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Master Thesis
in
e-Learning

Unlocking Career Opportunities for ICT Graduates through Social Networking Sites

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Abstract

The advent of technology, particularly web-based platforms, has ushered in an era where an ever-expanding cohort of professionals engage with and leverage social networking sites [SNS]. In a contemporary landscape where cumulative knowledge is readily accessible to all, the imperative arises for graduates of academic institutions, including universities, colleges, and other institutions of higher education, to distinguish themselves in order to maintain a competitive edge. To this end, the establishment of a network facilitating ongoing interaction between educational institutions and their alumni, while concurrently fostering the expansion of professional networks and a nuanced understanding of the dynamic job market, is essential within the context of an evolving and fluid employment environment.A social networking site can be delineated as an online community wherein users establish connections with one another and construct public profiles, incorporating systems housing individual information, be it fully or partially accessible, which can be shared with fellow users [TC14]. Within this realm, one noteworthy SNS stands out, primarily geared towards the pursuit of employment opportunities—LinkedIn. Indeed, LinkedIn has evolved into an indispensable tool for prospective employees and is now perceived as such [Bue17].Notably, given the relatively recent emergence of this phenomenon, the potential advantages and drawbacks of such platforms remain inadequately explored [Yok16]. The present research endeavors to elucidate the utility of SNS in the context of identifying, recruiting, and engaging with alumni specialized in Information and Communication Technology [ICT] concerning employment prospects. In this pursuit, this study adopts a comprehensive perspective, considering the viewpoints of both current employees and prospective candidates, as well as the perspectives of educational institutions and employers and its focus lies on the intersection of initial employment opportunities and the evaluation of job acceptability and quality.

Περίληψη

Η εξέλιξη της τεχνολογίας, κυρίως η τεχνολογία που βασίζεται στο διαδίκτυο, έχει επιτρέψει σε ένα συνεχώς αυξανόμενο αριθμό επαγγελματιών να λειτουργούν και να χρησιμοποιούν κοινωνικά δίκτυα [SNS].Σε έναν κόσμο όπου η γνώση είναι ελεύθερα προσβάσιμη για την πλειονότητα των ανθρώπων, είναι σημαντικό για τους αποφοίτους των πανεπιστημίων, των κολεγίων και άλλων ιδρυμάτων ανώτερης εκπαίδευσης να προχωρήσουν ένα βήμα μπροστά για να διατηρήσουν το ανταγωνιστικό τους πλεονέκτημα. Για τον σκοπό αυτό, είναι απαραίτητη η δημιουργία ενός δικτύου που επιτρέπει τη διατήρηση της επαφής μεταξύ του ιδρύματος εκπαίδευσης και των αποφοίτων του, ενώ παράλληλα επεκτείνει τα επαγγελματικά δίκτυά τους και προσφέρει μια καλύτερη κατανόηση της δυναμικής αγοράς εργασίας, σε αυτό το συνεχώς μεταβαλλόμενο περιβάλλον εργασίας. Ένα κοινωνικό δίκτυο μπορεί να περιγραφεί ως μια διαδικτυακή κοινότητα όπου οι χρήστες συνδέονται μεταξύ τους και δημιουργούν δημόσια προφίλ, περιλαμβάνοντας συστήματα που κατέχουν πληροφορίες για τον κάθε χρήστη, πλήρως ή εν μέρει προσβάσιμες, που μπορούν να μοιραστούν με άλλους χρήστες [TC14]. Εντός αυτής της πραγματικότητας, ξεχωρίζει ένα SNS, προσανατολισμένο κυρίως προς την αναζήτηση επαγγελματικών ευκαιριών - το LinkedIn. Πράγματι, το LinkedIn έχει μετατραπεί σε ένα αναπόσπαστο εργαλείο για τους προσεχείς εργαζόμενους και εκλαμβάνεται πλέον ως τέτοιο [Bue17].Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τη σχετικά πρόσφατη εμφάνιση αυτού του φαινομένου, τα δυνητικά πλεονεκτήματα και μειονεκτήματα αυτών των εργαλείων παραμένουν ακόμη ανεπαρκώς διερευνημένα [Yok16].Η παρούσα έρευνα επιδιώκει να αποσαφηνίσει τη χρησιμότητα των SNS στο πλαίσιο της αναγνώρισης, της πρόσληψης και της ενασχόλησης με αποφοίτους ειδικευμένους στην Τεχνολογία Πληροφορικής και Επικοινωνιών [ICT] σχετικά με τις προοπτικές απασχόλησης. Σε αυτήν την προσπάθεια, η μελέτη υιοθετεί μια συνολική προοπτική, λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τις απόψεις τόσο των εργαζομένων και των υποψηφίων, όσο και τις απόψεις των εκπαιδευτικών οργανισμών και των εργοδοτών και εστιάζει κυρίως στη διασταύρωση των αρχικών ευκαιριών απασχόλησης και στην αξιολόγηση της αποδοχής και της ποιότητας της εργασίας.

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List of Abbreviations

CS Computer Science

DevOps Development and Operations

IT Information Technology

ICT Information and Communications Technology

SNS Social Network Sites

Contents

Introduction

1.1 Methodology

Regarding the methodology in this master's thesis, our focus centers on internet crawling and data collection—a common method of data bundling, as recommended by prior research and publications[Bue17; Gon+14; KGD18; S+12]. Our chosen approach for conducting this research and achieving our ultimate objective of presenting our conclusions is bibliographic research. To elaborate, we systematically searched for relevant academic papers that could serve our research objectives by offering cognitive insights and, ideally, tangible datasets. Initially, we conducted our search using Google Scholar, targeting established knowledge and research in the field. Specifically, we performed search queries such as 'ICT alumni "and" career opportunities,' 'first job* "and" ICT alumni,' and 'social network sites "and" ICT alumni.' This initial search yielded a limited number of results that warranted further examination. Recognizing the need for a broader dataset, we expanded our keyword search strategy. To this end, we performed variations such as:

- "Alumni/alumnus," used interchangeably with "graduates."
  - "Graduate*," encompassing both singular and plural forms.
- "ICT," interchangeably used with "IS" (Information Systems), "CS" (Computer Science), or "IT" (Information Technology).
- Extended searches on Social Network Sites in the context of job hunting, job opportunities, and salaries, not limited to ICT alumni.
- Alternatives to "social network sites" such as "Social media Sites" or "Social Media" to broaden the scope of results.
- Investigation into the importance and impact of social media on networking in general and its effect on education, emphasizing the significance of connectivity for educational institutions and organizations with potential future employers (e.g., SNS "and" Universities/Educational Institutes/Educational Organizations').

The comprehensive combination of these search queries yielded a total of 756 papers, articles, and books. It is noteworthy that our research does not focus on specific geographical regions or genders. Additionally, we did not impose any restrictions on the publication date of the sources; however, the majority of the resources utilized were published within the last decade.

Of the initial 756 results, 432 were excluded based on their introduction and/or abstract. Consequently, we narrowed our focus to the remaining 324 results. Some sources were found to be inaccessible, resulting in our concentration on the remaining 253 papers, articles, books, or book chapters. This final selection is currently under review and investigation, and the precise number of papers to be cited in this bibliographic research has not been definitively determined. Nevertheless, the sample of papers amassed thus far serves as an indicative representation of our research effort.

Furthermore, we incorporated select websites as secondary resources or sources of inspiration to advance our research. It is anticipated that the number of references may evolve over the course of this research as our focus adapts and new, related topics of interest emerge. As a concluding remark, we emphasize the importance of identifying specific datasets that can better demonstrate and support our assertions. These datasets may align with those cited in the bibliography and may also encompass new sources that arise during the course of our research effort.

1.2 Thesis Structure

Chapter 2

Presents a brief overview of existing studies.

Chapter 3

Initiates an examination of the employment landscape and market dynamics within which ICT alumni are engaged.

Chapter 4

Conducts an in-depth exploration of the profiles of ICT alumni, providing a comprehensive understanding of their characteristics and backgrounds.

Chapter 5

Studies the phenomenon of Social Networking Sites (SNS) within the context of job opportunities and recruitment, with a specific focus on recent ICT graduates. The chapter presents an analysis and discussion of their significance.

Chapter 6

Investigates the significance and impact of SNS utilization by educational institutions, exploring how this influence extends to recent graduates.Also,is directed toward assessing their impact on education, with a particular emphasis on the development of essential technical and soft skills demanded by the contemporary job market.

Chapter 7

Offers insightful observations concerning the correlation between the usage of Social Networking Sites (SNS) and the availability of career opportunities.

Chapter 8

The study meticulously cites and examines the results derived from a comprehensive survey conducted to substantiate the concepts and ideas presented throughout the thesis.

Background and Related Work

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2.1 Literature Review

Technical knowledge in our time is easy to access, especially in the fields of IT and ICT sectors which is occupied by individuals that are usually accustomed operating within the realm of knowledge retrieved from the internet [Mat17]. As such ICT/IT graduates need additional effort to distinguish themselves from the majority of other new professionals in the same sector. In recent years, social network platforms have risen to the top of the list of Internet apps. They have also created new possibilities for universities and their alumni [TC14]. With the new addition of the social networks to the equation there are even more options and opportunities regarding the ICT/IT/CS sector and its employees. SNSs are a tool that can be used by different members of society, including people of all ages including, in our case recently graduated students. Social Network Sites can and are currently playing a major role in the successful realization of their goals the most important of which is better job opportunities as well as better first job actualization. Therefore, is of great importance to identify the impact of SNSs on the career of IT/ICT alumni. Understanding and foreseeing alumni's career path is crucial for IT/ICT/CS graduates, and the recently graduate students, who often require assistance in relation to their career, in this technology-driven field were needs and tools change constantly with high frequency [Mon+21]. In order to be better engaged with the ICT curricula and get connected to alumni but most importantly to adapt their learning to the constantly shifting technology field, existing students is important to use their Social Network profiles as a self-advertising instrument to help them advance and kick-start their careers with a concrete and informed first step [Li+16]. Inside organizations, SNS may help users on connection, collaboration and communication, but more important in job-hunting opportunities since an educational program/organization should provide and identify for their students the skills that the work market demands most [Gon+14]. Recent research (especially during the COVID-19 crisis) strongly suggests that education "is gradually shifting its focus from established facilities and protocols of communication and learning to virtual environments. As such, "self-learning activities" are given more attention nowadays than teaching in the more traditional sense, including self-teaching regarding the roadmap a recent graduate student should follow regarding their career. Therefore, it is imperative to understand and investigate how students' social network presence which falls under the category of "self-teaching", particularly regarding job oriented SNS affects their knowledge sharing and engagement not only regarding the actual skills but mostly regarding the essential skillset that often required in the job market

[KWK18]. Moreover, SNS should be utilized by organizations with respect to their alumni since social media sites can develop the communication on one hand but also makes a difference by providing a view in the special expertise and advanced topics of the modern ICT workplace [KN18]. The creation of a system to handle the information of its alumni is one of the key approaches to determine what requests need to be addressed, offering them a clearer and more concrete understanding and "view" of the job market they are about to enter specifically regarding job opportunities and also the required skill set and salaries. As an example, e-mentoring through SNSs, which connects alumni and students as mentors and mentees, has shown to be a beneficial approach, although it is still a new and under-studied field with regard to nurturing professional development [CJM12; LL11a; LL11b]. Nevertheless. many educational organizations are still hesitant or unable to utilize SNS beyond their personal advertisement [CJM12]. Undergraduate students can use social networking sites (SNSs) to interact with alumni and widen their network. The case of LinkedIn, for instance, a business-oriented SNS, highlights the importance of "relationships-building" with professionals in order to encourage development and learning [Raj+12]. Within this relationship-building paradigm, the focus should be shifted to information, knowledge, and skills that are necessary for the career development, which are resources that are usually amassed via interpersonal connections, created through social networks [CJM12]. The ICT/IT sector has been on the rise constantly and is one of the most lucrative as well as most required professions out there offering an abundance of opportunities for new carriers [Kre00; Sav22; 21]. Nevertheless, there is a small percentage [Sav22] that are not capable or do not know how to expand their skills and search successfully for a new career or new job opportunities. The fact that students are less likely to use sites like LinkedIn than young professionals is an immediate issue for successful online involvement. This is due, in part, to a lack of awareness or a reluctance to engage in career-building activities such as seeking quality sources of advice form "online" sources [Ger11; TC14]. In the context of higher education, such activities may result in an improved student experience, which can facilitate future involvement between alumni and the school beyond graduation. Alumni interaction with SNS should actually start at the beginning of the student lifetime, in order for students to become co-producers of networking outputs and contribute to the growth of social capital at the university but also for themselves, it is necessary for ICT alumni to be able to create and sustain social networks through the development of networking skills [TC14; VA09; TC14]. Additionally, is evident that ICT/IT is a profession mainly occupied by younger individuals and its constantly increasing population is dominated by tech-friendly generations. The new generations of work force namely the Millennials and Generation Z have changed the manner that they tend to seek employment [Den+20]. They have specific criteria and needs which they require to be met but also are somewhat distant or indifferent regarding job-hunting. The extraordinarily nature of social media empowers enrollment specialists to particularly distinguish and target skilled but detached or semi-passive work candidates and to bait them to possibly alluring work positions [KGD18]. Furthermore, SNSs provide a variety of advantages, such as creating and expanding a network of relationships that facilitate job search success and

provide advice and connections for employment [JF08]. As a secondary positive outcome, this creation and development of job-related and eventually job-opportunities related actions, promote emotional wellbeing [SEL08]. It is suggested by studies that creating and maintaining "social capital" (i.e., LinkedIn social connections), can contribute positively to the level of social satisfaction than less intense users who reported feeling unsatisfied with their college experience and they reportedly had significantly less bridging social capital than those who used SNSs more intensely. Such interactions create a form of engagement cycle and natural continuation reinforced by the student's sense of valued member of the working-community. The results derived here also concern the relevance of SNS in such cases [S+12]. Moreover, the connections between the Universities social network sites and potential employer organizations are vital [**tsa**; Hir19; TC14] not only in order to disseminate their organization but also to proceed with disseminating their "products" the actual alumni which essentially are and potentially can act as advertisement for them. This form of social capital is known as bridging. When a student graduates from university and joins a company, a "weak bond" is created between the company and the university. As such the school and the alumni community tend or should try to create a strong link with SNS. Given the declines in the labor market worldwide, colleges must find new ways to educate students for the workforce and achieve performance goals for graduate employability [CJM12]. The social network presence of the university that allows students to draw on information and resources from other members of their network can be a powerful weapon towards that goal. A manifestation of that is the connections between individuals and the subsequent opportunities or possibilities in the job market drawn from those new perspectives [Gra03].

Alumni & Job Prospects

Job success and satisfaction are one factor that can have a significant impact on how graduates rate their college experiences [Dac]. The relationship between job satisfaction and alumni satisfaction with college is surprisingly poorly understood, despite the fact that questions concerning work experiences are regularly included in alumni surveys. It is important to investigate the relationship between alumni employment satisfaction in order to evaluate of their college experiences [Pik94]. Alumni are more likely to say they are happy with their educational experiences if they are happy with their jobs [Pik94]. Institutions have long-standing, complex plans in place to "engage" alumni and tap into their financial resources. Nevertheless, only 9% of college graduates reported that their university network was helpful or very helpful in the job market [FP21; Gal19]. As such, access to networks, of any shape and kind, may be a crucial factor in determining which degrees are considered to be worthwhile or satisfactory for the students and how well these degrees eventually pay-off in the job market [FP21]. However, it is important to understand the current times and trends. Both as a measurement and factor in this research but also from the position of the alumni and their respective educational institutions. To that end, there is a need to consider majorly the importance not of networking as a general term but networking specifically targeted through the use of social network sites and is subsequent social capital for the alumni. This social capital has the enormous potential to enhance students' on-campus experiences and increase graduates' long-term return on investment in a degree [FP21]. Moreover, the development of technology-based solutions for student support, alumni engagement, and work-integrated learning offers enormous potential for alumni mobilization and consequent realization of their primary goal "a first well paid but also satisfiable work" [FP21]. The assumption among this generation of college students is that networking is crucial to landing a job. Additionally, networking styles vary by job type, gender, and race. Based on research that took place in the Dartmouth college, one of the strongest findings is that students who achieve well-paying employment are more likely to have asked for assistance and advice from their social network. Now in this era of technological advancement their social network is extended by the use of SNS. As such, it is safe to assume that their social network(s), on which the new employing power of Dartmouth relies on for better and faster first job opportunities, has as a contemporary extension the "students' SNS" [MS02].

3.1 Initial Employment Challenges

The job titles and positions for IT professionals that are advertised in industry are not well understood by CS and IS students. For newly graduate students it is very important to assess their post-graduate CS and IS knowledge of IT careers. Post-graduate students lack a realistic comprehension of the job titles, in-depth career knowledge, and an understanding of the specific IT tasks carried out in the various IT roles. Businesses post advertisements for a variety of IT positions, and it is required of students that they are familiar with the job titles and duties of these IT positions. The career awareness of CS and IS students shows that only a small percentage of students have made a decision about their career path and are unable to define or explain IT job titles [ECC19]. Findings suggest that LinkedIn profiles can help with answering questions like what jobs ICT graduates get, what an ICT professional's typical career trajectory looks like, and if ICT graduates can successfully transition from technical to managerial positions [Cas+13]. The current study's will (amongst other) try to ascertain how accurately LinkedIn profiles can portray the entry-level jobs available to IT/CS or IS program graduates in order to help them with their subsequent career advancement.

3.2 Staying Informed

Additionally, the importance of SNSs for ICT alumni is highlighted when taking under consideration that they provide a platform for networking and building professional connections. LinkedIn, for example, is a SNS specifically designed for professionals and can be used to connect with potential employers, industry experts, and colleagues. By building a strong LinkedIn profile and actively participating in relevant groups, ICT alumni can increase their visibility and credibility in their field, which can lead to job opportunities [CL17]. Another reason SNSs are important for ICT alumni is that they can provide access to job listings and employment opportunities that may not be advertised elsewhere. Many companies now use SNSs to post job openings and to recruit potential candidates, and ICT alumni can use these platforms to search for and apply to these positions [LLC15]. Moreover, SNSs can be useful for ICT alumni in terms of building and showcasing their skills and experiences. Many SNSs allow users to create profiles that highlight their education, work experience, and accomplishments, and to share examples of their work through links to portfolios or projects. This can be especially beneficial for ICT alumni who may not have much professional experience but want to demonstrate their capabilities and potential to potential employers [Kie+11]. Taking all the above into consideration it is evident that, SNSs play a significant role in the job search and career development of ICT alumni. Through networking, access to job listings, and the ability to showcase skills and experiences, SNSs provide valuable resources and opportunities for ICT alumni seeking their first job. Potential employees that seek to stay informed about the latest

trends and developments in the field are often deemed as important assets for a company since ability and willingness to engage and interact with new knowledge and technologies is highly regarded in the IT industry [Kie+11; KH10; LLC15; Smi16]. This ability is offered in abundance via SNSs since many SNS have groups or communities dedicated to specific topics or industries, allowing ICT alumni to engage with others who share their interests and to stay up to date on the latest news and research. For example, LinkedIn has a variety of groups dedicated to specific technologies or industries, such as artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, or software development. These groups provide a forum for ICT alumni to discuss the latest developments in their field and to ask questions or seek advice from their peers. In addition to groups, many SNS also allow users to follow industry experts or thought leaders, giving ICT alumni the opportunity to stay informed about the latest trends and research through the content these individuals share. For example, Twitter is often used by industry experts to share their thoughts and insights on current events and trends, and users can follow these individuals to stay up-to-date on the latest developments in their field.

3.3 First Salary and Job Quality

Furthermore, by having a strong presence on professional SNSs, ICT alumni can increase their visibility to potential employers and improve their chances of being hired for high-paying positions. SNS can also help ICT alumni to build their professional reputation and demonstrate their expertise. By sharing relevant content and participating in relevant online groups and discussions, ICT alumni can position themselves as thought leaders in their field and increase their "employability value" to potential employers [Smi16]. This "employability value" is directly affecting the salary of ICT alumni. SNS play a significant role in the salaries of ICT alumni by providing a platform for networking and job searching, helping to build professional reputation and expertise, providing access to valuable information and resources, and offering a way to connect with experienced professionals. As such, it is important for ICT alumni to be active and engaged on SNS in order to maximize their earning potential and succeed in today's job market, by providing access to valuable information and resources [KH10]. Many SNS have groups or communities dedicated to specific industries or areas of expertise, and these can be a great source of information and job leads for ICT alumni. Therefore, SNS can provide a way for ICT alumni to connect with and seek advice from experienced professionals in their field, by reaching out to mentors or connecting with colleagues, ICT alumni can gain valuable guidance and support as they navigate their careers towards better salaries and opportunities [KH10; 19].

Profiling ICT Alumni

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Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is a dynamic and ever-evolving landscape, where skilled professionals are in high demand. For ICT alumni and recent graduates, the transition from academia to the professional realm is marked by exciting possibilities and unique challenges. This section will discuss and delve into the experiences of ICT alumni and recent graduates in their quest for first job opportunities and competitive salaries. Additionally, we will examine the role of Social Network Sites (SNS) in their job search and professional networking endeavors, highlighting the impact of these platforms in shaping their career trajectories. In an effort to leverage their career services, and SNS platforms, they seek internships and entry-level positions to kick start their careers [BS02]. Graduates often participate in job fairs, industry events, and virtual career expos to showcase their talents and connect with prospective employers. For recent ICT graduates, the job search process can be both exciting and daunting. However newer graduates armed with fresh knowledge and a desire to make an impact tend to explore job boards, company websites, and SNS platforms to find suitable openings utilizing much more their online presence to promote themselves [BS02]. Graduates and in general their college trajectory and career tap into the power of SNS to build an online presence that highlights their skills and accomplishments, presenting themselves as attractive candidates to potential employers [Den+20]. After gaining industry experience and honing their technical skills, they become better equipped to advocate for competitive compensation packages [Cas+13]. SNS platforms, particularly LinkedIn, provide invaluable insights into industry salary benchmarks and trends, empowering alumni to make informed decisions about salary negotiations. Networking with experienced professionals on SNS also helps alumni gain insights into various organizations' compensation practices and benefits. Recent ICT graduates often grapple with the question of fair compensation for their entry-level roles. While eager to land their first job, they must navigate the delicate balance between gaining valuable experience and receiving reasonable remuneration [Den+20]. SNS platforms enable them to connect with peers who have recently secured positions in similar fields, allowing for peer-to-peer discussions on salary expectations and industry standards. Additionally, graduates often rely on SNS to research salary data and assess their market value before entering negotiations with potential employers. SNS platforms have become indispensable tools for both ICT alumni and recent graduates in their job search. Employers increasingly use SNS, particularly LinkedIn, to post job openings and identify potential candidates [BS02]. By actively maintaining professional profiles, highlighting relevant skills, and engaging in industry discussions, alumni and graduates increase their visibility to employers and enhance their chances of being considered for job opportunities. For

ICT professionals, networking plays a crucial role in career advancement. Moreover, SNS platforms facilitate networking by connecting alumni and graduates with industry experts, recruiters, and like-minded professionals[Cas+13]. These platforms enable individuals to seek mentorship and guidance from experienced professionals, aiding in skill development and providing insights into the job market's nuances. SNS empowers ICT alumni and recent graduates to craft and maintain a compelling personal brand. By curating their online presence, showcasing technical expertise, and sharing relevant content, they position themselves as credible and knowledgeable professionals in their field [Den+20]. A strong personal brand enhances their attractiveness to potential employers and can be a decisive factor in securing job opportunities with competitive salaries. For ICT alumni and recent graduates, the pursuit of professional growth is a continuous journey [BS02]. ICTs (information and communication technologies) are now prevalent in many facets of life. Over the past 20 years, the usage of ICT has fundamentally altered the practices and procedures of almost all commercial and governmental endeavors. ICT has started to influence education, though not as significantly as it has in other disciplines, since IT and CS related occupations are on the rise regarding their demand on the current job market. However, as the globe quickly transitions to digital media and information ICT skills and education are becoming more and more significant, and in the twenty-first century, this significance will only increase [KK18; KN18]. ICT disciplines span a broad spectrum, from business/commerce-related disciplines on one hand and to engineering-related disciplines on the other [Kop+09]. Australia's Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering (2007) states that ICT education is "the dominating engine for productivity development and commercial potential" and "a critical determinant for producing future employment" [Hag04]. The ICT sector has proven to be highly resilient and is expected to expand in the years to come. There are a lot of indicators that suggest the healthy growth of the sector at least for the last ten years [New05]. Hardware, software, services, and communication are the four main ICT industries that are noted to have increased at the same time in relation to the contemporary job market [Kop+09]. ICT education has been significantly impacted by the development of ICT both currently and in the future in two ways. More skilled workers will be needed across the board, including at the maintenance, design, development, implementation, and leadership levels, to support the expanding ICT sector. New discoveries and advancements will also lead to the emergence of new ICT disciplines, necessitating the introduction of fresh curricula and training initiatives across the board. ICT alumni career options and job hunting have had to undergo simultaneous modifications due to the fast-paced change in the industry [Kop+09]. According to demographic data, 70% of graduates have only worked for their employer for two years or less. This might be explained by the fact that those who were invited to participate in the study were more recent graduates of the respective universities, who felt a stronger connection to their institutions and were, thus, more motivated to answer. Less than half (40%) of graduates were able to get full-time IT jobs right away, but they are already employed in the field [Hun+11]. Staying updated with the latest technological advancements and acquiring in-demand skills are critical steps in securing high-paying job opportunities. SNS platforms

serve as excellent resources for accessing industry-specific webinars, online courses, and certifications that bolster skill sets and enhance employability. The ICT job market, like any other industry, experiences fluctuations. ICT alumni and recent graduates must be agile in adapting to market trends and exploring diverse job opportunities. By utilizing SNS to stay informed about job market dynamics and networking with professionals who have weathered similar market challenges, they gain resilience and adaptability in their career journey.

4.1 The Significance of Social Capital

Social capital is an old idea, but it wasn't until the 1990s that it started to be discussed in academic and policy circles. In recent years, its significance in explaining economic and social phenomena has grown. Social capital refers to the ability to access and activate relationships that support a person's potential and ambitions. Similar to knowledge and skills, relationships provide resources that open new doors to opportunities [BY09; FP21]. The Importance of Social Capital & Networking Since networking is crucial to the job search process and elite private universities offer superior networking chances than rival institutions, then the private schools may be able to command a significant price premium. The importance of networking may also be the reason why students are prepared to pay for expensive MBA schools [MS02]. LinkedIn can assist students in creating networks with working professionals that can be utilized to find internships and jobs [CHR16].

LinkedIn in Recruitment

In the broader realm of ICT, the term networking, was originally used to describe how computers are connected to one another, but in more recent years the word "social networks" is now used to describe how humans are connected to one another and has been a key component of the Internet computing environment. Nevertheless, there is an overabundance of information on social networks like Twitter, Facebook or LinkedIn [LWS14]. For job seekers, SNS presents a more accessible and user-friendly platform for job searching compared to traditional methods. Creating and updating professional profiles on platforms like LinkedIn allows job seekers to showcase their skills, experiences, and aspirations to potential employers effortlessly. On the other hand professional SNSs offer a far more focused strategy than Facebook for example, which seeks to appeal to all users with features like public message exchanges, images, games, music, and so forth. Some of the most prominent professional SNSs are listed below:

- LinkedIn: LinkedIn is a professional networking site that allows users to connect with others in their industry and find employment opportunities. It may have data on the employment status of ICT alumni who are using the platform.

- Glassdoor: Glassdoor is a website that provides job listings and company reviews. It may have data on the employment status of ICT alumni who are searching for jobs or have recently been hired.

- Indeed: Indeed is a job search website that allows users to search for jobs and get insights into different industries and companies. It may have data on the employment status of ICT alumni who are using the platform to search for jobs.

- The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE): NACE is a professional association that provides career development resources for college students and recent graduates. It may have data on the employment status of ICT alumni in relation to their use of SNS.

- The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS): The BLS is a government agency that collects and publishes data on employment and unemployment in the United States. It may have data on the employment status of ICT alumni in the field of information and communication technologies.

From the abundance of SNS currently existing out there, LinkedIn is a standard for corporate networking [Sch07; LWS14]. Facebook also provides equivalent social networking features for business workers, but none has seen the explosive surge in usage that LinkedIn has. The largest professional network in the world, LinkedIn has more than 700 million users and is expanding quickly forecasting that in 2025 there will be more than 900 million users [21]. LinkedIn allows users connect with reliable contacts and engage in knowledge, idea, and opportunity sharing with a larger professional network. Furthermore, Schuen [Sch07] believes that LinkedIn is particularly beneficial for people looking to connect with potential clients. In this sense, the capability of using LinkedIn to locate other users is a crucial function. The fact that LinkedIn has been aggressively improving its search engine and released a significant update to their search platform in 2008 is therefore not surprising [Koz08; LWS14]. Additionally, this search engine was expanded in late 2009 to support embellished search, which enables users to set dynamic and extensive filtering options. This was done in union with the introduction of a premium search service [Koz09]. So far LinkedIn is used for three major purposes: being the recipient of inquiries, such as those from job seekers wanting to apply for a position at a company; acting as a middleman, sending message s on behalf of friends (or friends of friends); and acting as a job seeker [JF08; Dou10; LWS14]. Nevertheles, Linked in has some shortcomings in its usage. Despite the filtering tools offered by LinkedIn Higher Education services, finding solutions to questions about job placement and career advancement is not always simple. Even though the filters can be helpful in identifying pertinent alumni profiles, it is frequently necessary to drill down into individual profiles to obtain sufficiently detailed answers to questions about jobs and careers [CHR16]. Answering inquiries regarding employment, employers, and careers by only advising prospective and existing students to use LinkedIn to determine why a degree in IS (or CS or IT) is beneficial, is insufficient [CHR16]. As such, many students don't have LinkedIn profiles and don't see the point in getting one, as evidenced by Dach [Dac].

5.1 SNS and Recruitment

In the past, job seekers were often limited to using traditional methods such as classified ads and job fairs to find employment. These methods were time-consuming and often resulted in a narrow range of job options. With the advent of SNS, ICT alumni can now easily connect with a wide range of potential employers and job openings through professional networking platforms such as LinkedIn [Shr17]. In addition to connecting with potential employers, ICT alumni can also use SNS to showcase their skills and experiences to a larger audience. For example, many professionals use LinkedIn to create an online resume that highlights their education, work history, and accomplishments. This allows them to stand out to potential employers and demonstrate their value as a candidate. Additionally, ICT alumni can use social media platforms such as Twitter and Instagram to share their

work and experiences, which can help to establish their reputation in the industry and increase their visibility to potential employers. Another way in which SNS have impacted ICT alumni recruitment is by providing access to information about job openings and company cultures [Shr17; SC14]. In the past, job seekers often had limited information about the companies they were applying to, which made it difficult to determine whether a particular job was a good fit. With the advent of SNS, ICT alumni can now easily access a wealth of information about potential employers, including company values, culture, and employee experiences. This can help them to make more informed decisions about which jobs to pursue and can also increase their chances of success in the job application process. SNS have also had a significant impact on the way that employers find and hire ICT talent [SC14]. In the past, employers were often limited to using traditional methods such as classified ads and job fairs to find candidates. These methods were time-consuming and often resulted in a narrow range of job options. With the advent of SNS, employers can now easily connect with a wide range of potential candidates and access a wealth of information about their skills and experiences. This can help employers to identify the most qualified candidates and streamline the hiring process [SC14]. SNS have had a significant impact on the way that ICT alumni find and secure their first jobs. These platforms provide a range of benefits for both job seekers and employers, including the ability to connect with a wider range of potential employers and job opportunities, access to information about job openings and company cultures, and the ability to showcase one's skills and experiences to a larger audience [SC14]. As such, it is important for ICT alumni to be active on these platforms and to use them to their advantage in the job search process.

5.2 SNS Comparison and Bias

Recruiting in the digital age has been significantly transformed by the emergence of social network sites (SNS). Social media platforms like LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and others have become integral tools for recruiters and job seekers alike. In this article, we will explore how recruiters use SNS for recruiting and examine the advantages and disadvantages for job seekers who utilize or refrain from using these platforms in their job search efforts [Nik14]. Recruiters have embraced social network sites as a powerful tool to identify and engage with potential candidates. One of the primary ways recruiters use SNS is for talent sourcing. They can actively search for candidates based on specific skills, experience, or qualifications, enabling them to access a vast pool of candidates beyond traditional job boards and applicant tracking systems. This broader reach allows recruiters to find candidates who may not be actively job hunting but are open to new opportunities [BP15; VM19]. Furthermore, social media platforms enable recruiters to gain valuable insights into candidates' personalities, interests, and professional networks. By reviewing a candidate's social media presence, recruiters can assess their cultural fit

within an organization and get a sense of their online reputation and thought leadership [VM19]. This information goes beyond what can be gleaned from a resume or cover letter and provides a more comprehensive view of the candidate's potential. SNS expands the horizons of job seekers by connecting them to a vast network of employers and job openings. These future employees can access job postings, industry-specific groups, and professional networks that cater to their career interests. The ability to explore opportunities across various industries and geographical locations offers job seekers a more comprehensive view of potential career paths [BP15; VM19]. Recruiters also use SNS to engage with potential candidates and build relationships. Social media provides a more informal and approachable channel for recruiters to interact with candidates, allowing for personalized communication and establishing rapport. Recruiters can share job postings, company updates, and industry news, which helps to build the organization's employer brand and attract top talent [Nik14]. Job seekers should actively engage in industry discussions, share relevant content, and participate in professional groups to demonstrate their expertise and passion within their field. Such engagement can attract the attention of potential employers and build a positive online reputation [VM19]. However, despite the advantages for recruiters, there are potential drawbacks for job seekers who use SNS in their job search. One major concern is privacy and data security. Job seekers may unwittingly share sensitive personal information or engage in conversations that could be detrimental to their job prospects [VM19]. Even seemingly innocent posts or comments can be viewed by potential employers and impact their perception of a candidate. Another disadvantage is the potential for bias in the recruiting process. Recruiters may inadvertently form opinions about candidates based on their social media presence, leading to unconscious bias. This could adversely affect candidates who do not fit the mold of the ideal candidate in the eyes of the recruiter, regardless of their qualifications or potential. Moreover, relying solely on SNS for job search can be limiting. SNS profiles may not always accurately represent a job seeker's true abilities and qualifications. The lack of verification and potential embellishment of achievements on social media platforms can undermine the credibility of a candidate's profile. Job seekers must be mindful of presenting accurate and authentic information to avoid misrepresentation [VM19]. Despite the broad reach of SNS, there is a risk of inadvertently excluding certain groups or demographics that are less active on social media. This could result in missed opportunities for future employees from underrepresented backgrounds, leading to potential disparities in access to job opportunities [VM19]. Not all job opportunities are advertised on social media platforms, and some industries or organizations may still prefer more traditional methods for recruiting. Job seekers who solely rely on SNS may miss out on potential job openings from other sources [BP15]. On the other hand, job seekers who choose not to use SNS for their job search may miss out on some significant advantages. The primary advantage of using social media platforms is the ability to access a wide range of job opportunities and connect with recruiters and hiring managers directly [BP15]. This level of direct interaction can be invaluable in gaining insights into job roles, company culture, and the application process. Additionally, having an active and professional presence on SNS, especially on

LinkedIn, can enhance a job seeker's visibility and credibility within their industry. Sharing relevant content, participating in discussions, and building a robust professional network can position job seekers as subject matter experts and increase their chances of being noticed by recruiters [BP15]. Furthermore, employees who use SNS can gain a competitive edge by staying informed about industry trends, job market developments, and networking events. Social media platforms provide access to a wealth of information and opportunities for job seekers to enhance their skills, knowledge, and employability. Potential employees should create professional and consistent SNS profiles that align with their career goals and aspirations. Presenting an authentic and cohesive online brand can help job seekers stand out to potential employers [VM19]. In conclusion, social network sites have become a game-changer in the recruitment process, offering unique advantages for recruiters and employees alike. Recruiters leverage SNS for talent sourcing, engagement, and employer branding, enabling them to identify and connect with potential candidates more effectively. However, recruits must be mindful of the potential drawbacks, such as privacy concerns and the risk of unconscious bias. While using social media strategically can open up a world of opportunities and professional connections. It provides a platform to showcase skills, build a strong personal brand, and stay informed about industry trends. Nevertheless, job seekers should also be cautious about the content they share and consider complementing their job search efforts with more traditional methods to ensure comprehensive coverage of potential job opportunities While SNS can be a valuable tool, job seekers should not rely solely on social media for job search. Exploring multiple channels, such as job boards, networking events, and recruitment agencies, ensures a more comprehensive approach to finding suitable job opportunities. Social network sites have transformed the recruitment landscape for job seekers, providing them with unique opportunities and challenges. The advantages of a more accessible job search, diverse job opportunities, and the ability to engage with passive employers present exciting prospects for job seekers. However, the potential pitfalls, such as privacy concerns, bias in decision-making, and the need for verified information, call for cautious "navigation" within the job hunting paradigm.

SNS in Education & Alumni

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6.1 Educational Institutes

One more important aspect of the SNSs is that theys have impacted ICT alumni through offering the capacity to stay connected with their educational institutes. Many educational institutes have their own SNS pages or groups, which can be used by alumni to stay updated on events and news related to the institute [KKL12]. These pages can also serve as a platform for alumni to connect with current students and staff, providing an opportunity for mentorship and guidance [LHL12]. SNS have also provided a platform for ICT alumni to connect with each other. This connection can be particularly beneficial for those who have graduated from institutes in different locations or countries, as it allows for the exchange of information and experiences [KH10]. This can help to foster a sense of community among ICT alumni and provide support during the transition from student to professional [KKL12]. In addition to staying connected with their educational institutes and with each other, ICT alumni can also use SNS to enhance their professional development. Many professionals use SNS as a way to stay up-to-date on industry news and trends, as well as to connect with potential employers or clients [KH10]. For ICT alumni, this can be particularly important as the field is constantly evolving and staying current is essential for success [KKL12]. SNS can also provide opportunities for networking, which can be beneficial for ICT alumni as they enter the job market. Through the use of SNS, alumni can connect with professionals in their field and establish relationships that can lead to job opportunities or other forms of professional support [KH10]. Overall, the impact of SNS on ICT alumni in relation to educational institutes has been significant. SNS have provided a platform for staying connected with their educational institutes and with each other, as well as for professional development and networking. These connections can be invaluable for ICT alumni as they transition from student to professional and seek to establish themselves in their field. First, SNSs can be used to facilitate networking and professional development among alumni. LinkedIn, in particular, is geared towards professional networking and can be a valuable tool for alumni looking to connect with others in their field or explore job opportunities. Many educational institutions have established LinkedIn groups for their alumni, which can serve as a virtual alumni association and provide a way for alumni to connect with each other and stay informed about job openings, industry events, and other professional development opportunities [KH10]. Second, SNSs can be used to promote the accomplishments and achievements of alumni. By sharing news and updates about the successes of their alumni, educational institutions can help to raise the profile of

their alumni and increase their visibility in their respective fields. This can be especially valuable for alumni who are looking to advance their careers or gain recognition for their work [Kie+11; LLS16]. Third, SNSs can be used to foster a sense of community and belonging among alumni. By creating online spaces where alumni can interact with each other and with the institution, SNSs can help to foster a sense of belonging and connection to the educational institution. This can be especially important for alumni who may have graduated from the institution many years ago and may not have the same opportunities to stay connected with their alma mater through in-person events or activities [LLS16]. Fourth, SNSs can be used to facilitate the dissemination of information and resources to alumni. Educational institutions can use SNSs to share news, updates, and resources with their alumni, such as information about upcoming events, alumni benefits, and opportunities for engagement. This can help to keep alumni informed and engaged with the institution, even if they are no longer physically present on campus. In order to effectively use SNSs to help their alumni, educational institutions should consider the following best practices:

1. Establish a presence on multiple SNSs: By having a presence on multiple SNSs, educational institutions can reach a wider audience of alumni and provide multiple platforms for alumni to connect with each other and with the institution.

2. Engage with alumni regularly: To foster a sense of community and keep alumni engaged, educational institutions should aim to post regular updates and interact with alumni through comments, likes, and shares.

3. Foster two-way communication: In addition to sharing information with alumni, educational institutions should also encourage alumni to share their own news, updates, and resources with each other and with the institution. This can help to create a more dynamic and interactive online community.

4. Protect alumni privacy: Educational institutions should be mindful of their alumni's privacy and ensure that any personal information shared on SNSs is done so with their consent.

In conclusion, SNSs are an important tool for educational institutions to help their alumni by facilitating networking and professional development, promoting the accomplishments and achievements of alumni, fostering a sense of community and belonging, and disseminating information and resources. By following best practices and engaging with alumni regularly, educational institutions can effectively use SNSs to support and connect with their alumni.

6.2 Professional Development

To that end, the universities and higher education institutes do have to provide guidance and help to their alumni by establishing or having in place a strong social network through their use of professional SNSs. Moreover, new technological solutions that make connections have huge potential to lower coordination costs and raise social capital activation for the organizations themselves [CHR16]. The LinkedIn web platform is one such effective and well-known solution. This will also be regarded as one of our tools in the effort to identify the influence of SNS on ICT graduates' satisfaction and initial employment opportunities. Research on student use of LinkedIn reveals that its potential has not yet been achieved, despite LinkedIn's potential value in student decision-making, since it is not adequately supported by their respective universities. According to a study by Hall (2013), university students underuse LinkedIn when looking for employment. Craig [Cra] noted that the majority of the students in her sample utilized LinkedIn for job searches and a variety of other LinkedIn services. However, it is also noted that the remaining students in the sample lacked LinkedIn accounts and saw little value in having one. As a result, there is no guarantee that students will use LinkedIn's job search tools (as well as other resources as University Pages or Field of Study Explorer) to their full potential [CHR16; LLS16]. Specifically, the LinkedIn profiles' metadata, can be utilized to:

1. Suggest jobs/employers that best match the person.

2. Showcase individuals to potential employers in situations when they seem to be a good fit.

3. Based on the person's career trajectory, velocity, and professional development, suggest potential employment or employers for them.

4. Provide prospective employers with a list of people you think would be a good fit in the future.

5. Facilitate project work, virtual internships, assessments, and curricula with potential companies.

6. Offer educational opportunities based on desired employment and employer information and skill gaps.

7. Pre-identify students to potential educators based on desired careers/employers and skill gaps.

8. Facilitate conversations about education with potential educators [CHR16].

9. Additionally, despite the filtering tools offered by LinkedIn Higher Education services, finding solutions to questions about job placement and career advancement is not always simple. Even though the filters can be helpful in identifying pertinent alumni profiles, it is frequently necessary to drill down into individual profiles to obtain sufficiently detailed answers to questions about jobs and careers [CHR16].

The LinkedIn database is a useful source of knowledge. To mine the data and deliver insightful findings, LinkedIn has created "analytics teams" of "LinkedIn data scientists". These teams' efforts have helped create new services like University Pages and Field of Study Explorer, whose potential users go beyond students. Marketed features of University Pages and Field of Study Explorer include their capacity to assist prospective students in selecting a college to attend and a major for both current and future students [CHR16]. Some believe the addition of University Rankings to LinkedIn's Higher Education services could be a game changer in the field (University World News, n.d.). Nevertheless, according to Craig [Cra] the significance of university rankings is overplayed. Craig discusses a poll by the college admissions firm Admittedly (Admittedly, n.d.), which found that relevance of U.S. News university rankings was ranked 20th out of 27 considerations when choosing a school to attend. Rankings were "not important at all," according to twice as many students as those who claimed they were "extremely essential." When selecting a university, students are most concerned with four things: majors, price, safety, and jobs. Therefore, University Rankings might not turn out to be a revolutionary LinkedIn feature [CHR16]. The rapid rise of social network sites (SNS) has transformed various aspects of society, including the way universities interact with students and alumni. In recent years, universities have embraced SNS as powerful tools to engage with their student communities, facilitate networking, and enhance career development opportunities. This explores the impact of universities' SNS usage on job hunting for their graduates. We will examine how universities leverage SNS to foster professional connections, support job-seeking efforts, and equip graduates with the necessary skills to navigate the competitive job market. In the digital age, universities have embraced the power of social network sites (SNS) as transformative tools to foster meaningful connections for their graduates. The dynamic landscape of SNS platforms has enabled universities to bridge the gap between students and alumni, offering a plethora of opportunities for networking, mentorship, and career development [PH15; STM18; ZB15]. Through the strategic use of SNS, universities have unlocked new avenues to support their graduates in their job-pursuing journey and equip them with the necessary skills to thrive in the competitive professional world. This article explores the profound impact of SNS usage by universities on building connections for their graduates, delving into the ways in which these platforms facilitate engagement, career growth, and a lifelong sense of belonging within the university community. Universities can leverage SNS platforms, especially LinkedIn, to build and maintain extensive alumni networks. These networks facilitate connections between current students and graduates, fostering mentorship opportunities and providing a platform for students to seek advice and guidance from experienced professionals in their fields. By connecting students with successful alumni, universities

enhance the potential for networking and open doors to valuable job opportunities. SNS platforms enable universities to disseminate job postings, internship opportunities, and career-related events to their student and alumni communities. Through dedicated career services pages and groups, universities keep their graduates informed about potential job openings and networking events, effectively supporting their job pursuing endeavors. This enhanced communication stream helps graduates stay connected with the university even after graduation, reinforcing the institution's commitment to their professional development [PH15]. Likewise, incorporating SNS into virtual career fairs and networking events has become increasingly popular among universities. SNS platforms offer a virtual space for employers, students, and alumni to interact and engage in real-time discussions. Virtual events transcend geographical barriers and enable graduates to network with employers from diverse industries, expanding their job search beyond local opportunities [STM18]. Universities guide their graduates in creating compelling online profiles on SNS platforms to showcase their skills, experiences, and professional interests. Personal branding through well-curated profiles helps graduates stand out to potential employers and recruiters in a competitive job market. Career advisors and university mentors often assist graduates in optimizing their online presence to align with their career aspirations. SNS platforms serve as virtual hubs for networking and information sharing among graduates. Graduates can join industry-specific groups, attend webinars, and participate in discussions to enhance their knowledge and broaden their professional network. Networking on SNS facilitates access to job leads and insights into industry trends, giving graduates a competitive edge in their job-hunting journey. Graduates that have been equipped by their universities with strategies for effective job searching on SNS platforms. Graduates learn how to leverage social media for finding relevant job openings, researching companies, and connecting with potential employers. Additionally, career advisors educate graduates on the dos and don'ts of applying for jobs via SNS, ensuring that they present themselves professionally and tailor their applications to suit each opportunity [PH15; ZB15]. Nevertheless, there are a number of challenges that can become apparent while universities interact with SNS.The widespread use of SNS raises concerns about data privacy and information security. Graduates must be cautious about the personal information they share on SNS and take measures to protect their privacy. Universities play a role in educating graduates about privacy settings and responsible online behavior [ZB15].Graduates need to strike a balance between their personal and professional online presence. While social media allows for self-expression, unprofessional content or behavior can adversely impact job prospects. Universities guide graduates in managing their online image, ensuring that it aligns with their career goals. While SNS can be a valuable tool in the job hunt, graduates must avoid overreliance on social media platforms. Traditional job search methods, such as networking events and direct applications, remain essential components of a well-rounded job pursuing strategy. Universities stress the importance of a diversified approach to job seeking [PH15]. Besides the aforementioned challenges SNS can be proved extremely beneficial for universities and undergraduates alike since the above positive outcomes can be achieved by the following a set of best practices. A comprehensive SNS training and

guidance curriculum for their students and graduates is key in the successful integration of SNS with universities. This includes educating them on privacy settings, personal branding, networking etiquette, and responsible online behavior. SNS workshops and webinars can empower graduates with the knowledge and skills to navigate the digital job market effectively [STM18]. Additionally, universities can foster alumni-student engagement through tailored SNS initiatives. By encouraging alumni to actively participate in career-related groups and mentoring programs, universities create a supportive network that benefits both current students and graduates [PH15]. Universities must uphold ethical standards in the use of SNS for career services. This includes ensuring that graduates' personal data is handled responsibly and transparently, respecting their privacy preferences, and avoiding any form of discrimination based on online content [STM18]. The integration of social network sites in universities' career services has revolutionized job hunting for their graduates. By leveraging SNS platforms, universities enhance networking opportunities, support career development, and prepare graduates to navigate the digital job market with confidence. However, careful attention must be paid to privacy concerns and the potential for overreliance on SNS. With strategic guidance and ethical practices, universities can continue to harness the power of SNS to strengthen the bond between graduates and their alma maters, contributing to successful job-hunting outcomes and long-lasting professional relationships [STM18].

6.3 Training and Soft Skills Development

The foundation of social networking is the idea that individuals should engage and get to know one another. Social media brings together people who share similar hobbies, occupations, and personal values. It empowers people to share, fostering greater connectivity and global openness [Zai12]. However, this essay tries amongst other issues to emphasize, and discuss the usage of social media in employment and outline the benefits and drawbacks of doing so. These networks are referred to as social since they enable contact with friends and colleagues while fostering relationships amongst them in the online community. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and other social networks are the most well-known [LHL12]. Electronic social networking platforms like Twitter and Facebook, in particular, have quickly gained notoriety because The idea that you can use the web as a decentralized search engine to look up information or connect with people is becoming crucial. One of the most significant services provided by social networks is connections and discovery of new opportunities as well as the sharing of common interests and ideas [Den+20; Zai12]. Nevertheless, social network sites have evolved to all facets of life and employment or employability has become one of the most predominant in the realm of SNS usage [KSS17; Zai12]. The majority of job seekers in the 1990s turned to advertisements, while today the Internet is the most popular media utilized for job searches [KSS17]. The majority of businesses did not establish HR departments until the 1990s, and they have

only steadily grown in importance. Usually, placing a print ad in the newspaper, finding a candidate for a free work post was not difficult. However, this has shifted from a "simple task" to something very complicated due to the new job market needs and the details and skills the contemporary job market requires from new employees. As an example, there is no currently a need for ICT or CS personnel but for DevOps engineer or Web Developer or Security Specialist. At the turn of the millennium, the first web portals and servers specializing in employment offers and needs debuted. Companies had to be sufficiently inventive in the previous five years when hiring new personnel. For specialist roles where the finest employees are required and head hunting is done, a typical advertisement is frequently insufficient. Recruiters speak directly with specialists and seek them out on social media [MS02; PH15]. Additionally, we consider job postings and possible employee recruiting from the perspective of recruitment specialists and specialized staffing firms. Naturally, the majority of them have their own online portal. More frequently than not, the businesses have profiles on their own social networking sites. Specialized recruitment firms discovered that online and social media communication is significantly more effective than traditional newspaper and Internet marketing for certain professions and demographic groups [LHL12]. The primary reason is that young people are spending more time on social networking sites and less time reading the daily press. Another benefit is that information spreads quickly and has an impact on a large number of people in a short period of time [KSS17; PH15]. Moreover, social networks make it simpler to find references and it has always been true that getting the correct candidate's references is crucial. Using a social networking business card, one may tell a "good" candidate from a "poor" one. And that's exactly what modern human resources demand: a thorough reference list and a history of the applicant. It is possible to focus on the applicant's other distinguishing qualities because there is some assurance that the individual polled satisfies the requirements ([Den+20; PH15]. More than ten years ago [Sch07], LinkedIn became the social media standard for business and professional networking. Although other social media platforms provide business professionals social networking features, none have grown as quickly or been used as much by business professionals as LinkedIn. The largest professional network in the world, LinkedIn, had more than 332 million users as of 2014 [Cle; CHR16]. Registered users of LinkedIn can create and maintain networks of coworkers they know and trust. Relationships between LinkedIn members are referred to as "connections," and the site's basic membership is free. In contrast to other free social networking sites like Facebook or Twitter, LinkedIn has historically demanded that users have pre-existing connections in order to create connections [**li2016survey**; CHR16; Li+16]. Social media use is highly common among young people. In the research conducted by Potkány & Hajduková [PH15], 96% of respondents, or 391 people, use Facebook daily, it holds a strong position among social networks. It is a suitable product that is most frequently advertised in the media and, in every way, satisfies the needs of young people. Being used by more than half of respondents validated social networks' popularity among young people and their usefulness in job searching for college students [LHL12]. It is also important to note that only a small portion, 4.2%, or 17 respondents to our study, use the

occupationally oriented social network LinkedIn. It supports the theory that professionals utilize this social network more frequently than recent graduates do. Social networks' main goals are to bring people together, make communication easier, provide a forum for individual and group presentations, and offer information and resources for leisure, entertainment, as well as professional purposes. Additionally, we tried to identify the main reason why people (and specifically university students) use social networks. Social networks were undoubtedly primarily used by university students to stay in touch with their friends and family [**ming2014integrating**; Den+20; PH15; VA09]. A big number of young people are still unaware of the expanded potential of social media use for career chances, business networking, and personal branding, but still utilize SNS majorly for "relaxation and entertainment" [Den+20; PH15]. Less than 30% of respondents use social networks significantly or regularly to look for career prospects or to present themselves. Since there are many options today for finding a job, and the internet is also highly popular. Nearly 90% of those surveyed said they routinely or occasionally use the Internet to look for work. This demonstrates that young people mostly use the Internet for job searching. Surprisingly, we discovered that respondents do not frequently use social networks for job searching. Only 25% of respondents claimed to have used social networks successfully to find work in the past or to have done so at least once . Up to 72.7% of respondents claimed they had unsuccessful results with their job search on social media or had not used it at all [PH15]. Despite the fact that the majority of respondents based on the data by Potkány & Hajduková do not have this experience, we can assume that from the perspective of the young people, social networks have a lot of potential to be a place for job searching [JF08; PH15]. The majority of respondents thought that traditional methods including the interviewer's personal presentation, the evaluation of data from a professional CV, and the use of contacts, references, and nepotism were very important [Bue17; Cas+13; JF08].

One more aspect that is deemed important in the modern work environment is the set of soft skills of a candidate employee. Soft skills are regarded as a valuable asset for organization and as such increase the chances of employability [Maj+12]. Users of SNS have a better chance to identify the needs of their future/possible employers by using the related information on various SNSs regarding this aspect of a company [Maj+12]. Moreover, graduates have the opportunity to display their soft skills by "exploiting" the "social" aspect of SNSs which arguably offers more space and time for someone to present themselves. According to research, graduates believe that a variety of skills in the areas of personal/interpersonal, cognitive, business, technical, and learning are crucial for doing their jobs [Den+20; PH15]. These include client interactions, project management, teamwork, problem solving, information organization, and technical competence. However, there were significant discrepancies between what graduates believed to be of high relevance for their profession and how effectively they believed institutions had concentrated on developing pertinent skills. While the majority of graduates appear to be happy with the way their institution prepared them for their jobs, many feel underprepared in terms of their business and interpersonal skills as well as their personal and interpersonal skills

[Den+20; Kop+09; JF08]. Graduates indicated that, while they had adequate technical preparation, they would appreciate to experience more modern, cutting-edge technology. It's not always because institutions didn't offer opportunity for students to develop these talents that graduates are perceived as lacking in communication and other "soft" skills. Many graduates reported that they did not fully engage in acquiring these abilities as students because they did not recognize their value for future employment. Research conducted using the perspectives of graduates as well as those of employers has discovered how business and academics may collaborate to create courses that will educate graduates for careers in the burgeoning ICT profession [Den+20; Kop+09]. This strategy might lead to more industry participation in undergraduate teaching. Data gathered from grads in the workplace revealed that success in a professional career demands a well-rounded ICT graduate to have the necessary technical knowledge, job experience, problem-solving abilities, and teamwork skills. Students need a balance of technical and non-technical abilities for industry relevance [MS02]. One of the responses provided what are arguably the most important final thoughts and words [Kop+09] and that is personal presentation. Personal presentation is considered a very important soft skill and can be seen as an encapsulation of a set of soft skills, contrary to what Potkány & Hajduková [PH15] have found, an interesting conclusion is drawn that states that more than 30% of respondents do not believe that a personal online presence is crucial when looking for a job. Based also on the same research according to more than half of the respondents the opportunity of a personal presentation is essential, but only in combination with other opportunities that they value more [PH15; Den+20]. Only 14% of respondents believe that using social networks for personal branding is crucial when looking for a job.

Alumni with and without SNS

7

ICT alumni with social network sites have an advantage in terms of job opportunities due to the fact that they are able to effectively use these platforms to network and connect with potential employers. According to a study conducted by the University of Pennsylvania, "participation in professional social media is positively related to the number of job contacts and offers received" [LLC15]. This is because social network sites allow ICT alumni to showcase their skills and experiences to a larger audience, as well as connect with professionals in their field and stay up-to-date with industry developments. On the other hand, ICT alumni without social network sites may face more challenges in terms of finding job opportunities. Without the ability to connect with potential employers and industry professionals online, these alumni may have a more difficult time promoting themselves and finding job openings. They may also miss out on valuable opportunities to learn about industry trends and developments through social media [LHL12; LL11a]. In addition, ICT alumni with social network sites may have a competitive advantage in the job market due to their ability to effectively use digital tools and platforms. In today's digital age, many employers are seeking candidates who are proficient in using technology and able to adapt to new platforms and tools [LL11a]. Having a strong online presence and a demonstrated ability to use social media can set ICT alumni apart from their peers and make them more attractive to potential employers. However, it is important to note that having a social network site alone does not guarantee job success. It is still necessary for ICT alumni to have the necessary skills and qualifications for the positions they are applying for. Additionally, it is important for alumni to be mindful of their online presence and ensure that their social media profiles present a professional image. ICT alumni with social network sites have an advantage in terms of job opportunities due to their ability to network and connect with potential employers, as well as showcase their skills and experiences to a larger audience. While having a social network site does not guarantee job success, it can certainly help ICT alumni stand out in the job market and give them a competitive edge [LL11b]. SNS offer the ability to connect with a large and diverse network of professionals in the field. By joining relevant groups and following industry leaders on sites like LinkedIn, ICT graduates can gain access to job openings, career advice, and other valuable resources that may not be readily available through traditional job search channels [Ker12]. In addition, SNS can provide ICT graduates with an opportunity to showcase their skills and accomplishments to potential employers. Many SNS allow users to create profiles that highlight their education, work experience, and other qualifications, which can be a useful tool for demonstrating their fit for a particular job or organization [LL11b]. There is also evidence to suggest that SNS can improve the chances of finding a

job. A study published in the Journal of Business Research found that job seekers who used LinkedIn were more likely to find employment than those who did not, with the effect being particularly strong for those with higher levels of education. Another study, published in the Journal of Applied Social Psychology, found that job seekers who used Facebook were more likely to receive job offers than those who did not[LL11b]. However, it's worth noting that while SNS can be a valuable resource for job searching, they are not a panacea. Some ICT graduates may find that they are less successful in finding employment through SNS if they do not have a strong online presence or if they are competing with a large number of other job seekers for a limited number of positions. Now let's consider the job search prospects for ICT graduates who do not use SNS. While these graduates may not have the same level of access to job openings and professional networks as those who do use SNS, they can still find employment through other channels [Ker12]. One option is to use traditional job search methods such as applying directly to companies or agencies, attending job fairs and networking events, and reaching out to industry contacts. These methods can be effective, especially for ICT graduates who have strong resumes and cover letters, and who are able to demonstrate their skills and qualifications to potential employers. Another option is to start a business or freelance in the field of ICT. Many ICT graduates have the skills and knowledge needed to develop and sell their own products or services and can leverage their expertise to create their own job opportunities [Che14]. It's also worth noting that while SNS can be a useful tool for job searching, they are not the only way for ICT graduates to find employment. In fact, some studies have found that traditional methods such as networking and applying directly to companies are still the most common ways for job seekers to find employment [Che14; Ker12]. We can derive that, both ICT graduates who use SNS and those who do not have a range of options for finding employment in their field. Those who use SNS may have an advantage in terms of access to job openings and professional networks, but they may also face more competition for a limited number of positions. Meanwhile, those who do not use SNS can still find employment through traditional methods or by starting their own businesses or freelancing [Che14]. According to a survey conducted by the Pew Research Center, 69% of adults in the United States use SNS. Among this group, 28% report using SNS specifically to look for job opportunities, and 22% say that they have found a job through an SNS platform. These figures suggest that SNS can be a valuable tool for job seekers, but it is important to note that they do not necessarily indicate a causal relationship between SNS use and job success. However, there are also potential downsides to relying on SNS for job search. For one, there is the risk of becoming too reliant on these platforms, which can lead to a narrow focus on online connections rather than building a more diverse network of contacts through in-person networking and other offline channels. Additionally, there is evidence to suggest that SNS algorithms may favor certain types of content and connections, which could create a biased view of job opportunities and potentially lead to missed opportunities for some users [Ker12]. Another potential concern is the way in which SNS can be used to portray oneself to potential employers. While it can be useful to have an online presence that showcases one's skills and experiences, there

is also the risk of presenting an overly polished or curated version of oneself. This can create unrealistic expectations for employers and may ultimately lead to disappointment or conflict once the job begins. Despite these concerns, many ICT alumni continue to use SNS as a key part of their job search strategy. A survey of ICT professionals conducted by the technology consulting firm Robert Half found that 84% of respondents use LinkedIn as a job search tool, while 46% use Facebook and 36% use Twitter. These figures suggest that, while there are potential drawbacks to relying on SNS, many ICT alumni see the benefits as outweighing the risks. On the other hand, there are also ICT alumni who do not use SNS as part of their job search. Some may prefer to rely on more traditional methods, such as networking events and job boards, while others may simply not be interested in using these platforms. For these individuals, the potential benefits of SNS may be less clear, and they may need to find other ways to connect with potential employers and build their personal brand. One alternative approach that has gained traction in recent years is the use of professional online portfolio sites. These platforms allow ICT professionals to showcase their work and skills in a more focused and professional manner than is possible on many SNS. Some examples of popular portfolio sites include Behance and Dribbble, which are specifically geared towards designers, and GitHub, which is popular among developers. One study found that ICT graduates who use SNS have a greater number of job opportunities available to them. According to the study, ICT graduates with SNS profiles had an average of 17.9 job opportunities, while those without SNS profiles had an average of 9.3 job opportunities [Che14]. This suggests that having a presence on SNS can significantly increase the number of job opportunities available to ICT graduates. There are several reasons why SNS use may lead to increased job opportunities for ICT graduates. First, SNS allow individuals to connect with a wider network of professionals and potential employers. This can lead to more job openings being shared and more opportunities for job seekers to be noticed by potential employers [LL11a]. Second, SNS allow ICT graduates to showcase their skills and accomplishments in a way that is easily accessible to potential employers. ICT graduates can share their work, projects, and other relevant information on their SNS profiles, making it easier for employers to learn about their qualifications and capabilities [Ker12]. Third, SNS can help ICT graduates stay up-to-date on industry trends and developments, which can make them more attractive to potential employers. By following relevant accounts and participating in industry-related discussions on SNS, ICT graduates can demonstrate their knowledge and interest in their field [LL11a]. Overall, the available evidence suggests that ICT graduates with SNS profiles have a greater number of job opportunities available to them than those without SNS profiles. However, it is important to note that this does not necessarily mean that using SNS will guarantee success in finding a job. Other factors, such as education, experience, and personal characteristics, may also play a role in an individual's job search and career progression. There are also potential drawbacks to using SNS for job searching and career advancement. One concern is the potential for employers to discriminate against job candidates based on their SNS profiles [Ker12]. For example, an employer may reject a candidate because of their political views or personal activities, which may be visible on their SNS profile. It is important for

ICT graduates to be aware of this potential risk and to use caution in what they share on their SNS profiles. The available evidence suggests that ICT graduates with SNS profiles may have a greater number of job opportunities available to them than those without SNS profiles. However, it is important to consider the potential risks and drawbacks of using SNS, as well as the role of other factors in an individual's job search and career progression.

7.1 Job Satisfaction & Quality

There is a growing body of research on the impact of SNS use on job satisfaction. Some studies have found that SNS use is positively related to job satisfaction [CHC17](Wang et al., 2015). For example, [CHC17] conducted a study of information technology professionals in Taiwan and found that SNS use was significantly related to job satisfaction, with those who used SNS reporting higher levels of satisfaction than those who did not. Similarly, Wang et al. (2015) found that SNS use was positively related to job satisfaction among healthcare professionals in China. However, other studies have found mixed or even negative relationships between SNS use and job satisfaction [**rauch2013rol**; **li2016careere**](e.g., Li et al., 2015; Marwick, 2013). For example, [Li+16] conducted a study of Chinese university students and found that SNS use was negatively related to job satisfaction, with those who used SNS reporting lower levels of satisfaction than those who did not. [**rauch2013rol**] also found that SNS use was negatively related to job satisfaction among young professionals in the United States. These conflicting findings suggest that the relationship between SNS use and job satisfaction may be more complex than previously thought. It is possible that the impact of SNS use on job satisfaction may depend on the specific context in which it is used, as well as the individual characteristics of the users. One study found that social media usage was positively correlated with job satisfaction among ICT professionals [LLS16]. The study surveyed 227 ICT professionals in Taiwan and found that those who used social media for professional purposes, such as networking and keeping up to date with industry developments, reported higher levels of job satisfaction. Another study examined the relationship between social media usage and job satisfaction among a sample of ICT students in Turkey [YK16]. The study found that social media usage was significantly related to job satisfaction, with those who used social media for professional purposes reporting higher levels of job satisfaction. However, it is important to note that the relationship between social media usage and job satisfaction may not be causal. It is possible that individuals who are already more satisfied with their jobs may be more likely to use social media for professional purposes, rather than social media usage leading to increased job satisfaction. Other factors, such as an individual's overall job satisfaction, may also play a role in their social media usage. A study by Kim and Lee [KL13] found that job satisfaction was significantly related to social media usage among a sample of South Korean workers. The study also found that social media usage was significantly related

to work engagement, which has been linked to job satisfaction [BDV04]. In addition to the potential relationship between social media usage and job satisfaction, there are other factors that may contribute to job satisfaction among ICT alumni. These factors may include an individual's job role, responsibilities, and working environment, as well as their personal characteristics and values [FC16]. Overall, the research suggests that social media usage may be associated with increased job satisfaction among ICT professionals. However, more research is needed to fully understand the relationship between social media usage and job satisfaction, and to identify any potential causal mechanisms. One study by Kim and Lee [KL15] found that the use of SNS was positively related to job satisfaction among ICT professionals. The authors surveyed 163 ICT professionals and found that those who used SNS for professional purposes reported higher levels of job satisfaction compared to those who did not use SNS for professional purposes. The authors suggest that the use of SNS allows for the creation of professional networks and the exchange of ideas and knowledge, which can lead to increased job satisfaction. Another study by Chen, Hsieh, and Chen [CHC17] also found a positive relationship between the use of SNS and job satisfaction among ICT professionals. The authors surveyed 199 ICT professionals and found that those who used SNS for professional purposes reported higher levels of job satisfaction compared to those who did not use SNS for professional purposes. The authors suggest that the use of SNS allows for the creation of professional networks and the exchange of ideas and knowledge, which can lead to increased job satisfaction [CHC17; KL15]. However, not all research has found a positive relationship between the use of SNS and job satisfaction among ICT professionals. A study by Al-Gahtani and Boczkowski [AB14] found that the use of SNS was not significantly related to job satisfaction among ICT professionals. The authors surveyed 256 ICT professionals and found no significant differences in job satisfaction between those who used SNS for professional purposes and those who did not use SNS for professional purposes. Overall, the research suggests that the relationship between the use of SNS and job satisfaction among ICT professionals is mixed. Some studies have found a positive relationship, while others have found no significant relationship. It is possible that the relationship between the use of SNS and job satisfaction may vary depending on the specific context in which SNS are used. For example, the use of SNS for professional purposes may lead to increased job satisfaction, while the use of SNS for non-professional purposes may not have the same effect [AB14; CHC17; KL15]. The job satisfaction of ICT alumni who use SNS may be higher compared to those who do not use SNS, but more research is needed to fully understand this relationship. It is important for ICT professionals to consider the potential benefits and drawbacks of using SNS for professional purposes when deciding whether to use these platforms. In a study published in the Journal of Business and Technical Communication, researchers examined the impact of SNS use on the job search outcomes of information and communication technology (ICT) alumni. The study found that ICT alumni who used SNS as part of their job search strategy were more likely to secure a job within six months of graduating, compared to those who did not use SNS [RCK13]. One reason for this may be that SNS allow individuals to connect with a wide range of professionals within

their industry, which can lead to opportunities for networking and job recommendations. Additionally, SNS can be used to showcase an individual's skills and experience, which can make them more attractive to potential employers. However, it is important to note that the benefits of SNS use for job seekers may vary depending on the individual's level of experience and the specific industry in which they are searching for employment. For example, a study published in the Journal of Applied Social Psychology found that SNS use was more beneficial for job seekers with less work experience, as these individuals may have fewer professional connections and may be less likely to be recommended for job openings through traditional means [RCK13]). In addition to the potential benefits of SNS use for job seekers, there are also potential drawbacks to consider. For example, excessive use of SNS could potentially distract individuals from other job search activities, such as updating their resume or applying for jobs. Additionally, there is the risk that an individual's online activity on SNS could be perceived negatively by potential employers, if they post inappropriate content or engage in activities that are perceived as unprofessional [DH14]. Overall, it appears that SNS can be a useful tool for ICT alumni in their job search, particularly for those with less work experience. However, it is important for individuals to use SNS responsibly and to consider the potential risks as well as the benefits when using these platforms as part of their job search strategy. Comparing the first job quality of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) alumni who use social network sites (SNS) with those who do not use SNS can provide valuable insights into the role that SNS play in the job search process and career development. There is evidence to suggest that SNS can be an effective tool for job seekers, with studies finding that use of SNS is associated with increased likelihood of finding employment (Bapna & Tan, 2014; Li & Lee, 2014). One reason for this may be that SNS allow individuals to expand their professional network, as they can connect with a wide range of professionals in their field (Kavanagh & Drennan, 2010). Additionally, SNS can serve as a platform for showcasing one's skills and experiences to potential employers (Cao, Wei, & Wen, 2015). However, it is important to note that the relationship between SNS use and job quality is not necessarily straightforward. For example, a study by Lee [CL17] and Park (2017) found that while SNS use was associated with increased job satisfaction, it was also associated with increased job stress. It is possible that the relationship between SNS use and job quality may depend on the specific nature of an individual's job and their own personal characteristics. One study that specifically compared the first job quality of ICT alumni who use SNS with those who do not was conducted by Kim and Lee [KL15]. This study surveyed a sample of ICT graduates in South Korea and found that those who used SNS during their job search reported higher levels of job satisfaction and job performance compared to those who did not use SNS. Additionally, the SNS users in this study reported higher levels of communication with their coworkers and supervisors, which may suggest that SNS can facilitate better integration into the workplace. However, it is worth noting that this study has some limitations. For example, the sample was limited to ICT graduates in South Korea, so it may not be generalizable to other populations. Additionally, the study did not control for other factors that could potentially influence job quality, such as the type of

job or the individual's preexisting professional network. Another study that examined the relationship between SNS use and job quality among ICT professionals was conducted by Kaur and Singh (2016). This study surveyed a sample of ICT professionals in India and found that those who used SNS during their job search reported higher levels of job satisfaction and job performance compared to those who did not use SNS. However, this study did not find a significant difference between the two groups in terms of communication with coworkers and supervisors. One potential explanation for these findings is that SNS can provide a platform for ICT professionals to share their knowledge and expertise with others in their field, which may contribute to increased job satisfaction (Kaur & Singh, 2016). Additionally, SNS can provide a convenient way for ICT professionals to stay up-to-date with developments in their field, which may enhance their job performance (Bapna & Tan, 2014). It is worth noting that both of these studies were conducted in a specific cultural context, and it is possible that the relationship between SNS use and job quality may vary across different cultural contexts. For example, a study by Seitz, Petzold, and Schrepp (2016) found that SNS use was positively associated with job satisfaction among professionals in Germany, but not among professionals in Austria. In conclusion, the available research suggests that SNS use may be associated with improved first job quality among ICT alumni, particularly in terms of job satisfaction and job performance.

7.2 Identifying Research Gaps

The limitations of the existing research should be considered since it is important to note that these studies do not necessarily imply causality, and it is possible that individuals who are more successful in finding employment are also more likely to be active on social media. Nevertheless, these studies do suggest that social media use may be beneficial for jobseekers, particularly in the ICT field where networking and staying up-to-date on industry developments may be important. According to a study published in the Journal of Business and Technical Communication in 2015, "active social media use is positively correlated with finding a job in the current market" [LLC15; Li+16] (Qiu, X.). Another study, published in the Journal of Applied Social Psychology in 2014, found that "active social media participation was associated with increased levels of job-finding success" (Kuiper, E. M., & Volkmar, M. 2014). According to a report published by Pew Research Center in 2020, around 69% of adults in the United States use social media, and this number is even higher among younger adults. It is likely that a significant proportion of ICT alumni also use social media [Li+16]. There is some evidence to suggest that the use of social media can have a positive impact on employment outcomes. For example, a study published in the journal "Computers in Human Behavior" in 2014 found that job seekers who use social media are more likely to find employment and are also more likely to receive higher salaries and better job titles compared to those who do not use social media [LWS14]. However, it is also important to note that the use of social media can also have

potential drawbacks when it comes to employment. Employers may view the content that job candidates post on social media as a reflection of their personality and judgment, and certain types of content could potentially be viewed as unprofessional or inappropriate [Gon14]. Therefore, it is important for ICT alumni to be mindful of the content they post on social media and to use it responsibly.

Survey and Results

To support and validate our thesis, we conducted an online survey targeting professionals from various IT occupations, including developers, DevOps specialists, and software architects. The survey aimed to explore the impact of Social Network Sites (SNS) on their career development and job-seeking experiences. Despite the smaller sample size of 44 respondents, the results carry significant importance due to the specificity of the participants' expertise and experiences in the IT industry. Participants were asked to provide insights into their use of SNS platforms for job hunting, networking, and skill development. The survey also delved into their perceptions of the role of SNS in enhancing career opportunities and how it influences their self-teaching activities in a rapidly evolving technology-driven field. The findings of the survey revealed interesting trends and patterns. Furthermore, the survey shed light on the significance of SNS in skill development and self-teaching. The analysis of the survey results highlights the importance of SNS for professionals in the IT industry, offering a valuable platform for networking, skill development, and career advancement. While the smaller sample size may limit the generalizability of the findings, the specificity and expertise of the participants lend credibility to the results within the context of IT occupations. In conclusion, the survey results provide valuable insights into how professionals in the IT industry leverage SNS to navigate their career paths successfully.

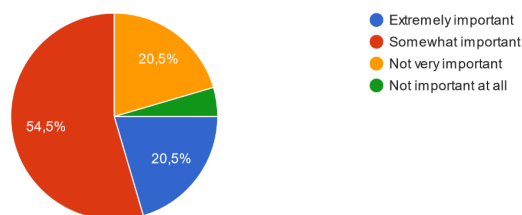How important do you consider social network sites for your overall job satisfaction?
44 απαντήσεις

- Extremely important
- Somewhat important
- Not very important
- Not important at all

20,5%
54,5%
20,5%

Fig. 8.1

The survey results revealed that a majority of the participants expressed a positive view regarding the impact of Social Network Sites (SNS) on their overall job satisfaction. This finding aligns with our assumption that SNS offer a diverse range of options that can fulfill the needs and preferences of IT professionals. Specifically, 54.5% of the participants responded that SNS are somewhat important for their job satisfaction, while an additional 20.5% reported that SNS are extremely important in this regard. These combined figures

indicate that a significant proportion of IT professionals find value in using SNS to enhance their job satisfaction. On the other hand, only a small percentage, 4.5%, of the participants indicated that SNS are not important at all to their job satisfaction. This minority view suggests that a very small fraction of IT professionals do not perceive any connection between their job satisfaction and their use of SNS. The positive response from the majority of the participants underscores the potential benefits of SNS in meeting the professional needs and expectations of IT professionals. The ability to connect with peers, access industry-specific information, and engage in skill development opportunities through SNS likely contributes to their overall job satisfaction. It is important to acknowledge that while the survey results indicate a positive correlation between SNS usage and job satisfaction for most participants, there may be individual differences and preferences regarding the impact of SNS on career-related experiences. Nevertheless, the overall trend of positive responses emphasizes the significance of SNS as a valuable tool in enhancing job satisfaction and career development within the IT industry.

Have you successfully networked with professionals in your field through social network sites?
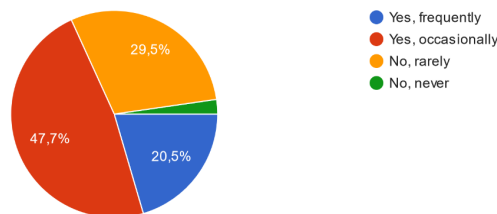44 απαντήσεις

- Yes, frequently
- Yes, occasionally
- No, rarely
- No, never

29,5%
47,7%
20,5%

Fig. 8.2

The survey results indicate that a significant majority of the respondents have effectively used Social Network Sites (SNS) to network with professionals in the same field. This finding aligns with the positive responses regarding the impact of SNS on overall job satisfaction. The ability to network with peers and industry experts through SNS appears to play a crucial role in the respondents' job search and career development. Networking provides them with new opportunities and leads to more satisfactory job prospects. Specifically, over 65% of the respondents reported successfully networking through SNS, with 20.5% doing so frequently and 47.7% occasionally. This highlights the importance of SNS platforms in facilitating connections and expanding professional networks for IT professionals. However, it is worth noting that approximately one-third of the respondents (25%) expressed some level of dissatisfaction with networking through SNS, indicating that SNS may not always lead to better job opportunities or higher job satisfaction. While the majority of the respondents find value in networking through SNS, there are still some individuals who feel that SNS has not provided them with sufficient networking opportunities.

The contrasting views regarding the impact of SNS on job satisfaction and networking suggest that while networking through SNS can be beneficial for many IT professionals, it may not necessarily guarantee better job prospects or higher levels of job satisfaction for everyone. Individual preferences, approaches to networking, and job market dynamics may contribute to these varying perspectives. A multifaceted approach to networking and job hunting, encompassing both online and offline strategies, may yield the most favorable outcomes for IT professionals seeking career advancement and job satisfaction.

How often do you use social network sites for job searching?
44 απαντήσεις

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Rarely or never
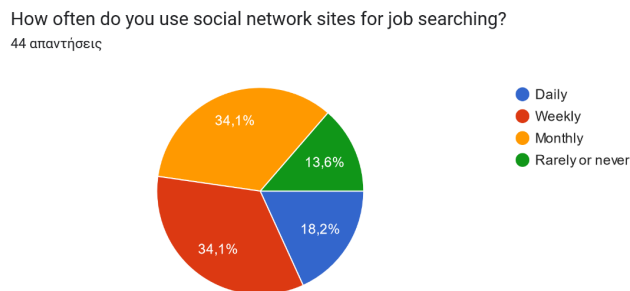
Fig. 8.3

The survey results reveal that the respondents are almost evenly divided into two groups in terms of their use of Social Network Sites (SNS). Approximately 52.3% of the responders are frequent users, engaging with SNS on a daily and/or weekly basis. On the other hand, the remaining respondents are non-frequent users, accessing SNS on a monthly and/or rare basis. This finding indicates that while SNS are considered important for job satisfaction among the responders, the rate of their SNS usage does not align with this perception. As indicated in our thesis, the manner of SNS usage appears to be crucial. The results suggest that simply being a frequent user of SNS may not necessarily lead to better job and salary satisfaction. Instead, it is the proper and strategic use of SNS that can yield more favorable outcomes in terms of career development and job satisfaction. The findings highlight the importance of using SNS effectively as a tool for networking, skill development, and job search. Frequent usage alone does not guarantee success in leveraging SNS for career advancement. The way in which individuals utilize SNS to connect with peers, access industry information, and engage with potential employers is a determining factor in achieving positive career outcomes. These results underscore the need for IT professionals to adopt a thoughtful and purposeful approach to their SNS usage. Understanding how to maximize the potential of SNS platforms and utilizing them strategically can lead to better job opportunities, higher job satisfaction, and ultimately a more fulfilling career in the IT industry.

As we analyze the results once again, we observe a consistent pattern in responders' views regarding the effectiveness of Social Network Sites (SNS) in finding job opportunities. The vast majority of responders, approximately 84.1%, provided positive responses, indicating

How effective do you believe social network sites are in helping you find job opportunities?
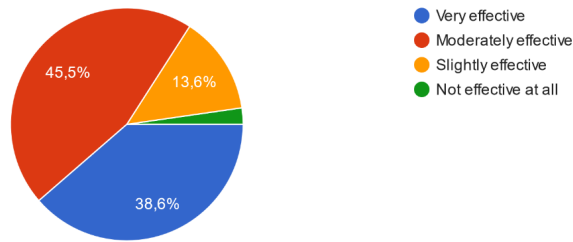44 απαντήσεις

- Very effective
- Moderately effective
- Slightly effective
- Not effective at all

45,5%
13,6%
38,6%

Fig. 8.4

that they found SNS to be either effective or moderately effective in discovering job opportunities. This strong positive sentiment aligns with our thesis, as it is expected that SNS, especially professional networking platforms, would be instrumental in facilitating the discovery of new job prospects. On the other hand, the set of negative responses amounted to just 15.9%, signifying a significant difference in outcomes and reinforcing the positive impact of SNS on career and job opportunities. The high percentage of positive responses reaffirms the importance of SNS as a valuable tool for job seekers in the IT industry. By leveraging SNS, IT professionals can access a vast array of job listings, connect with potential employers, and stay informed about industry trends. The effectiveness of SNS in expanding job search horizons underscores its pivotal role in enhancing career prospects and opening doors to a multitude of job opportunities. Some factors, such as individual networking efforts, industry demand for specific skills, and overall economic conditions, can also impact the job search process and outcomes. Nonetheless, the overwhelmingly positive responses emphasize the significance of incorporating SNS into one's career strategy to maximize opportunities for growth and success within the IT industry.

Did you secure your first job opportunity through connections made on social network sites?
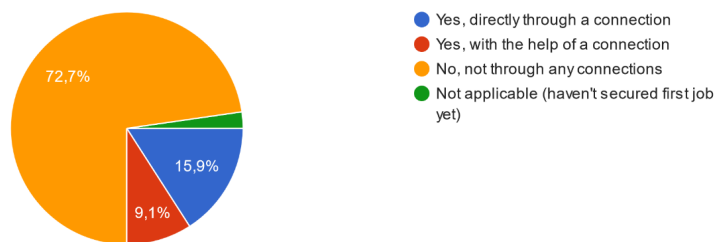44 απαντήσεις

- Yes, directly through a connection
- Yes, with the help of a connection
- No, not through any connections
- Not applicable (haven't secured first job yet)

72,7%
15,9%
9,1%

Fig. 8.5

The findings of the survey suggest that while responders value Social Network Sites (SNS) for job opportunities, particularly in later stages of their careers, it may not be as effective a tool when it comes to finding a first job. A significant majority of responders, approximately

72.7%, reported that they did not secure their first job through connections made on SNS. This outcome challenges our initial assumptions and contradicts the literature that supports the notion that SNS can be successfully utilized in all career phases of an IT professional. The results indicate that SNS may have limited effectiveness in the initial job hunting process for IT professionals. While SNS can be valuable in building professional networks and accessing job opportunities later in one's career, it appears that other methods or channels may be more effective for securing a first job. Traditional job search strategies, such as career fairs, university job placement services, and personal referrals, may play a more prominent role in the early stages of an IT professional's career. The discrepancy in the impact of SNS on job searching at different career stages underscores the need for IT professionals to adopt a multi-faceted approach to their job search. While SNS can be a valuable tool for career advancement, it may be complemented with other strategies for securing a first job. This could include leveraging university resources, attending industry events, and reaching out to personal and professional networks.

How satisfied are you with the job opportunities you found through social network sites?
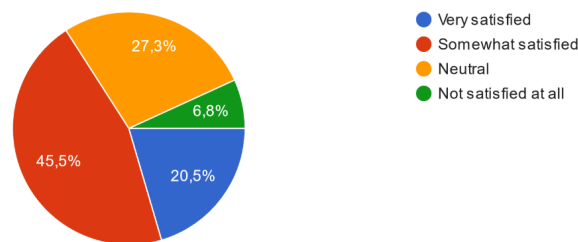44 απαντήσεις

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Neutral
- Not satisfied at all

27,3%
6,8%
45,5%
20,5%

Fig. 8.6

The presented results indicate that a majority of responders view Social Network Sites (SNS) as a useful tool for discovering satisfactory job opportunities. Specifically, 45.5% and 20.5% of responders reported that SNS were somewhat satisfactory and very satisfactory, respectively, in providing them with job opportunities. Building on these findings and considering the previous results, it is evident that SNS offer a wide range of job prospects that may be challenging to identify through other means. The availability of more opportunities through SNS can potentially lead to better job prospects for IT professionals. The positive responses regarding the usefulness of SNS in job searching highlight the significance of these platforms in facilitating connections between job seekers and employers. SNS enables IT professionals to access a vast pool of job listings, connect with recruiters, and stay informed about industry trends. The exposure to a greater number of job opportunities through SNS enhances the chances of finding positions that align with their career aspirations and skill sets. While SNS play a crucial role in presenting job opportunities, it is essential for IT professionals to approach the application and interview process diligently to secure their desired positions. Utilizing SNS strategically and effectively can open doors to a plethora of job prospects, but the process of securing a job ultimately depends on

individual qualifications, experiences, and performance during the hiring process. Overall, the survey results underscore the importance of SNS in expanding the horizons of job seekers and creating opportunities that may not be readily accessible through traditional job search methods.

How do you perceive the influence of social network sites on your starting salary?
44 απαντήσεις

Fig. 8.7

Again, the results continue to reveal a consistent pattern, with responders generally expressing positive views of SNS's impact on their careers. However, there is a notable contrast when it comes to their first job salary, with a majority of responders (59.1%) providing negative responses regarding the relationship between their first job salary and their use of SNS. Additionally, a small percentage (4.5%) of responders found that SNS had a negative impact on their first job salary, potentially indicating a pattern of incorrect or ineffective use of SNS in job-related matters. The majority of responders expressing negative views about their first job salary and its connection to SNS usage raises important considerations. It may suggest that while SNS can play a significant role in job searching and career networking, it does not necessarily translate to higher initial salaries for all IT professionals. Factors such as individual negotiation skills, market demand for specific skills, and overall job market conditions can also heavily influence salary outcomes. The presence of a small percentage of responders who perceived a negative impact on their first job salary through SNS usage could imply that some IT professionals may not be leveraging SNS effectively to their advantage. They may need guidance on how to best utilize these platforms to negotiate better salary packages or to access higher-paying job opportunities. It is crucial for IT professionals to recognize that while SNS can be a valuable tool in advancing their careers, it is not a sole determinant of salary outcomes. Strategic networking, skill development, and effective job searching strategies are equally vital for maximizing job prospects and salary potential.

The survey results indicate that responders rarely engage with alumni communities on Social Network Sites (SNS). A significant majority of respondents (70.5%) reported having no connection with alumni groups on SNS. This finding aligns with our assumptions that universities and colleges may not be effectively utilizing SNS for alumni networking and promoting their recent graduates. The lack of engagement with alumni communities on

How frequently do you engage with alumni groups or professional communities on social network sites?
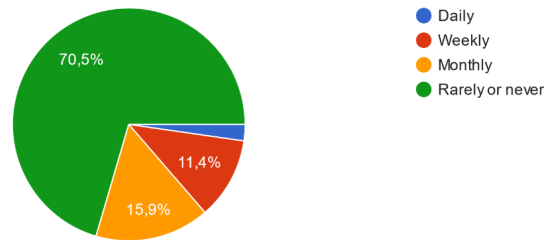44 απαντήσεις

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Rarely or never

70,5%

11,4%

15,9%

Fig. 8.8

SNS suggests that there may be untapped potential for universities to strengthen their alumni networks and foster stronger connections with their graduates. By leveraging SNS platforms, educational institutions have the opportunity to create a vibrant and engaged alumni community, providing valuable resources and networking opportunities for their graduates. Effective utilization of SNS for alumni networking can lead to various benefits, such as enhanced career opportunities, mentorship, and professional development for recent graduates. Furthermore, a thriving alumni community on SNS can serve as a powerful marketing tool for universities, showcasing the success and achievements of their graduates and attracting prospective students.

Do you believe that social network sites are essential for building professional connections in the IT/Computer Science field?
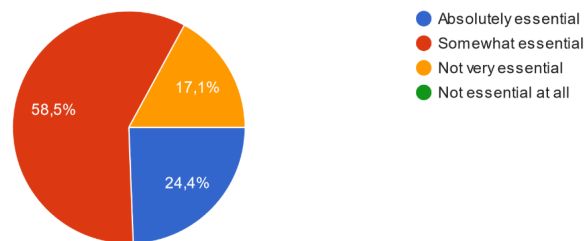41 απαντήσεις

- Absolutely essential
- Somewhat essential
- Not very essential
- Not essential at all

17,1%

58,5%

24,4%

Fig. 8.9

Based on the survey results, it is evident that a majority of responders recognize the importance of Social Network Sites (SNS) in building professional connections within the IT field. Approximately 24.4% of responders consider SNS to be absolutely essential for this purpose, while an even larger proportion, 58.5%, view them as somewhat essential. This combined percentage of 82.9% highlights the significant majority of IT professionals who believe that SNS play a crucial role in establishing and expanding their professional networks. The high percentage of responders who consider SNS to be essential or some-what essential for building professional connections is a testament to the power of these

platforms in the IT industry. SNS offer IT professionals valuable opportunities to connect with peers, mentors, industry experts, and potential employers, regardless of geographic location. These virtual networking opportunities enable IT professionals to stay updated on industry trends, share knowledge and experiences, access job opportunities, and seek advice or mentorship. It is very important to note the absence of responders who believe that SNS are not essential at all further reinforces the prevailing belief in the importance of SNS for professional connections in the IT field. This suggests that the vast majority of IT professionals recognize the value of SNS and actively utilize these platforms to enhance their career prospects and overall success in the industry.

Have you received job recommendations or referrals through social network sites?
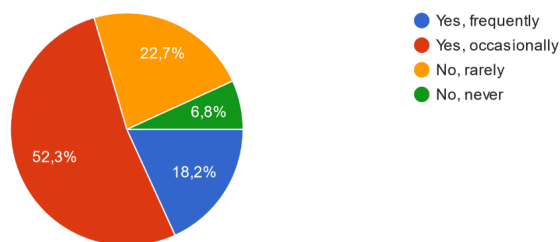44 απαντήσεις

- Yes, frequently
- Yes, occasionally
- No, rarely
- No, never

Fig. 8.10

The results related to this question reveal that a substantial number of respondents have experienced the benefits of job recommendations and referrals through Social Network Sites (SNS). Among the participants, 18.2% reported receiving job recommendations or referrals frequently, while an even larger percentage of 52.3% indicated that they receive such recommendations occasionally. This cumulative 70.5% demonstrates a significant majority of IT professionals who have leveraged SNS for job opportunities and networking. The high percentage of respondents who have received job recommendations or referrals through SNS indicates the pivotal role that these platforms play in the job search process for IT professionals. By actively engaging with SNS, IT professionals can tap into a vast network of potential employers, colleagues, and industry peers, expanding their visibility in the job market and gaining access to a wider range of job opportunities. These findings are in line with previous inputs highlighting the essential nature of SNS in building professional connections within the IT field. The majority of respondents recognized the importance of SNS for networking and career advancement, with 82.9% considering them either absolutely essential or somewhat essential for establishing connections in the industry.

The above results indicate that a significant portion of respondents feel confident in their ability to showcase their skills and achievements on Social Network Sites (SNS), 22.7% of respondents reported feeling very confident, while an additional 40.9% expressed being somewhat confident in presenting their skills and accomplishments on SNS. This

How confident are you in your ability to showcase your skills and achievements on social network sites?
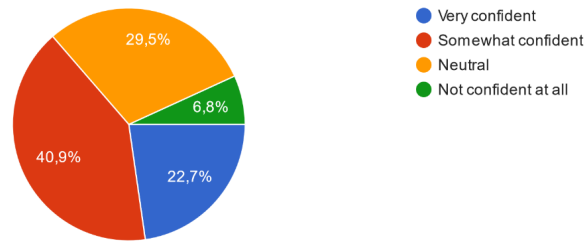
44 απαντήσεις

Legend:
- ● Very confident
- ● Somewhat confident
- ● Neutral
- ● Not confident at all

29,5%
6,8%
40,9%
22,7%

Fig. 8.11

combined percentage of 63.6% highlights a majority of IT professionals who are comfortable showcasing their expertise and achievements through these platforms. The high percentage of respondents who feel confident in their ability to showcase their skills on SNS aligns with previous inputs that emphasized the importance of SNS in building professional connections and accessing job opportunities. Respondents recognized the value of SNS as a platform to present their skills and experience to potential employers and industry peers. Feeling confident in effectively portraying one's skills on SNS is crucial in making a strong and positive impression on recruiters and potential collaborators. However, it is worth noting that there is a sizable portion of respondents (29.5%) who indicated a neutral stance on their confidence level. This suggests that while they may not feel highly confident, they are also not entirely lacking in confidence in presenting their skills on SNS. This could indicate that some IT professionals may need additional guidance or support in optimizing their SNS profiles to effectively showcase their expertise. Furthermore, a small percentage of respondents (6.8%) reported feeling not confident at all in their ability to showcase their skills on SNS. This highlights the need for targeted support and resources for IT professionals who may be less familiar with leveraging SNS for professional purposes. Providing guidance and training on how to effectively present skills and accomplishments on SNS could help boost their confidence and increase their visibility in the job market.

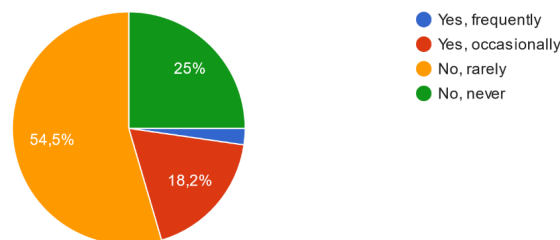Have you participated in industry-related discussions or forums on social network sites?

44 απαντήσεις

Legend:
- ● Yes, frequently
- ● Yes, occasionally
- ● No, rarely
- ● No, never

25%
54,5%
18,2%

Fig. 8.12

A significant number of respondents have not actively participated in industry-related discussions or forums on Social Network Sites (SNS). Approximately 54.5% of respondents reported participating rarely, while 25% stated that they have never participated in such discussions on SNS. This cumulative 79.5% represents a substantial majority of IT professionals who have not engaged extensively in industry-related discussions on these platforms. The low percentage of respondents who have actively participated in industry-related discussions or forums on SNS is in contrast to the previous inputs that highlighted the importance of SNS in building professional connections and accessing job opportunities. The survey results suggest that while IT professionals may recognize the value of SNS in career advancement and networking, they may not be as actively involved in participating in industry discussions on these platforms. On the other hand, 18.2% of respondents reported participating occasionally, while a small percentage of 2.3% stated that they frequently engage in industry-related discussions on SNS. These percentages indicate that there are IT professionals who do participate in such discussions, albeit in smaller numbers.

How often do you seek advice or mentorship from professionals in your field through social network sites?
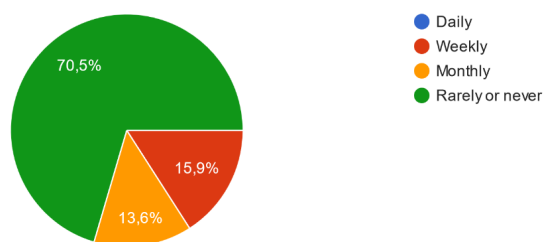44 απαντήσεις

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Rarely or never

70,5%

15,9%

13,6%

Fig. 8.13

The above results display that a substantial part of respondents rarely or never seek advice or mentorship from professionals in their field through Social Network Sites (SNS). Approximately 70.5% of respondents reported that they rarely or never seek advice or mentorship on these platforms. This suggests that while SNS offer opportunities for networking and connecting with industry professionals, IT professionals may not be utilizing these platforms extensively for seeking mentorship or guidance. The low percentage of respondents who seek advice or mentorship on SNS is in line with previous inputs that indicated a smaller percentage of active participation in industry-related discussions on these platforms. It appears that IT professionals may be less inclined to seek mentorship or advice through SNS, possibly due to factors such as time constraints, the availability of other mentorship resources, or personal preferences for mentorship formats. On the other hand, 15.9% of respondents reported seeking advice or mentorship weekly, and 13.6% indicated doing so monthly. While these percentages are relatively smaller, they do suggest that some IT professionals do seek mentorship or advice on SNS, but with less frequency.

The low percentage of seeking mentorship on SNS may indicate that IT professionals may prefer other channels or methods for obtaining mentorship or guidance, such as in-person meetings, professional organizations, or formal mentorship programs. It could also reflect the perception that mentorship on SNS may not provide the same level of personalized guidance or interaction as other mentorship avenues. Overall, the survey results suggest that there is room for increased utilization of SNS for seeking mentorship and advice among IT professionals.

Do you believe that social network sites have expanded your job prospects beyond your local area?
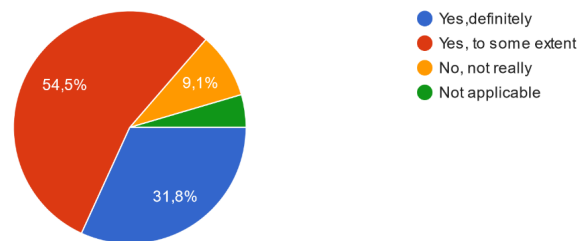44 απαντήσεις

Fig. 8.14

The survey results here indicate that a majority of respondents believe that Social Network Sites (SNS) have expanded their job prospects beyond their local area. Approximately 31.8% of respondents stated that SNS have definitely expanded their job prospects, and an additional 54.5% responded that SNS have expanded their job prospects to some extent. This cumulative 86.3% reflects a significant majority of IT professionals who credit SNS for broadening their job opportunities beyond their local region. The high percentage of respondents who believe that SNS have expanded their job prospects aligns with previous inputs that highlighted the importance of SNS in accessing job opportunities and building professional connections. IT professionals recognize the value of using SNS to connect with potential employers and industry professionals from different geographic locations, thereby increasing their visibility in the job market and expanding their job search beyond their local area. On the other hand, there is a smaller percentage of respondents (8.2%) who indicated that SNS have not really expanded their job prospects. This may be influenced by various factors, such as the specific job market conditions in their local area, the industries they are targeting, or the level of engagement on SNS. The small percentage of respondents who indicated that SNS are not applicable to their job prospects (4.5%) suggests that these professionals may not currently be actively using SNS for career-related purposes or may not perceive the relevance of SNS in their specific field.

Approximately 34.1% of respondents stated that they are highly likely to recommend SNS, while an additional 40.9% responded that they are somewhat likely to do so. This cumulative 75% reflects a substantial percentage of IT professionals who recognize the value of SNS in career development and networking. The high percentage of respondents who are likely

How likely are you to recommend social network sites to other IT/Computer Science alumni for career purposes?
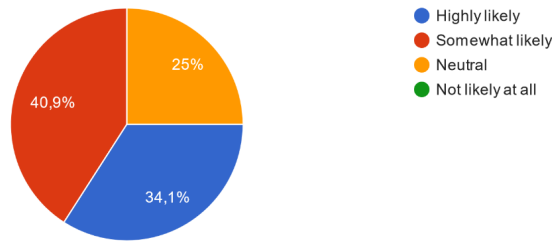44 απαντήσεις

- Highly likely
- Somewhat likely
- Neutral
- Not likely at all

25%
40,9%
34,1%

Fig. 8.15

to recommend SNS to other IT/Computer Science alumni aligns with previous inputs that highlighted the positive impact of SNS on job recommendations, networking, and expanding job prospects. IT professionals who have experienced the benefits of utilizing SNS for career purposes are more likely to recommend these platforms to their peers in the industry. The fact that 25% of respondents expressed a neutral stance suggests that some IT professionals may be uncertain about the benefits of SNS for career purposes or may not have fully explored the potential of these platforms in their own career journeys. Importantly, there is a notable absence of respondents who stated that they are not likely at all to recommend SNS to other IT/Computer Science alumni for career purposes. This suggests that the majority of IT professionals have a positive view of the value of SNS in career development and networking, and they may view these platforms as valuable resources for connecting with potential employers and advancing their careers.

How often do you come across job openings that are exclusively advertised on social network sites?
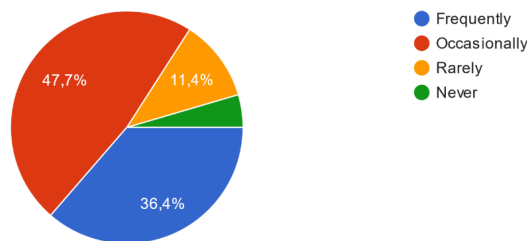44 απαντήσεις

- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Rarely
- Never

47,7%
11,4%
36,4%

Fig. 8.16

The majority of respondents frequently or occasionally come across job openings that are exclusively advertised on social network sites (SNS). Approximately 36.4% of respondents stated that they frequently encounter such job openings, while an additional 47.7% reported coming across them occasionally. This cumulative 84.1% reflects a significant percentage of IT professionals who regularly find job opportunities that are exclusively posted on

SNS. The high percentage of respondents who frequently or occasionally come across job openings on SNS aligns with previous inputs that highlighted the positive impact of SNS on job opportunities and expanding job prospects. SNS have become a popular platform for employers and recruiters to advertise job openings and connect with potential candidates, making them a valuable resource for job seekers in the IT industry. On the other hand, there is a smaller percentage of respondents (11.4%) who stated that they rarely come across job openings exclusively advertised on SNS. This may be influenced by various factors, such as the specific industries or geographic regions in which respondents are job hunting, the level of engagement on SNS, or the types of jobs they are seeking. Importantly, a very small percentage of respondents (4.5%) reported that they never come across job openings exclusively advertised on SNS. This suggests that a vast majority of IT professionals are aware of the prevalence of job postings on these platforms and actively use SNS as part of their job search strategies.

Have you connected with potential employers or recruiters on social network sites?
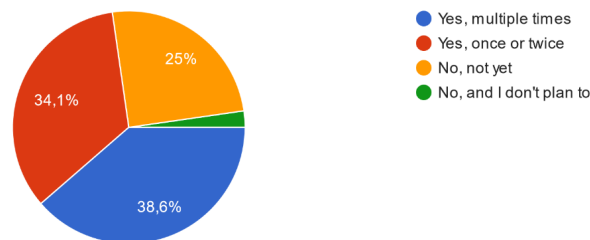44 απαντήσεις

Yes, multiple times
Yes, once or twice
No, not yet
No, and I don't plan to

25%
34,1%
38,6%

Fig. 8.17

The main body of respondents have connected with potential employers or recruiters on social network sites (SNS), 38.6% of respondents stated that they have connected with potential employers or recruiters multiple times, while an additional 34.1% reported having done so once or twice. This cumulative 72.7% reflects a significant percentage of IT professionals who have utilized SNS as a platform to connect with potential employers and recruiters. The high percentage of respondents who have connected with potential employers or recruiters on SNS aligns with previous inputs that highlighted the positive impact of SNS on networking and expanding job prospects. SNS have become an essential tool for job seekers to connect with employers and recruiters, showcase their skills and achievements, and explore job opportunities within the IT industry. On the other hand, 25% of respondents stated that they have not yet connected with potential employers or recruiters on SNS. This may be influenced by various factors, such as the stage of their career, their level of engagement on SNS, or the types of jobs they are seeking. However, it also indicates that there is room for more IT professionals to actively use SNS for networking and connecting with potential employers in order to enhance their job prospects. Importantly, only a small percentage of respondents (2.3%) reported that they do not plan to connect with potential employers or recruiters on SNS. This suggests that

the vast majority of IT professionals recognize the value of using SNS for networking and career advancement and intend to leverage these platforms to connect with potential employers and recruiters in the future.

How important do you consider the online professional presence established through social network sites for your career advancement?
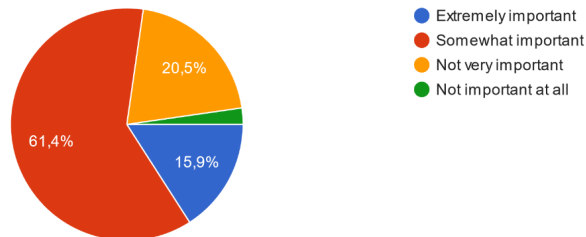44 απαντήσεις

Legend:
- Extremely important
- Somewhat important
- Not very important
- Not important at all

20,5%
61,4%
15,9%

Fig. 8.18

Here the results indicate that most of respondents consider their online professional presence established through social network sites (SNS) to be important for their career advancement,15.9% of respondents stated that their online professional presence is extremely important, and an additional 61.4% responded that it is somewhat important. This cumulative 77.3% reflects a significant percentage of IT professionals who recognize the value of maintaining a strong online professional presence on SNS for their career growth and advancement. The high percentage of respondents who consider their online professional presence on SNS to be important aligns with previous inputs that highlighted the positive impact of SNS on job recommendations, networking, and expanding job prospects. IT professionals are increasingly aware of the importance of maintaining a professional and well-curated online presence, as it can positively impact their visibility in the job market, attract potential employers and recruiters, and open up new career opportunities. On the other hand, there is a smaller percentage of respondents (20.5%) who stated that their online professional presence on SNS is not very important. This may be influenced by various factors, such as personal preferences for privacy, a belief that traditional methods of job searching are more effective, or a lack of awareness of the potential benefits of a strong online professional presence. Notably, only a very small percentage of respondents (2.3%) reported that their online professional presence on SNS is not important at all. This suggests that the vast majority of IT professionals recognize the significance of cultivating and maintaining a professional online presence on SNS for their career advancement.

47.7% of respondents stated that they have received multiple job offers through SNS, while an additional 22.7% reported receiving one job offer. This cumulative 70.4% reflects a substantial number of IT professionals who have successfully secured job offers through SNS. The high percentage of respondents who have received job offers directly through SNS aligns with previous inputs that highlighted the positive impact of SNS on job opportunities

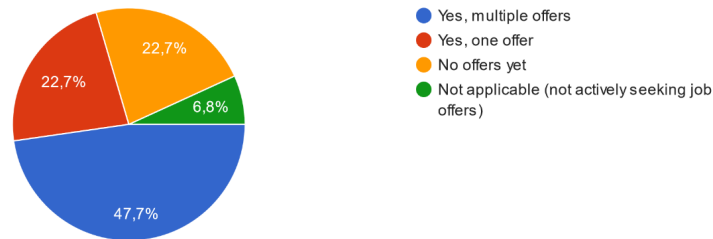Have you received job offers directly through social network sites?
44 απαντήσεις

- Yes, multiple offers
- Yes, one offer
- No offers yet
- Not applicable (not actively seeking job offers)

22,7%
22,7%
6,8%
47,7%

Fig. 8.19

and networking. SNS have become an important platform for employers and recruiters to reach out to potential candidates, and IT professionals who actively use these platforms for job searching and networking are more likely to receive job offers. On the other hand, there is a smaller percentage of respondents (22.7%) who stated that they have not yet received any job offers through SNS. This may be influenced by various factors, such as the stage of their career, the types of jobs they are seeking, or the level of engagement on SNS. Highly important is the fact that a small percentage of respondents (6.8%) stated that receiving job offers through SNS is not applicable to them because they are not actively seeking job offers. This suggests that some respondents may currently be employed or not actively looking for new job opportunities, which is why they have not received job offers through SNS.

How often do you share industry-related content or knowledge on social network sites?
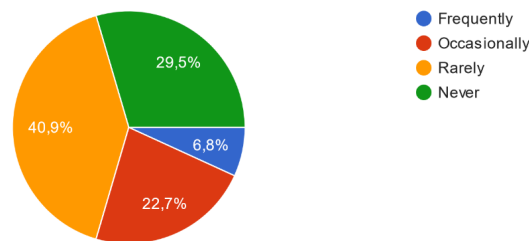44 απαντήσεις

- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Rarely
- Never

29,5%
40,9%
6,8%
22,7%

Fig. 8.20

6.8% of respondents stated that they frequently share such content, while 22.7% reported doing so occasionally. On the other hand, a significant percentage of respondents (40.9%) stated that they rarely share industry-related content on SNS, and 29.5% stated that they never do so. The results suggest that there is a wide range of engagement levels when it comes to sharing industry-related content on SNS. Some IT professionals are active contributors, frequently sharing knowledge and insights with their networks, while others do so only occasionally or rarely. A smaller percentage of respondents stated that they

never share industry-related content, indicating that there are IT professionals who do not actively engage in content sharing on SNS. The frequency of sharing industry-related content on SNS can be influenced by various factors, such as individual preferences for privacy, the time and effort required to curate and share content, and the perceived value and impact of such sharing on their professional network. Comparing these results with previous results, we can observe that while a significant percentage of respondents believe that SNS are important for their career advancement and job opportunities, they may not necessarily be actively sharing industry-related content on these platforms. This suggests that some IT professionals may be more passive users of SNS, leveraging the platforms for networking and job searching but not actively contributing to knowledge sharing and content dissemination. Overall, the survey results highlight the diverse engagement levels of IT professionals when it comes to sharing industry-related content on SNS. By actively encouraging and promoting content sharing on these platforms, IT professionals can further maximize the benefits of SNS for their career advancement and professional growth within the IT industry.

How influential do you believe social network sites are in shaping industry trends and developments?
44 απαντήσεις

- Higly influential
- Moderately influential
- Slightly influential
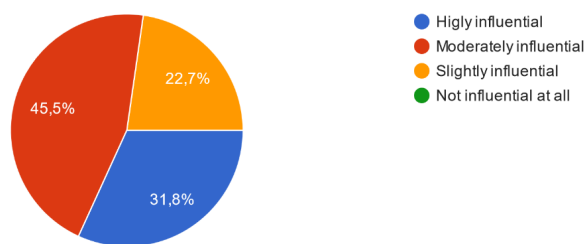- Not influential at all

45,5% 22,7% 31,8%

Fig. 8.21

The result of this question indicate that IT professionals have varied perceptions regarding the influence of social network sites (SNS) in shaping industry trends and developments, 31.8% of respondents believe that SNS are highly influential in shaping industry trends, while an additional 45.5% view them as moderately influential. A smaller percentage of respondents (22.7%) consider SNS to be slightly influential in shaping industry trends. The results suggest that a majority of IT professionals recognize the impact of SNS in shaping industry trends to some extent. They acknowledge that these platforms play a role in disseminating information, sharing insights, and facilitating discussions that can influence industry developments. The perception of moderate to high influence aligns with the previous inputs that highlighted the positive impact of SNS on networking, job opportunities, and career advancement within the IT industry. Interestingly, no respondents stated that SNS are not influential at all in shaping industry trends. This indicates that IT professionals generally perceive some level of influence from SNS on industry developments, even if it is not as significant as the perception of moderate to high

influence. The perception of SNS as influential in shaping industry trends can be attributed to several factors. These platforms provide a space for professionals to share knowledge, exchange ideas, and stay updated on the latest trends and developments within the IT industry. The ability to connect with a diverse and global network of professionals through SNS can also expose IT professionals to a wide range of perspectives and insights that can shape their understanding of industry trends. The correlation between positive responses regarding the impact of SNS on networking, job opportunities, and industry trends further emphasizes the importance of strategic use of SNS for professional development and career growth in the IT industry.

Have you participated in online professional development courses or webinars promoted through social network sites?
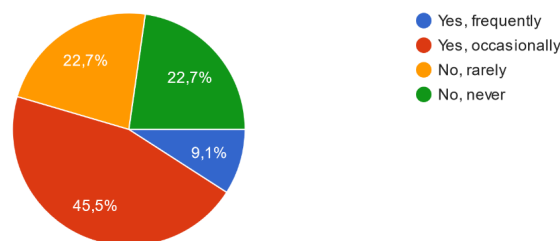44 απαντήσεις

- Yes, frequently
- Yes, occasionally
- No, rarely
- No, never

Fig. 8.22

IT professionals have varied levels of participation in online professional development courses or webinars promoted through social network sites (SNS), 9.1% of respondents stated that they frequently participate in such courses or webinars, while 45.5% reported doing so occasionally. On the other hand, a significant percentage of respondents (22.7%) stated that they rarely participate in online professional development opportunities promoted through SNS, and an equal percentage (22.7%) stated that they never do so. The results suggest that while some IT professionals actively engage in online professional development courses and webinars promoted through SNS, others have a less frequent or minimal level of participation. This variation in participation may be influenced by factors such as time constraints, personal preferences for learning formats, and availability of suitable opportunities. We can observe that there is a positive correlation between respondents who find SNS valuable for their career advancement and those who frequently or occasionally participate in online professional development courses or webinars. IT professionals who recognize the importance of SNS for job opportunities, networking, and industry trends may also be more inclined to actively seek and participate in professional development opportunities offered through these platforms. On the other hand, a smaller percentage of respondents who stated that SNS are not very important for their career advancement or job satisfaction may be less likely to participate in online professional development opportunities promoted through these platforms.

How often do you use social network sites to gather insights and advice related to your career growth?
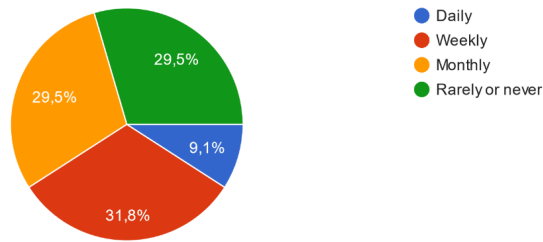
44 απαντήσεις

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Rarely or never

9,1%
31,8%
29,5%
29,5%

Fig. 8.23

IT professionals have varied frequencies of using social network sites (SNS) to gather insights and advice related to their career growth. Specifically, 8.2% of respondents stated that they use SNS daily for this purpose, while 31.8% do so on a weekly basis. Additionally, 29.5% of respondents use SNS for career insights and advice on a monthly basis, and an equal percentage (29.5%) stated that they rarely or never use SNS for this purpose. The results suggest that there is a diverse range of engagement levels when it comes to using SNS for gathering career-related insights and advice. Some IT professionals actively seek and utilize SNS on a frequent basis to stay informed and seek guidance on career growth, while others do so less frequently or not at all. We can observe that there is a positive correlation between respondents who find SNS important for their career advancement and those who use SNS more frequently to gather career insights and advice. IT professionals who recognize the value of SNS for job opportunities, networking, and industry trends may also be more likely to utilize these platforms as a valuable resource for career guidance.

Do you believe that social network sites will continue to play a significant role in the future of IT/Computer Science careers?
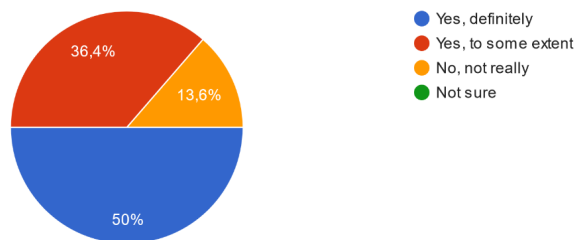
44 απαντήσεις

- Yes, definitely
- Yes, to some extent
- No, not really
- Not sure

36,4%
13,6%
50%

Fig. 8.24

Exactly 50% of respondents stated that SNS will definitely continue to be influential in shaping the future of careers in this field, while an additional 36.4% believe that SNS will play a role to some extent. Only a small percentage (13.6%) of respondents are not convinced that SNS will continue to be significant for IT/Computer Science careers in the

future. These results indicate that IT professionals have a positive outlook on the future of SNS in the context of their careers. The belief in the continued significance of SNS in shaping the future of IT/Computer Science careers may be influenced by the positive experiences and perceptions of the impact of SNS on networking, job opportunities, career advancement, and industry trends, as observed in previous inputs. We can detect that; respondents who have a positive view of SNS in shaping their careers are more likely to find SNS important for their career advancement, job satisfaction, and networking. This indicates a consistent and positive perception of the role of SNS in the IT/Computer Science field. The belief in the continued significance of SNS in the future of IT/Computer Science careers is also aligned with the increasing reliance on digital platforms for professional networking, skill development, and knowledge-sharing. As the IT industry continues to evolve and embrace technology-driven advancements, IT professionals are likely to rely on SNS as valuable tools for staying connected with industry developments and expanding their career opportunities.

Limitations of the Study

While our research endeavors to shed light on the complex relationship between social media usage and the careers of ICT alumni, it is essential to acknowledge and address several limitations that impact the scope and generalizability of our findings. These limitations are discussed in detail below.

- **Sample Size and Representativeness:** In the context of our study involving ICT alumni, the adequacy of the sample size and its representativeness is a primary concern. The ICT alumni population is notably vast and diverse, encompassing professionals with differing specializations, experience levels, and geographical locations. A relatively small sample may not adequately capture this diversity, potentially limiting the applicability of our findings to a broader range of ICT professionals. To mitigate this limitation, our study strives to acquire a sufficiently large and diverse sample, ensuring that our results account for the variety of experiences within the ICT alumni community.

- **Self-Selection Bias:** Self-selection bias poses a significant challenge in our research involving ICT alumni. Those alumni who voluntarily choose to participate may possess varying perceptions of the impact of social media on their careers, leading to potential bias in the collected data. For instance, alumni who have experienced notable career benefits, whether positive or negative, due to their social media engagement, may be more inclined to participate, thus potentially skewing the results. Our research seeks to address this bias by exploring techniques such as random sampling methods and conducting follow-up surveys or interviews with non-participating alumni to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the experiences of all members of the population.

- **Causation vs. Correlation:** Our study recognizes the complexity of establishing a direct causal relationship between social media use and career outcomes within the dynamic ICT field. ICT alumni face numerous career development factors, including their skills, educational background, and the prevailing job market conditions, all of which can potentially confound the relationship between social media usage and career success. As we explore this relationship, it is vital to acknowledge this limitation and consider the influence of other variables that may contribute to career outcomes. Longitudinal studies or experimental designs may be employed in future research to provide stronger evidence of causation.

- **Time Frame:** The dynamic nature of the ICT field necessitates an appreciation of the temporal aspect of our research. The impact of social media on careers can evolve over time, and a study conducted within a limited time frame may not fully capture the long-term effects or emerging trends. It is crucial to recognize that social media platforms and their usage patterns can change, potentially resulting in varying effects on careers over the years. Our research acknowledges the importance of conducting follow-up studies and analyzing data across multiple time points to account for these temporal changes.

- **Social Desirability Bias:** In the context of our study involving ICT professionals, the presence of social desirability bias is particularly relevant. ICT alumni may experience pressure to present themselves as technologically savvy and successful, possibly leading to an overemphasis on positive experiences with social media. To mitigate this bias, our research ensures anonymity in surveys and interviews, formulates questions in a neutral and non-leading manner, and endeavors to cross-validate self-reported data with objective measures whenever feasible.

- **Limited Demographic Information:** Recognizing the heterogeneity within the ICT alumni community is pivotal to our research. ICT is a diverse field with numerous specializations, and the impact of social media on careers may differ among various subgroups. However, the absence of detailed demographic information, such as years of experience, specific ICT areas of expertise, and geographic location, may limit our ability to uncover these nuanced differences in experiences. Our study, therefore, emphasizes the collection and analysis of comprehensive demographic data to gain a more holistic understanding of how social media affects diverse subgroups within the ICT community.

In conclusion, the aforementioned limitations are intrinsic to our study and necessitate a cautious interpretation of our findings. Acknowledging and addressing these limitations is imperative in ensuring the validity and applicability of our research on the impact of

social media on the careers of ICT alumni. Furthermore, these limitations provide avenues for future research to explore this complex relationship in greater depth.

Cronbach's Alpha and Scale Construction

In our study, we utilized Cronbach's Alpha, a widely recognized measure of internal consistency, to assess the reliability of a scale constructed from questionnaire responses. The scale in question contained 25 items, each corresponding to a specific question, and respondents were asked to choose from four possible answers for each question, representing different levels of agreement or response. To facilitate the application of Cronbach's Alpha, we transformed the textual responses into a numerical scale, assigning values from 1 to 4 based on the respondents' chosen answers. This conversion allowed for a more quantitative assessment of the questionnaire data. We initiated the reliability assessment by calculating the variance for each of the four possible answers and subsequently summing these variances. The sum, amounting to 15.8351, provided insight into the degree of variability present in the responses. Furthermore, to evaluate the overall internal consistency of the scale, we computed the variance of the mean score for each participant, resulting in a value of 79.272727. This analysis aimed to examine the extent to which the items in the questionnaire collectively measured a common underlying construct. With K representing the number of questions (K=25), we applied the Cronbach's Alpha formula as follows:

Cronbach's Alpha = (K / (K - 1)) * ((Variance of the Mean Score - Sum of Item Variances) / Variance of the Mean Score)

Cronbach's Alpha = (25 / 24) * ((79.272727- 15.8351) / 79.272727) 0.83358892514

According to relevant literature, a Cronbach's Alpha value of approximately 0.83 is considered a very favorable indication of the internal consistency of the scale. This suggests that the 25 items in the questionnaire collectively measure the underlying construct effectively, enhancing the scale's reliability and the validity of our measurements.

This process involves several steps, starting with calculating the Total Score for each respondent. The Total Score is computed by summing up a respondent's scores on all the questionnaire items or questions. This step essentially condenses their responses into a single value. Next, to evaluate how much individual scores deviate from the mean score and to understand the spread of scores around this mean, we calculate the variance. Variance quantifies the variability or dispersion in the data. To do this in a tool like Excel, you can use the VAR.S function, which calculates the sample variance. You'll need to calculate the variance for all respondents for each of the 25 questions in your questionnaire. This means you'll have 25 variance values, one for each question. These variances reflect how individual responses to each question vary from the mean response for that particular question. After this, you sum up the variances obtained for all 25 questions to create a single value, the Sum of Variance. This sum gives you a measure of the overall variability in the questionnaire. Finally, Cronbach's Alpha, a reliability coefficient, can be computed using the following formula:

Cronbach's Alpha = KK1×(1Variance of Individual QuestionsSum of Variance)

Cronbach's Alpha = K1K×(1Sum of VarianceVariance of Individual Questions)

In this formula, K represents the number of questions, which is 25 in your case. This coefficient ranges from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating greater internal consistency among the questionnaire items. A high Cronbach's Alpha suggests that the items in your questionnaire tend to correlate well with each other and measure the same underlying construct, while a low Alpha may indicate inconsistency among the items. Cronbach's Alpha is a valuable tool for assessing the reliability and consistency of questionnaires, ensuring that the questions work together effectively to measure the intended construct.

Question	Variance	Mean	Standard Deviation	Cronbach's Alpha
Q1	0.596	2.84	1.42	0.834
Q2	0.586	2.76	1.36	
Q3	0.674	2.96	1.29	
Q4	0.585	2.68	1.38	
Q5	0.615	3.05	1.21	
Q6	0.725	3.12	1.23	
Q7	0.423	2.38	1.18	
Q8	0.475	2.61	1.28	
Q9	0.670	2.92	1.34	
Q10	0.440	2.47	1.19	
Q11	0.664	2.93	1.26	
Q12	0.771	3.00	1.30	
Q13	0.534	2.61	1.22	
Q14	0.579	2.76	1.31	
Q15	0.586	2.94	1.27	
Q16	0.596	2.97	1.32	
Q17	0.649	3.05	1.29	
Q18	0.736	3.08	1.36	
Q19	0.457	2.65	1.18	
Q20	0.987	3.14	1.34	
Q21	0.809	3.11	1.38	
Q22	0.550	2.73	1.27	
Q23	0.899	3.12	1.31	
Q24	0.716	3.03	1.34	
Q25	0.516	2.76	1.26	
Total Variance	15.835			
Variance of Sum	79.273			

Fig. 8.25: Table 1. Detail results of Cronbach's Alpha measurement

Participants Profile

The sample of respondents in our study presents a diverse yet highly educated and experienced group of individuals within the field of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). The age range of the participants spans from 22 to 44 years, encompassing a broad

spectrum of experiences and perspectives. This diversity in age allows us to capture a comprehensive view of the impact of social media on careers across different stages of professional development. Furthermore, the educational background of the respondents is notably impressive, with the majority having attained graduate or higher-level degrees. Among the participants, 22 held graduate degrees, 14 had earned master's degrees, and 8 had reached the pinnacle of academic achievement with Ph.D. qualifications. This rich educational diversity among our respondents adds a layer of complexity to our analysis, allowing us to explore how educational attainment may intersect with social media's influence on careers in the ICT domain. The unique combination of age diversity and high educational achievement contributes to the richness and depth of our study's insights. In addition to age and education, our respondent pool exhibits a varied occupational landscape within the ICT sector. A total of 9 individuals identified as Machine Learning Engineers, 19 as Software Engineers, 5 as Developers, and 11 as DevOps Engineers. This occupational diversity reflects the multifaceted nature of the ICT industry, with professionals engaged in roles spanning software development, machine learning, and infrastructure management. Such diversity in professional roles adds robustness to our findings, as we can explore how the impact of social media on careers differs across these distinct job categories. It is also worth noting that while the majority of our respondents were Greek nationals, our study had the valuable inclusion of one Lebanese participant. This additional perspective allowed us to consider potential cross-cultural nuances in the experience of ICT professionals in the broader Mediterranean region. In summary, our study's sample boasts a rich tapestry of ages, educational achievements, professional roles, and nationalities, rendering it well-suited for a comprehensive examination of the influence of social media on the careers of ICT professionals in a dynamic and global context.

Pearson Correlation

- **Correlation Analysis of Social Network Sites and Career Perceptions**
  Our research delves into the correlation between the perception of social network sites and various career-related aspects among ICT and Computer Science alumni. The variable in focus, "How important do you consider social network sites for your overall job satisfaction?" (variable 1), acts as a pivotal anchor in this analysis, allowing us to explore the intricate relationship between social media and career-related experiences.

- **Analysis & Figures**
  Question 1 ("How important do you consider social network sites for your overall job satisfaction?"), which was deemed the primary variable of interest, and the other 24 questions. Our objective was to assess the extent to which respondents' inclinations or preferences in relation to Question 1 were correlated with their responses to the

remaining questions. For each correlation, Question 1 served as the y-axis variable, while one of the other 24 questions represented the x-axis variable. The titles of the resulting correlation graphs were labeled with the names of the respective second variables, corresponding to each of the 24 questions, providing insights into the degree of association between Question 1 and the rest of the questions in our analysis.

- **Results**

  The correlation analysis presents fascinating insights. First and foremost, we observe a positive correlation (Pearson value: 0.4379 figure below) between variable 1 and the perception of social network sites influencing starting salaries. This suggests that respondents who believe social media plays a role in their starting salaries tend to experience higher job satisfaction.
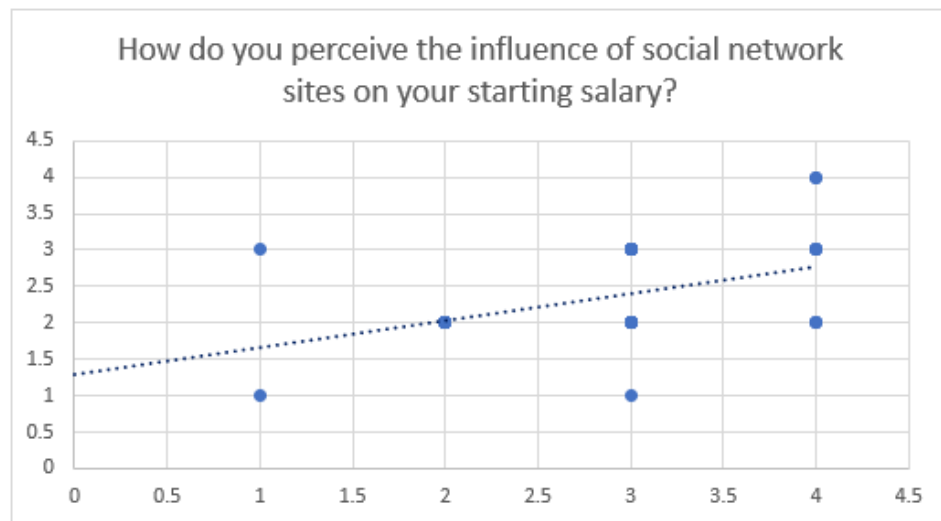

Fig. 8.26: Pearson Correlation: 0.437919

A similar positive correlation in Figure 8.27 emerges when examining whether respondents secured their initial job opportunities through connections made on social network sites. This highlights the pivotal role of these platforms in shaping early career trajectories.

Furthermore, a strong positive correlation in Figure 8.28 emerges with the frequency of seeking advice or mentorship from professionals through social network sites, underlining their significance as valuable resources for professional growth. These correlations reflect the favorable career-related perceptions associated with active participation on social media platforms.
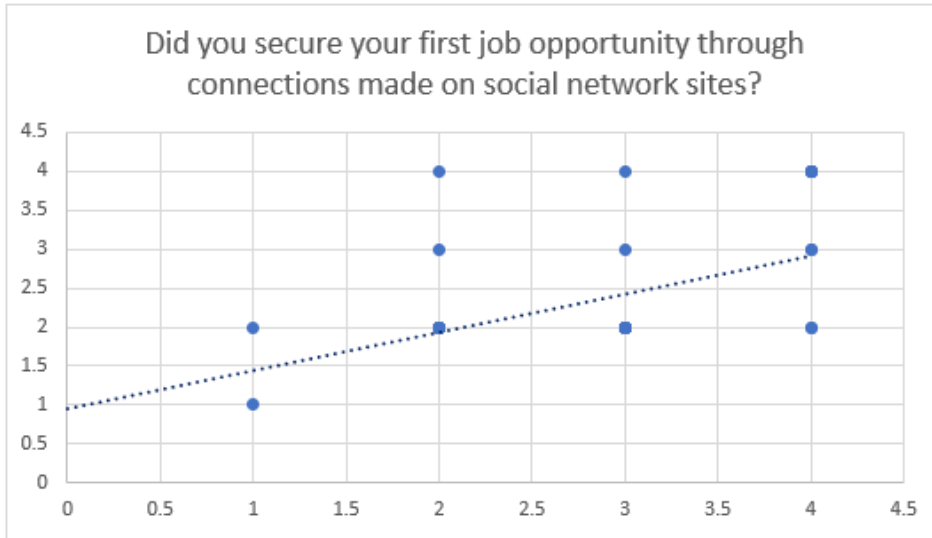
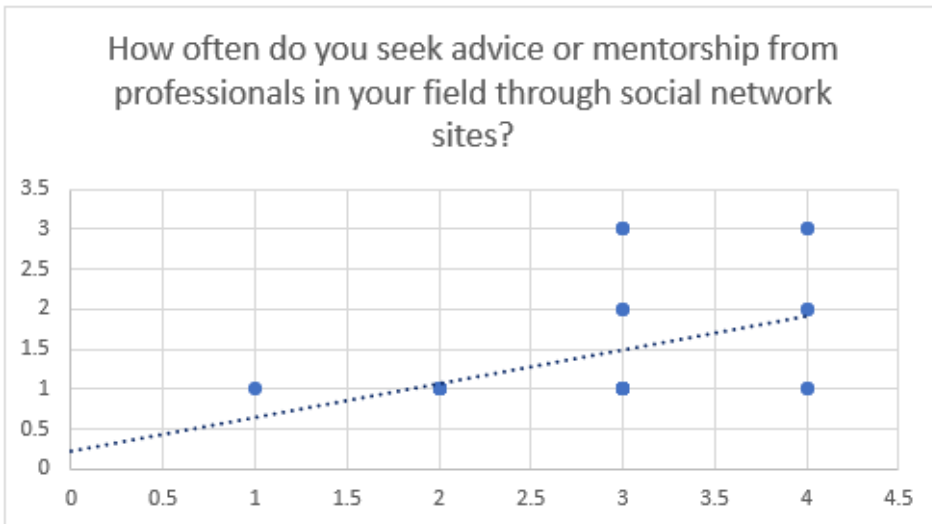**Fig. 8.27:** Pearson Correlation: 0.481942

Fig. 8.28: Pearson Correlation: 0.428102

Turning to the variable assessing the importance of an online professional presence established through social network sites for career advancement [variable 2], we observe a positive correlation with a Pearson value of 0.3404 in Figure 8.29. This indicates that respondents acknowledge the importance of maintaining an online professional profile, although it might not be the sole determinant of their overall job satisfaction.
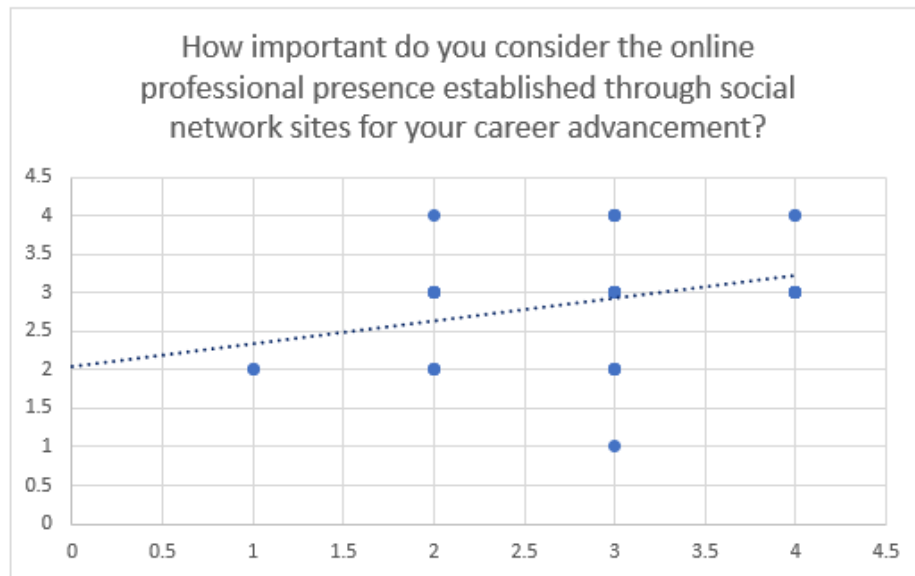

Fig. 8.29: Pearson Correlation: 0.340352

Interestingly, the analysis also reveals a nuanced outcome when it comes to the likelihood of alumni recommending social network sites to peers for career purposes. Here, a negative correlation in Figure 8.30 is observed. This suggests that while some respondents find social media influential in their career journeys, they may not necessarily advocate for its usage to others. This finding invites further exploration into the underlying factors influencing this discrepancy.
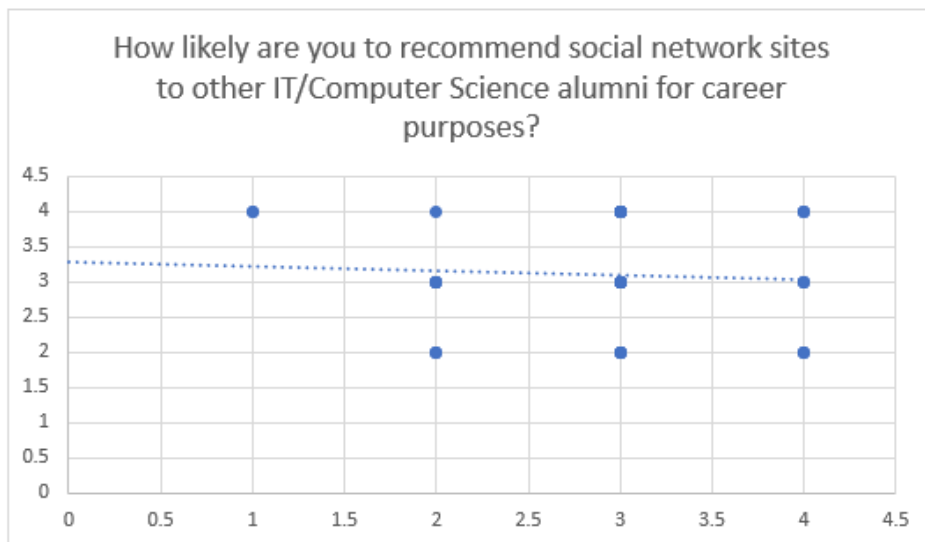
Fig. 8.30: Pearson Correlation: -0.06383

In summary, the Pearson correlation results showcase the multifaceted interplay between social network sites and career aspects for ICT and Computer Science alumni. They underline the instrumental role of these platforms in job search, mentorship, and professional presence, while also hinting at the presence of diverse factors influencing job satisfaction and recommendations to peers. This underscores the need for a holistic understanding when assessing the impact of social media on the career satisfaction of our respondent group.

Conclusions

<div style="text-align: right">9</div>

In conclusion, the integration of Social Network Sites (SNS) into the realm of IT/ICT careers has become instrumental in shaping the paths of both alumni and recent graduates. As the field of technology continues to evolve rapidly, the need for ICT professionals to distinguish themselves from the vast pool of new entrants becomes crucial. SNS platforms offer a dynamic and innovative way for ICT/IT graduates to navigate the competitive job market and gain a competitive edge. SNS plays a pivotal role in connecting alumni and students, fostering mentorship, and expanding professional networks. Graduates can use platforms like LinkedIn to showcase their skills, build personal brands, and connect with experienced professionals, enhancing their visibility to potential employers. The ability to access industry-specific webinars, online courses, and certifications through SNS empowers graduates to stay updated with technological advancements, ensuring their skills remain relevant in a constantly shifting field. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the shift towards virtual learning and self-teaching activities. Social network presence has become synonymous with self-teaching and knowledge sharing, enabling graduates to stay informed about job market trends and industry demands. Universities must embrace the potential of SNS as a tool for nurturing professional development and guiding students towards successful careers in the ICT sector. However, despite the benefits of SNS in career development, some challenges persist. Graduates may be hesitant to fully utilize SNS for career-building activities, partly due to a lack of awareness or reluctance to seek advice from online sources. Universities must take proactive steps to integrate SNS into the student experience, beginning from the early stages of the student journey. By encouraging interaction between alumni and students, educational institutions can create a nurturing environment that fosters social capital and facilitates future involvement between alumni and the university beyond graduation. The rise of social media-savvy generations, such as Millennials and Generation Z, necessitates the use of SNS as a targeted recruitment tool for employers. These platforms allow recruiters to identify and attract skilled but semi-passive job candidates effectively. The continuous creation and development of job-related actions on SNS contribute to emotional well-being and job satisfaction for graduates. Collaboration between universities and potential employer organizations is vital, with SNS acting as a bridge between them. Universities can use SNS to showcase their alumni, who in turn act as ambassadors and advertisements for their institutions. The connections between individuals and the subsequent job opportunities drawn from diverse perspectives demonstrate the power of SNS in enriching the ICT job market. The symbiotic relationship between ICT/IT alumni, recent graduates, and SNS offers a world of opportunities and possibilities. As the technology field continues to evolve, leveraging

SNS for career advancement will remain pivotal for graduates in their pursuit of successful, rewarding, and dynamic careers in the ever-growing ICT/IT sector.

Appendix

10

SURVEY

Survey Form

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