted the services that the app provided to the user. It took one and a half hour to exhaustively scrutinize the various facets of the app. After the review of the app, the researcher repeated the same process to familiarize with LinkedIn. Hence, the researcher clicked on links such as “home,” “profile,” “connections,” “jobs,” and “interests.” The review of the website took 45 minutes to complete. Just like the case of AppliView, the researcher noted the various services offered by LinkedIn. The next step included making a comparison of the two samples based on a set of themes. These included the variety of e-recruitment features, the ability of an e-recruitment mechanism to meet all the demands of a typical recruitment process, the degree of automation, and the impacts of the samples on recruitment costs. The researcher was conscious of the ethical issues that applied. As AppliView and LinkedIn are freely available over the Internet, the researcher was not required to seek any site permission. Additionally, given the notion no human subjects were involved in the study as a source of data, the researcher was not required to pursue privacy protection and confidentiality measures.

3. Findings

- **Search results**

After searching the phrase “e-recruitment software/application” on Google Search, the first result was AppliView. This software was selected because it fitted well within the definition of e-recruitment software and that the developer was credible as they had a track record in the field of e-recruitment, a result that corresponded with the reviews from other recruiters who had used the software. As such, one could use AppliView in locating, identifying, and attracting capable applicants to fill a given position. Besides, one could use the software either on the browser from the developer's website or remotely using the computer or related device. After searching the phrase “social media recruitment platform” using the Google Search engine, the LinkedIn website was the first one on the list. LinkedIn was selected because it corresponded with the definition of a social media recruitment platform, that is, a website designed for companies to search through those who have signed up in the search for appropriate candidates. LinkedIn was also determined as appropriate because many companies searched through the web had expressed views about their positive experience with this e-recruitment social media website. The following images are screenshots of each e-recruitment platform’s homepage.



Image (1): Screenshot of AppliView e-recruitment software

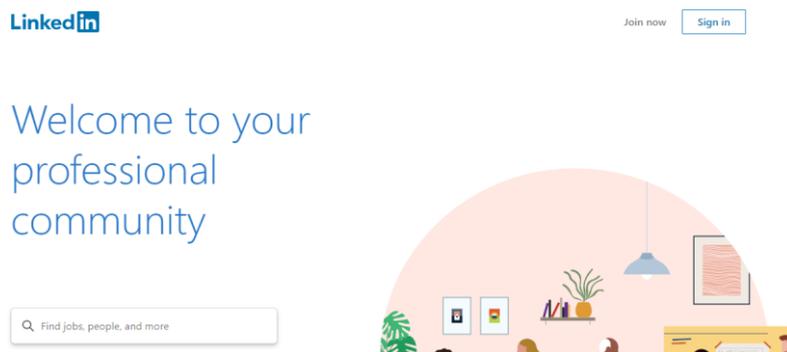


Image (2): Screenshot of the LinkedIn homepage

• Features of AppliView

It was established that AppliView offered the employer a range of features. One of these was the management of jobs' requirements. This feature provided the recruiter the option to publish as many jobs as possible for different clients as possible. After posting the jobs, the AppliView software executed the rest of the needed actions. The management of jobs requirement feature also encompassed offering the recruiter with a single-click filter to lost applicants by jobs, hence saving the firm from being overwhelmed by the sheer number of resumes it receives from its career portal (AppliView, 2020). It was also established that this feature provided the recruiter with an intuitive and simple interface for importing applicants as well as jobs from an Excel file to the recruitment system. Besides, the feature allowed the recruiter to import the applicant list, which they could download from job portals. The results also showed that the job requirement management feature offered the recruiter the opportunity to restrict access to authorized users through RBAC (AppliView, 2020).

Another feature noted was the candidate tracking system, which allowed for the recruiter to create a vast applicant database. Therefore, the recruiter could collect resumes from sophisticated job portals, emails, from the company's computer system, and online career websites to the recruitment software (AppliView, 2020). After an applicant was paired with a specific selection or job, the resume remained in the recruitment database for future references. Additionally, the recruiter was afforded the opportunity to review the history of the applicant at any time. It was also established that the candidate tracking system feature saved time with accurate searches. Accordingly, the software allowed the recruiter to find exactly what they are looking for and hiding extra details to save energy and time. In the case that the recruiter was searching for applicants from a specific city or with a given experience, the tracking system just shows these details. It conceals other data from the interface (AppliView, 2020). The results also showed that the candidate tracking system allowed the recruiters to download or print resumes, besides exporting all the jobs and applicants to an Excel file on the company systems.

It was also revealed that the AppliView had a feature called to manage and customize. Under this feature, it was established that the software could send an automatic email to everyone involved in the recruitment process, including the candidates, recruiters, interviewers, and human resource managers on every crucial event (AppliView, 2020). For every email being sent, the AppliView ensured that the recruiting firm had full control. What is more, it was established that the software allowed the recruiter to create as many job fields as possible based on the employer's needs. The manage and customize feature also provided the recruiter, client, interviewers, and human resource managers with role-based access control (AppliView, 2020).

The other feature that AppliView afforded the clients was screening and filtering. It was determined that under this feature, the software offered intelligent applicant screening with an automatic broad and close match. Besides, the results showed that the application provided the firm with not only talented but also manual applicant screening by experience, qualification, location, and/or industry (AppliView, 2020). What is more, it was established that the application was capable of discarding obvious mismatches with only a single click while reducing the time taken to screen the candidates by the human resource management department. At the same time, it was established that the screening and filtering feature afforded the recruiter with an opportunity to screen the applicants in terms of salary, skills, and experience. The recruiter could also check the history of the candidate with their previous jobs as well as their status within the application tracing software itself (AppliView, 2020). As if not enough, it was established that the screening and filtering feature tagged the candidates with notes and keywords and searched for candidates in the database with numerous options and features.

A yet additional feature that the AppliView software afforded the recruiter was interviewing and selection process. Under this feature, it was established that, under this feature, the software could schedule interview with robust interview scheduling applications (AppliView, 2020). Besides, it was noted that the application afforded the candidates and the interviewers with automatic notifications through SMS or email by the recruitment system. At the same time, the results showed that the application could use and manage phone calls, meetings, email communications, and reminders and report them accordingly. An additional discovery was that the software could manage the applicants by status (hold, open, selected, closed, not selected, negotiating, offered, joined, and refused to join) (AppliView, 2020). The results also showed that the application was able to export applicant information to CSV file and import in the company's ERP software. Besides, it was established that the software had the ability to sort the candidate by not only rating but also finding out the best-ranked applicant. It was as well determined that the interviewer was provided with an exclusive login with an option to change the status of the interview and rate the candidates.

Yet another feature of the application noted was analysis and reporting. It was established that the software offered a simple and informative dashboard, which had charts and calendars. At the same time, the researcher found out that the software provided the recruiter with Excel and PDF reports of the applicants and jobs (AppliView, 2020). As if not enough, the investigator found out that the software provided elegant charts and data reports using Google Charts APIS, which is a modern charting technology. The software, it was also determined, provided a candidate tracking system with reports about job statuses, qualification analysis candidate source analysis, and applicant status reports (AppliView, 2020). The software was also determined as providing age status, that is, how long the job has been open, and activity reports on weekly, daily, and monthly activities. The software also provided traffic analytics concerning a company's career website or job portal.

• Features of LinkedIn

The researcher also made essential findings concerning LinkedIn, the social media-based recruiting platform. One of the crucial features noted was that LinkedIn was finding the appropriate internship opportunity or job (LinkedIn, 2020). Accordingly, it was established that LinkedIn offered an opportunity for candidates to look for jobs and internship opportunities they desired. The platform allowed job searchers to look for jobs in different fields, including engineering, finance, administrative, operations, information technology, marketing, business development, and human resources. An additional feature that LinkedIn provided to its clients was posting a job (LinkedIn, 2020). As such, it was established that, through the platform, employers were able to post numerous jobs. Besides, the platform guaranteed that millions of people would be able to see the job posted.

An additional finding was that LinkedIn offered employers and candidates an opportunity to connect with persons that could help. It was revealed that through the platform, one would search for co-workers, professors, classmates, or even friends. Besides, LinkedIn provided the clients, especially companies, with the chance to search for people suitable for filling given job roles (LinkedIn, 2020). The recruiters could browse the candidates' profiles and read their curriculum vitae. Upon finding the right candidates, it was established that LinkedIn provided the recruiters with the chance to leave a message inviting them for an interview. A yet additional feature that LinkedIn provided was direct communication between the company and the candidates. It was identified the platform had an instant messaging option through which recruiters and candidates could communicate in real-time (LinkedIn, 2020).

It was also determined that LinkedIn was resourceful for those seeking work. As such, the researcher found out that LinkedIn provided vital information to the aspirants about the skills they needed to succeed in different careers (LinkedIn, 2020). Consequently, the platform linked the job searchers to courses they required for them to become more proficient in job skills sought. A further feature noted during the research was the recommendation. The researcher established that with LinkedIn, it follows that companies were provided with automatic alerts about candidates they would be interested in (LinkedIn, 2020). This outcome was also available to job seekers. As such, the platform recommended companies to job candidates.

4. Discussion

In terms of features, the results show that AppliView provides a variety when compared to LinkedIn. As such, the number of features or services that AppliView offered for the recruiter was way above those afforded by LinkedIn. Nonetheless, drawing from the results, it is apparent that the two e-recruitment approaches are vital resources for not only the employer but also the job candidates. For example, for job candidates, the two platforms allow them to track their recruitment status. Denny (2012) confirms that this is indeed the case with LinkedIn by claiming that LinkedIn helps the candidates to know their status as the platform has a status bar that shows up on the home pages of their connections. Just like LinkedIn, AppliView allows the candidates to track their recruitment status through alerts, which often come in the form of messages. As for companies, LinkedIn is a resource given that a recruiting firm is provided with an opportunity to browse the candidates' CVs. This service is also provided by AppliView. While this is the case, unlike LinkedIn, AppliView goes well beyond to provide an automatic alert to the recruiting company about any changes in the CVs. This feature is not available for the case of LinkedIn. Affirming this status quo, Lees (2014) identifies that, even. However, LinkedIn will eventually alert the recruiting company about any update on the candidates' CV, it usually takes some time for this to happen.

Drawing from the results, it is well evident that AppliView fulfills the entire demands of the recruitment process. As such, the platform is designed to handle each process involve from start to finish. As such, AppliView starts at the management of job requirements point and facilitates the process all the way to interviewing and selecting the candidates. LinkedIn is short when it comes to the scope of e-recruitment. As the results show, LinkedIn does not provide an opportunity for the employers, for example, to facilitate an in-depth interview with the candidate. This is solely due to the notion that the only feature for interviewing provided by LinkedIn is instant messages. For AppliView, the recruiter has the chance to videocall the candidate. Therefore, the limitations that characterize the instant messaging-based interview process are effectively filled by video calls. In line with this thought, Opdenakker (2006) revealed that with the messenger interviews, for example, through MSN instant messaging, the scope or depth of interview might be broader, but the one-on-one potential of video-based interviews makes the latter more efficient for recruiting companies.

It is also notable that, while the e-recruiting process involved when an employer is using LinkedIn is a manual one, AppliView affords the recruiter an automatic procedure. With LinkedIn, the recruiting company is required to facilitate the entire process of recruiting. However, with AppliView, the software is designed such that the entire process is automated. Therefore, a recruiting company only needs to wait for the outcomes. According to Torres-Coronas (2008), modern-day organizations are making concerted efforts to lower the recruitment cost, with the majority of them seeking to shorten the cycle of the recruitment process.

Nonetheless, as Parry and Tyson (2008) reveal, e-recruitment presents the best opportunity for firms to mitigate their levels of recruitment costs. This is particularly so because much of the recruitment is performed online, which means that the traditional recruitment cost items, for example, lunch or tea for the interviewing panel and the candidates, are eliminated. While this is the case, drawing from the results, the use of AppliView has a greater potential in suppressing the level of recruitment costs. This is especially so, given that the entire process is automated, which means that there is no human effort involved.

5. Limitations and recommendations for future research

Performing this study was not short of limitations, which perhaps serve to reduce the meaningfulness of the inquiry. One of the primary limitations was that the researcher used a convenient sampling approach. As such, he selected the first e-recruitment software (AppliView) and the first social media-based e-recruitment platform (LinkedIn) that appeared following a Google Search. The problem with this convenience sample is that the researcher perhaps left out other e-recruitment software and social media-based e-recruitment platforms that would have yielded better results than the current ones. This is indeed a possibility given that there exist perhaps hundreds of e-recruitment software and social media-based e-recruitment platforms. In light of this limitation, future researchers need to apply the use of other sampling methods. For example, they might seek to use purposive sampling.

Another limitation that characterized this study was the sample size. Only two e-recruitment methods were studied. This represents a very small sample size. According to Grbich (2012), qualitative sample sizes ought to be large enough to collect or obtain sufficient data, hence adequately describing the phenomenon of interest. This is indeed the key to addressing the underlying question in depth. If this is the case, then it is highly possible that the small sample selected for this research prevented the researcher from addressing the research question in the most comprehensive way possible. Therefore, future researchers need to focus on larger sample sizes so that they can generate more meaningful outcomes.

6. Implication of the study to the field of recruitment

The findings of this study have crucial implications to the field of recruitment. The research shows the importance of undertaking e-recruitment. Nonetheless, the study illustrates that when an employer decides to use e-recruitment as the primary process in hiring and recruiting workers, it is pertinent that he or she has a serious thought on the kind of e-recruitment strategy they follow. This research article shows that both recruitment Apps and social media websites are effective in helping an employer to find the right candidate to fill up a specified job position. While the e-recruitment apps seem to hold more potential than the social media websites, an employer should not use them in isolation. Instead, to have a more fulfilling experience, it is highly recommended that an organization should use both models. Additionally, the knowledge created in this paper illustrates the need for employers to perform in-dept scrutiny of an app. Just because an app is an e-recruitment software does not mean that it is appropriate for use. Rather, employers must make an effort to review the app to determine its credibility. This warrants the employer to go an extra mile by checking for the reliability of the developer as well as what other recruiters have said about a given app. Thus, the findings of this paper contribute towards best-practices within the area of e-recruitment.

7. Conclusions

The purpose of this research article was to investigate the effectiveness of e-recruitment apps by focusing on the features that these platforms offer to the employer to make the recruitment process even more productive. The study achieved this objective by comparing AppliView and one social media-based e-recruitment platform, that is, LinkedIn. It was established that each of the two members of the sample fitted well within the context of e-recruitment strategies or methods. It was established that AppliView and LinkedIn provided the recruiting agencies or companies with a set of similar services, which go well beyond the capacity of the traditional recruitment methods. While this is the case, this research article has shown that AppliView is perhaps more advanced when compared to LinkedIn. The results revealed that, unlike LinkedIn, AppliView affords a set of progressive services including live coverage of the recruitment process (interview), real-time alert about changes that a job candidate might make in their CVs, and automated recruitment process. Furthermore, this research has revealed that, even though both LinkedIn and AppliView have the potential to reduce the cost of recruitment, AppliView manifests the greatest promise. As such, the recruitment method can keep the recruitment costs at the bare minimum because of the underlying automation. Overall, this research study has shown that e-recruitment software such as AppliView is more effective than other e-recruitment strategies, and particularly social media-based methods. However, this study was characterized by some limitations. One of these was a small sample size, which potentially limited the ability of the researcher to explore the problem in a more comprehensive manner. Another limitation was that the researcher used convenient sampling. Therefore, future researchers must seek to apply other sampling methods and focus on more subjects (more e-recruitment methods). In this way, any gap in the knowledge created by this study will be filled more sufficiently.

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