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Management consultancy firms’ approach to IEM students’ social media exposure

A study investigating Industrial Engineering and Management students’ social media exposure and how it may affect their hireability at management consultancy firms in Sweden

Master of Science Thesis
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Abstract

Due to the digitization and increased accessibility to internet, social media has now become vital part of most people's lives. Today, even most professional organizations have implemented social media in their business strategy, using it for several purposes such as recruiting, marketing, internal communication, brand awareness and employer branding. Neither students nor graduates from Industrial Engineering and Management (IEM), or management consultancy firms (MCFs) in Sweden deviate from this statement. The MCFs and IEM students' mutual interest in each other is well-established and considering both sides' increasing presence and exposure on social networking websites (SNWs), a research on how an IEM student's social media exposure affects the student's hireability at an MCF in Sweden.

The objective of this report is to identify, analyze and map the attitudes of MCFs stationed in Sweden in relation to IEM students' social media exposure. By identifying and analyzing the attitudes of the MCF, the authors hope to develop a deeper understanding of how students' social media behavior affects their possibility to employment at a MCF in Sweden.

The theoretical framework presented in the report initially outlines an overview of the framework, providing information about the research areas from which the secondary data was collected. Then the theoretical framework deals with key concepts such as person-environment fit, values and attitudes, and values-based organizations (VBOs). The framework also addresses social media and its role in today's recruiting.

The research is of qualitative character and is based upon empirical data gathered from interviews with MCFs in Sweden. The work process was initiated by collecting information about the MCFs' through their websites and then contacting them via email and phone. Meanwhile, a literature study was initiated in order to understand the concept of social media in a recruiting context, as well as laying the foundation for the theoretical framework. By conducting interviews with eleven different respondents working with recruiting at MCFs, information regarding their attitudes on social media in a recruiting context was gathered.

The collected empirical data was then connected with the theoretical framework in an analysis chapter, leading up to a final discussion and conclusions.

The research study shows that professional SNWs and especially LinkedIn are associated with positive attitudes amongst the MCFs. IEM students and graduates can affect their hireability positively by exposing a broad, relevant and coherent network, updated qualifications and general knowledge by taking part in relevant discussions on LinkedIn. By not having a presence, having an unpolished LinkedIn profile and/or non-updated information therein affects the hireability negatively. IEM students should be aware of their non-professional social media behavior and what they post there. The research study shows that IEM students should use full privacy settings on their non-professional SNWs to affect their hireability positively.

List of words and concepts

Affect heuristic	A mental shortcut that creates judgements evoked by affective and emotional evaluations, which happen before any logical reasoning has taken place in the brain Kahneman (2003).
Availability heuristic	A mental shortcut which makes people value readily (in their minds) available objects and events higher in decision- and judgement-making (Bazerman & Moore, 2009).
Candidate	A job applicant applying for an employment.
Complementary fit	The degree to which an employee fills a gap in the organization in terms of characteristics and values (Piasentin & Chapman, 2006).
Confirmation bias	The tendency to acquire or process new information in a way that confirms one's preconceptions and avoids contradiction with prior beliefs (Nickerson, 1998).
Firm-specific human capital	The ability attributed to an employee, specifically useful in a certain organization (Coff & Raffee, 2015).
Heuristics	Simplifying strategies serving as mechanisms to help people cope with the complex nature surrounding decision-making (Bazerman & Moore, 2009). Sometimes called "mental shortcuts" (Read & Grushka-Cockayne, 2011).
Ingratiation	A tactic used by individuals to increase e.g. an interviewer's liking of the individual by performing actions such as opinion conformity, i.e. agreeing on opinions expressed by the interviewer, making the recruiter believe that they share similar attitudes and beliefs (Higgins & Judge, 2004).
Junior consultant	A management consultant with less than two years of experience working as a management consultant.
Management consultant	A professional who provides expert advice within management problems (Kubr, 2002)
Management consulting	The practice of helping organizations to improve their performance, operating primarily through the analysis of existing organizational problems and the development of plans for improvement (Kubr, 2002).
Management consultancy firm	An independent professional advisory service assisting managers and organizations to achieve organizational purposes and objectives by solving management and business problems, identifying and seizing new opportunities, enhancing learning and implementing changes (Kubr, 2002).
Non-professional SNW	A non-professional social networking website (e.g. Facebook and Instagram) is a website whose main content is personal information (Aguando et al., 2016) where users add to the existing content by sharing information with other users on the website (Kashi et al., 2016).
Organizational values	The common set of shared beliefs on the goals, means, and ends that refers to desirable end states or behaviors that together create

the organization and environment around leadership (Treviño & Brown, 2004; Viinamäki, 2012).

Partner	A co-owner of a firm.
Professional SNW	A professional social networking website (e.g. LinkedIn) is a website where users provide information about their current and past job positions, contributions to professional organizations and projects that they have been involved in (Aguando et al., 2016).
Representativeness heuristic	A mental shortcut that implies that people make subjective judgements about an individual, object or event, and make decisions based on similarity to stereotypes (Bazerman & Moore, 2009; Baker & Nofsinger, 2011).
Self-promotion	The way of promoting yourself and your positive characteristics to elicit attributions of competence (Stevens & Kristof, 1995)
Senior consultant	Management consultant with more than two years of experience working as a management consultant.
Social recruiting	The process of sourcing, attracting, identifying and initiating primary contacts with potential job candidates through the use of SNWs” (Kashi et al., 2016; Peters, 2014).
Supplementary fit	The degree to which an employee possesses characteristics that are similar to existing organizational characteristics (Piasentin & Chapman, 2006).
Values-based leadership	Leadership based on values or moral principles such as social responsibility, integrity and empowerment (Reilly & Ehlinger, 2007).
Values-based organization	Organization in which internal values are (1) defined and (2) applied in leadership to increase motivation and commitment of the personnel in order to create a strong culture of shared core values among all employees (Viinamäki, 2012).
Web	A complex system of interconnected elements. Whereas internet is the computer network, the web is a service that uses it.
Web 2.0	The second phase of the evolution of the web.

Abbreviations

HR	Human resources
IEM	Industrial Engineering and Management
KSAs	Knowledge, skills and abilities
MCF	Management consultancy firm
OB	Organizational behavior
OCB	Organizational citizen behavior
PE fit	Person-environment fit
PJ fit	Person-job fit
PO fit	Person-organization fit
PSNW	Professional social networking website
VBL	Values-based leadership
VBO	Values-based organization
NPSNW	Non-professional social networking website

Contents

1.	Introduction.....	1
1.1	Management consultancy firms and Industrial Engineering and Management students	1
1.2	Background	1
1.3	Objective	2
1.4	Research questions	2
1.5	Delimitations	3
2.	Theoretical framework	4
2.1	Framework overview	4
2.2	Defining social media and networking websites.....	5
2.3	Defining management consultancy firms	6
2.4	Values-based organizations	6
2.5	Person-environment fit	7
2.5.1	Person-job fit	7
2.5.2	Person-organization fit	7
2.6	Values, attitudes and heuristics in decision-making.....	8
2.6.1	Defining values, attitudes and heuristics	9
2.6.2	Attitudes and heuristics influencing decision-making	9
2.7	Social media's role in recruiting	12
2.7.1	Recruiting.....	12
2.7.2	Social networking websites.....	12
2.7.3	Social recruiting	13
3	Methodology	15
3.1	Research strategy	15
3.2	Research approach.....	15
3.3	Research design	16
3.4	Research process.....	16
3.4.1	Initiator of the study	16
3.4.2	Literature study.....	16
3.4.3	Empirical data collection	17
3.4.4	Data analysis	19
3.5	Research quality	19
4	Empirical data	21
4.1	Respondents on social media evolution	21
4.2	Respondents on organizational social media exposure.....	21

4.3	Respondents on professional and non-professional social networking websites	22
4.4	Respondents on PE fit in relation to recruiting	23
4.4.1	Respondents on PJ fit	23
4.4.2	Respondents on PO fit	24
4.5	Respondents on social networking websites' role in recruiting	24
4.5.1	Respondents on professional SNWs	24
4.5.2	Respondents on non-professional SNWs	25
4.6	Respondents on social media exposure in relation to candidates' hireability	26
4.6.1	Respondents on candidates' exposure on LinkedIn	26
4.6.2	Respondents on candidates' exposure of party pictures	26
4.6.3	Respondents on extremism and radical political opinions	26
4.6.4	Respondents on candidates' transparency and openness on non-professional SNWs ...	27
4.7	Student survey	27
4.7.1	IEM students' interest in MCFs	27
4.7.2	IEM students' social media presence and behavior	27
4.7.3	IEM students' attitude on social media's role in recruiting	28
4.8	Attitudes and quotes	29
5	Analysis	35
5.1	Analyzing values and culture in relation to MCFs' recruiting	35
5.1.1	Values and culture in MCFs	35
5.1.2	The MCF recruitment process	36
5.2	Analyzing the MCFs' attitudes on social media in a recruiting context	37
5.3	Analyzing the management consulting firms' use of social media in recruitment purposes ..	38
6	Discussion	40
6.1	How do values and culture influence the MCFs' recruiting?	40
6.1.1	Business-specific culture	40
6.1.2	Firm-specific culture	40
6.2	What are the MCFs' attitudes on candidates' social media exposure in relation to recruiting? 41	
6.3	How does the MCFs' implementation of social media in the recruitment process affect the candidates' hireability?	43
6.4	What are the IEM students' recruitment-related expectations on how MCFs view the students' use of non-professional SNWs?	45
7	Conclusion	47
	References	49
	Appendix	54
	Interview template	54

Survey template	56
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1. Introduction

The following report aims to discuss management consultancy firms' attitudes on job-seeking candidates' (hereafter referred to as "candidates") social media exposure and how the attitudes influence decision-making in the firms' recruitment process. The introductory chapter therefore includes a brief background on how social media has found its place in most organizations' recruitment process, and thus why this report is of relevance on today's business landscape. Also, the chapter provides an introduction to the relationship between IEM students and MCFs. Furthermore, the background presents the report's objective and research questions which will guide the direction of the report. Finally, the report's delimitations and disposition are outlined.

1.1 Management consultancy firms and Industrial Engineering and Management students

MCFs and IEM students' mutual interest in each other is well-established. The conducted survey presented in the empirical data shows that 86,4 per cent of the IEM students answered either "yes" or "maybe" to the question whether they are interested in working as a management consultant after graduation. Further, using a Likert scale where 1 represented "not at all likely" and 5 represented "very likely", 76,7 per cent of the IEM students answered either 3, 4 or 5 to the question how likely it was that the surveyed would apply for a job at an MCF when graduating. From the other perspective, IEM graduates are well-represented at MCFs - several MCFs actively engage in activities in and around IEM programs all over Sweden with the purpose of finding potential employees. Several of the respondents interviewed in the empirical research highlight how IEM students' knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) often fit into the job requirements outlined by the MCFs, i.e. having a high person-job fit - a concept that will be further elaborated on in the theoretical framework.

1.2 Background

Social media has become an important part of most people's lives during the past decade and there are several possible explanations to why: the digitalization, the increased accessibility of internet, the commercialization of personal computers, and of course the entry of the smartphones and tablets. In Sweden - a modern, industrialized country with superb conditions for using internet on a daily basis - studies show that, quite intuitively, the amount of both internet and social media users has increased steadily over the past decade and continues to do so. Going back to 2000, the amount of people in Sweden with access to internet in their own homes was roughly 50 per cent, whereas in 2016, over 93 per cent of the Swedes had access to internet at home (Internetstiftelsen i Sverige, 2016). This is an 86 per cent increase from the year 2000, and aside from changing the way people consume information and news, this increase has enabled and activated the rapid spread of social media. In 2010, only 28 per cent of internet users admitted using social media on a daily basis but in the more recent research conducted in 2016, 58 per cent of the internet users said they were using social every day. Young women and men (16-25 years) are the ones spending the most time on SM, where the women in this category reportedly spend a total of 1hr 40mins on social media every day.

Shifting focus from the vast majority of people to IEM students and graduates, answers from surveyed IEM students all over Sweden show that 99,2 per cent of the surveyed are active Facebook users and over half of them (51%) think they spend too much time on SM. Using a different language, social media

is heavily incorporated in IEM students' lives. Same goes with organizations and people within them; due to the range of incentives for being on social media, the different types of social relationships and the immense user-base, the private use of social media has become intertwined with the workplace (Drouin, O'Connor, Schmidt & Miller, 2015). With the information-driven society we live in today networks hold great power (Khullar & Pandey, 2014), which is why social media has become increasingly important for organizations as *"a way to identify, attract, and recruit potential employees"* (Kashi et al., 2016). Headworth (2015) names this "social recruiting", which with support from several scholars could be defined as *"the process of sourcing, attracting, identifying and initiating primary contacts with potential job candidates through the use of social networking websites such as LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter"* (Kashi et al., 2016; Headworth, 2015).

Related to social recruiting, and to some degree incorporated in it, is how organizations use social media in evaluation purposes. Already back in 2010, Bohnert and Ross (2010) reported about an increasing number of organizations using social media for screening candidates. In 2016, Roth, Bobko, Iddenkinge and Thatcher also highlight a growing application of social media in personnel decision-making, i.e. that organizations search the social media information about potential employees before hiring them. Singh and Sharma (2014) state that *"social networks have the potential to provide recruiters a competitive edge when it comes to screening [...] the talent pool"*. Information found on social networking websites about candidates can be used to evaluate the candidates' attitude and personality (Kashi et al., 2016), and thus allow for recruiters to determine whether the candidates' attributes would fit into the organization (Chiang & Suen, 2015). However, social networking websites also provide much information about e.g. race, sexuality, political opinion and religiousness, characteristics which do not necessarily have anything to do with future job-performance.

The huge amount (and varying character) of information on candidates' social networking websites brings a need to investigate how organizations use this information in recruitment purposes. According to Roth et al. (2016), organizational practice has outpaced research on social media as an assessment tool, which has implications for both individuals and organizations as well as the society. By investigating the MCFs' attitudes on candidates' social media exposure in a recruitment context, this research provides information on what implications the IEM students and graduates' social media exposure has to their hireability at MCFs in Sweden. Thus, the report fills a void in today's recruitment research.

1.3 Objective

The objective of this report is to identify, analyze and map the MCFs' attitudes in relation to job candidates' social media exposure. By identifying and analyzing the attitudes of the MCFs, the authors hope to develop a deeper understanding of how candidates' social media behavior affects their hireability at an MCF in Sweden. Furthermore, the purpose is also to map how values and culture influence the MCFs recruitment process and how they relate to candidates' future job-performance and organizational commitment.

1.4 Research questions

1. *What are the management consultancy firms' attitudes on professional and non-professional social networking websites as a resource in their recruitment process?*
2. *How does Industrial Engineering and Management students' social media exposure affect their hireability at a management consultancy firm in Sweden?*

3. *How do the values and culture in the management consulting business and firms influence the MCFs' recruitment process?*

1.5 Delimitations

The research is delimited to only include IEM students as survey respondents on one hand and on the other hand only MCFs as interview respondents (hereafter referred to as “respondents”). Only issues concerning social media and MCFs are included in this report, and therefore this research strictly investigates MCFs' attitudes in relation to social media exposure. Every interviews conducted is held with either one or two employees chosen by the MCFs and directly involved in the MCF's recruitment process. Thus, it is important to be aware of the fact that their answers are their personal attitudes and that they may not be fully correlating with the attitudes of the MCFs in throughout the entire interviews. The research is also delimited to only include professional and non-professional social medias as LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and snapchat etc. Media not labelled as “social media”, such as newspapers or TV channels, will not be taken into consideration.

2. Theoretical framework

The following chapter lays out the theoretical framework, which serves as a frame of reference for the report. Initially, the framework presents an overview of the framework, providing information about the research areas from which the secondary data was collected. The overview is followed by sections describing key words and concepts used throughout the report, such as “social media”, management consultancy firms”, “person-environment fit”, “values and attitudes” and “values-based organizations”. Finally, the framework ends with linking social media with organizations’ recruitment by laying out social media’s role in today’s recruiting. This way a terminology is established, and the report’s area of focus is put into context.

2.1 Framework overview

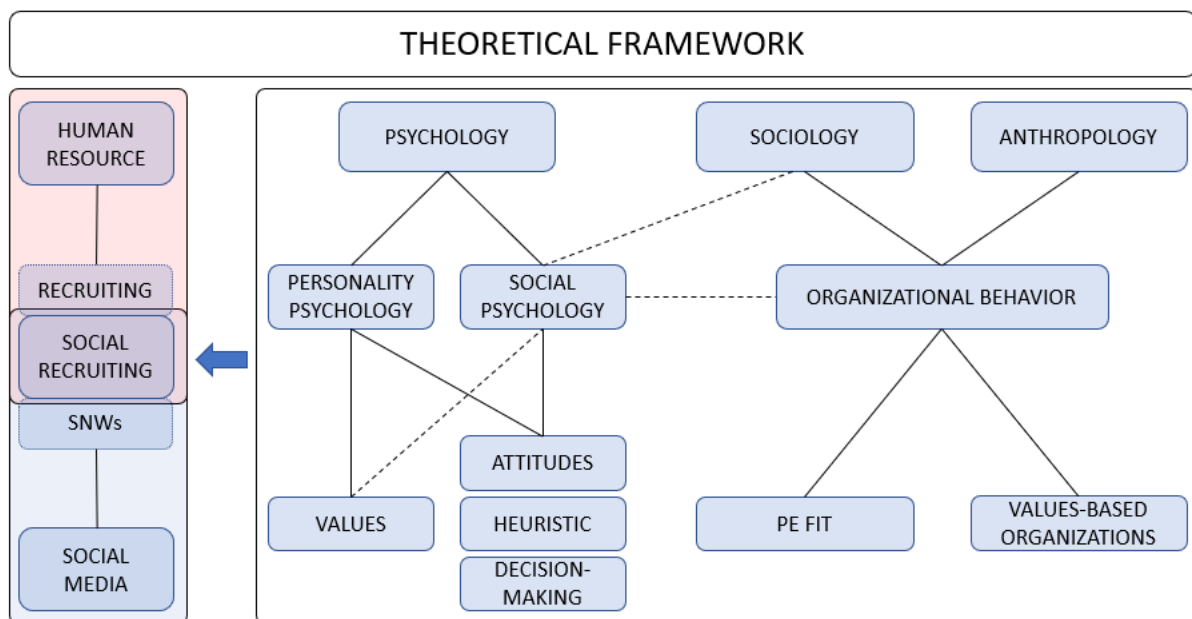


FIGURE A. theoretical framework overview

Data presented in the theoretical framework can be categorized into three different focus areas: the human behavior area, the human resources area and the social media area. Together, these areas create a web of information sufficient enough to thoroughly explain how social media exposure, attitudes and hireability are relevant factors to students in a recruitment context.

Together with the empirical data collected via interviews, the theoretical framework serves as one of the keystones in this report. The theoretical framework presents research relevant to the report’s purpose and research questions, providing density to the report and enables for a thorough analysis and discussion section. Breaking down the research questions we see concepts like “social media exposure”, “attitudes” and “hireability”, which can all be categorized into these different research areas. Put together without context would make no sense and there would certainly be blind spots needed to be bridged by the reader, which would call for own, subjective interpretations. The theoretical framework presented below tries to fill the void in these blind spots, bridging the gap between different research areas.

As can be seen in figure 2.1, the theoretical framework is separated into three research areas. The human behavior area focuses on why people behave the way they do, how values, attitudes and heuristic affect decision-making, and how values-based organizations and person-environment fit relate to each other.

This area is built upon the different perspectives on the behavior of both individuals and groups, i.e. psychology, sociology and anthropology. Organizational behavior (OB) includes principles from all three of these perspectives (Ashkanasy & Dorris, 2017), and serves the purpose of “understanding, influencing, and predicting the behavior of people in organizations” (Shani, 2009).

Social and personality psychology mostly originate from the psychology and sociology perspectives and provide understanding in what influences our brains in terms of attitudes, values and characteristics. Whereas personality psychology contains theory on personality and its variation amongst individuals (Friedman & Schustack, 2016), social psychology has traditionally been seen as bridging the gap between psychology and sociology (Sewell, 1989), seeking to understand human experiences and behaviors in social settings (Harvard, 2018). This definition of social psychology is a somewhat simplified version of G.W. Allport’s significantly older definition social psychology describing it more detailed as “the study of how people's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are influenced by the actual, imagined, or implied presence of others” (Craig, Hogan & Wolfe, 1993).

The human resources area is mostly focused on human relations research and its role in today’s organizations. There will always be a need to hire new people to organizations and HR people ultimately have to make decisions regarding several different matters in relation to the potential hire of a candidate. The theoretical framework presents research on how organizations use their HR departments today, and what is important parts to consider in today’s recruitment landscape. Khullar and Panday (2014) point out the importance of the HR department, calling it a “key component” in order to achieve organizational goals, and stresses the need for it to be able to adapt in a dynamic environment. Social media’s entrance in recruiting - numbers from 2015 say that 84 per cent of recruiters use social media in their recruitment process - has made recruiting more dynamic than ever before. Therefore, the human resources area and the social media area overlap quite heavily.

2.2 Defining social media and networking websites

The term “social media” is very well incorporated in today’s society - people use the term without any hesitation, and it is now such a vital part of our daily communication that few bother to reflect upon the true meaning of the term. Social media is still a new phenomenon - at least for the vast majority of people - and serves different purposes than websites which originates from the first phase of the evolution of the Web. Researchers tend to agree that social media differentiates from other media and content on the web by its user-generated content (John, 2013; Obar & Wildman, 2015; Murugesan, 2007), and represents the foundation of what Tim O’Reilly calls “web 2.0”, i.e. the second phase of the evolution of the Web.

Web 2.0 has attracted the attention of both businesses and web users to utilize the web in a more interactive and collaborative way, with emphasis on social interaction and collective intelligence (Murugesan, 2007). Obar and Wildman (2015) describes the shift to web 2.0 as “*a shift from user as consumer to user as participant*”. This view of the web has led the way for websites on which users not only take part of the content, but also add to the existing content by sharing information with other users on the web. Such websites, e.g. Facebook and Instagram, are in this research referred to as “Social networking websites” (SNWs) (Kashi, Zheng & Molineux, 2016).

Obar and Wildman (2015) try to define the concept of “Social media” and although the value with and purpose of different social media change very rapidly (and thereby provide difficulties in defining the concept of social media), there are a few common characteristics to the concept. Most important is their notion that “*social media services facilitate the development of social networks online by connecting a profile with those of other individuals and/or groups*”. They add to this by describing the user profile as

the “*backbone of the social media*” and that “*the user-generated content is the fuel*”. Clearly, SNWs such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter all fit into the Obar and Wildman (2015) description of social media. There are several websites nowadays that, although somewhat misleading, could be classified as social media; online newspapers often provide the option to create a user account that enables commentary functions, which, by Obar and Wildman’s definition, would put these newspapers in the social media category. However, social media as referred to in this report only includes SNWs whose main content is user-generated.

2.3 Defining management consultancy firms

Kubr (2002) describes a management consultancy firm (MCF) as “an independent professional advisory service assisting managers and organizations to achieve organizational purposes and objectives by solving management and business problems, identifying and seizing new opportunities, enhancing learning and implementing changes” (Kubr, 2002). The consulting process is two-sided and involves the management consultants working for the MCFs and the clients purchasing the services provided by the MCFs.

2.4 Values-based organizations

The concept of values-based organizations (VBOs) refers to organizations where internal values are defined and applied in leadership to increase motivation and commitment of the personnel - this in order to create a strong culture of shared core values amongst all employees (Viinamäki, 2012). A VBO creates a culture by a clear set of key components where internal values are there to generate clear communication streams, strengthen decision-making and preferred actions, and to create a sense of community within the company (Viinamäki, 2012). VBOs want to establish a values-driven culture where employees personal values are aligned with the organization’s values to create a unified and motivated workforce (Viinamäki, 2012).

Introducing organizational values into business and management is not a new thought; values have been one of the core components to organizations for decades and are considered to be as important as understanding the guiding principles of the industry and the organizations, institutions and individuals competing there (Schwartz, 1992; Cummings & Worley, 2001). From a management perspective, organizational values are often defined as a common set of shared beliefs on the goals, means, and ends that refers to desirable end states or behaviors that together create the organization and environment around leadership (Treviño & Brown, 2004; Viinamäki, 2012). There are many studies within the field of organizational structure discussing the importance and benefits of shared values within organizations, especially when addressing problems related to coordinating and managing complex organizational structures (Viinamäki, 2012).

The word “values” has different meanings depending on the context, one of them being the values that are held by the organization and shared amongst its personnel (Treviño & Brown, 2004; Viinamäki, 2012), which is the meaning referred to in this report. Organizational values partially reveal the culture and identity and is often seen as a core component of the organization’s definition (Williams, 2002; Viinamäki, 2012). Strong and aligned organizational values provide leaders with means and directions to create a culture as well as guiding them in the right direction from an organizational point of view (Mills & Spencer 2015). The organizational values enable values-based leadership (VBL) which refers to leadership based on values or moral principles such as social responsibility, integrity and empowerment (Reilly & Ehlinger, 2007). VBL is the way communicating the organizational values to all employees, connecting the values and means to the personnel’s values and means.

2.5 Person-environment fit

Person-environment (PE) fit implies that there is an interaction between a person and its environment. This area of research is extensively studied and researchers, primarily in the field of psychology, have exploited it for over 30 years. There are different definitions on PE fit, although the commonly used by researchers seems to be the one by Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman and Johnson (2005), defining PE fit as *“the compatibility between an individual and a work environment that occurs when their characteristics are well matched”*. Amy L Kristof-Brown, PhD in Organizational behavior and Human Resource Management, has made extensive contributions to the research on PE fit, and her publications are cited very frequently by other researchers within this area of research. Thus, this research will use her definition of PE fit going forward. As stated, the E in PE stands for “environment” and specifically represents the work environment. There are different aspects to how a person would fit in a work environment, where the most studied aspects of PE fit are what Gregory, Meade and Thompson (2013) identify as person-job (PJ) fit and person-organization (PO) fit.

2.5.1 Person-job fit

PJ fit and PO fit are both important factors to consider when in a recruitment process and selecting future employees (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005), as they could help predict employee attitudes like commitment and satisfaction (Sekiguchi, 2007). Quite intuitively, PJ fit concerns the fit between an employee’s knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs), and the requirements of the job to be performed (Higgins & Judge, 2004). Thus, the PJ fit would be an indicator of how competent the employee is for the given task, all other aspects aside, and what the future task performance of the employee will look like (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). In other words, PJ fit considers the harder values, i.e. how well the employee’s KSAs match the requirements of the task to be performed.

2.5.2 Person-organization fit

The concept of PO fit is a central concept throughout this report and in order to fulfill the research’ purpose, there is a need to fully understand PO fit and its implications on job-related matters. PO fit is also a vital part in analyzing and discussing social media’s role in the MCFs’ recruitment processes and what implications it has to job-seeking candidates. First is a thorough section defining PO fit, followed by a section laying out its importance in recruiting.

2.5.2.1 Defining PO fit

Numerous researchers state that there are different types of PE fit and points out PO fit as one of the more essential of them (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Morley, 2007; Sekiguchi, 2007). Commonly used, once again, is the definition by Kristof-Brown saying that PO fit *“focuses on the compatibility between the individual and the organization in terms of values and/or personality traits* (Kristof, 1996; Kristof-Brown, 2000)”, meaning that the higher the PO fit, the more resembling are the employee’s and the organization’s core values and preferences regarding workplace atmosphere (Kristof, 1996). PO fit may not seem as intuitively easy to grasp as does PJ fit, which is why several scholars have divided the concept into smaller building blocks like supplementary and complementary fit (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Piasentin & Chapman, 2006). Complementary fit occurs when the employee fills a gap in the organization in terms of characteristics and values, whereas supplementary fit is the opposite, i.e. when *“an individual possesses characteristics that are similar to existing organizational characteristics”* (Piasentin & Chapman, 2006). The latter has attracted the most amount of research and will be given the most attention also in this paper.

2.5.2.2 PO fit implications

There is a common understanding amongst scholars that PJ and PO fit affect the job performance, although in different ways. Previous research has also pointed out that, regardless of the level of PJ and PO fit, a higher degree of intelligence and conscientiousness will lead to an overall better job performance (Sekiguchi, 2007). This being noted, Sekiguchi continues by stating that the applicability of PJ and PO fit as selection criteria should not be neglected. Although PO fit has lower correlations with specific task and job performance than PJ fit (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005), PO fit has the potential to be of major impact and value for organizations.

PO fit and values are tightly interlinked and value congruence between an organization and its employees, i.e. “*the things that I value in life are very similar to the things that my organization values*” (Piasentin & Chapman, 2006), is commonly known as the defining, operationalization of PO fit (Kristof, 1996). Today, many organizations are value-oriented and self-named VBOs, with well-established core values guiding the organizations’ code of conduct. Such organizations, especially those wanting to operate with a high degree of organizational citizen behavior (OCB), benefit from high PO fit. OCB means “*individual behavior that is not an enforceable requirement of the job or job description*”, e.g. being supportive helpful towards fellow coworkers, being tolerant with inconveniences, being helpful in reaching organizational goals by participating in non-obligatory value-creating functions (Wei, 2013). Simply put, OCB means “walking the extra mile”, so to speak.

Although some scholars downplay the importance of PO fit, there seems to be a common understanding that high PO fit is not a negative thing - rather the opposite. Wei (2013) states that PO fit serves as predictor of OCB, and OCB serves as predictor of organizational effectiveness, performance and turnover. High PO fit help organizations run smoothly and creates stronger long-term relationships between the organizations and their employees (Sekiguchi, 2007), and also affect effectiveness, performance and turnover. When similarity between the organization’s and its employees’ goals and values is high, a mutual trust and understanding arise between the parties (Sekiguchi, 2007), fostering an environment in which people are more willing to help each other as well as put in the extra effort into their jobs. With higher PO fit comes a higher willingness to act as an in-group employee and take part in activities that are of value for the organization - high PO fit employees feel that what is valuable for the organization is also valuable for themselves (Wei, 2013).

In a comprehensive research conducted by Kristof-Brown et al. (2005), results show that high PO fit correlates not only with the satisfaction employees feel about their job, but also with the organizational commitment. This organizational commitment is a true resource for any organization and could be seen as firm-specific human capital, i.e. an ability attributed to an employee, specifically useful in a certain organization (Coff & Raffee, 2015). Sekiguchi (2007) argues that PO fit fills an important role in order to create firm-specific human capital that is likely to be “*valuable, rare, inimitable and non-substitutable assets for the firm*”, i.e. creating a sustainable competitive advantage. Further, Kristof-Brown et al. (2005) stress the fact that organizations’ demands on their employees, having them “*do more with less*”, create an opportunity to use PO fit to find, hire and keep personnel who “*contribute beyond job requirements*” and turn it into a competitive advantage.

2.6 Values, attitudes and heuristics in decision-making

The following section brings clarity to the concepts “values”, “attitudes” and “heuristics” and how they may influence people’s decision-making.

2.6.1 Defining values, attitudes and heuristics

In social psychology theory, there is a clear distinction between values and attitudes. Although they are two separate concepts, they should not be considered isolated from each other. Instead, they are two interlinked parts of a model that explains people's behavior. There are different ways of describing the interplay between values, attitudes and behavior and one commonly used model is Homer and Kahle's "Cognitive hierarchy model". This model consists of the notion that values influence people's behavior indirectly through attitudes (Homer and Kahle, 1988). Further, Homer and Kahle (1988) describe that this influence runs from more abstract cognitions (values), to mid-range cognitions (attitudes), and then to more specific behavior. The notion is hence that (a) the abstract values are influential on attitudes, and (b) both values and attitudes are influential on behavior.

Schwartz's (1992) definition of values describe them as "desirable trans-situational goals varying in importance, which serve as a guiding principle in the life of a person or other social entity". Verplanken and Holland (2002) underline this definition and further establish the relationship between values and behavior by describing values as "conceptions of desirable ways of behaving or desirable end states" (e.g. living a healthy lifestyle, equality and respect for tradition). Verplanken and Holland continue by stating that values are sometimes shared with others (e.g. political parties, organizations or cultural groups) and distinctly formulated, they constitute the basis for the identities of these groups and, sometimes, the foundation of moral and ethical rules of conduct. This view of values' role in organizations finds support in Viinimäki's (2012) research on values-based organizations. Olver and Mooradian (2003) include beliefs in the value concept by stating "values are learned beliefs about preferred ways of acting or being which serve as "guiding principles in the life of a person or other social entity".

Whereas the characteristic aspect of values is their variation in relative importance to us Schwartz (1992), the main characteristic in attitudes is their variation on an evaluative dimension, e.g. favorable-unfavorable (Verplanken & Holland, 2002; Schwartz, 1992). Katz (1960) stated early on that attitudes express a person's central values and self-concept, and Eagly and Chaiken (1993) later defined attitude as "a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor", which is the definition used hereafter.

Heuristics are simplifying strategies and rules of thumb, serving as mechanisms to cope with the complex nature surrounding people's decision-making (Bazerman & Moore, 2009). They are sometimes called "mental shortcuts" (Read & Grushka-Cockayne, 2011), helping people out in their decision-making by making the decision-making process less time- or effort-consuming. When heuristics does not succeed in producing a correct judgment, it can sometimes result in a cognitive bias (Bazerman & Moore, 2009). The heuristics may be used either in a more intuitive way, where they kick in automatically and totally effortless, or in a more conscious way, involving reasoning and logical thinking (Kahneman, 2003).

2.6.2 Attitudes and heuristics influencing decision-making

Managers and recruiters use information from e.g. interviews, resumes, tests and SNWs in order to make hiring recommendations and decisions regarding candidates and a number of different factors come into play when making these recommendations and decisions. The recruiters' attitudes and values impact decisions, and so does common heuristics and biases. Irrespective of the candidates' level PJ fit of in terms of KSAs, research has shown that recruiters tend to give subjectively desirable candidates more positive evaluations than subjectively undesirable candidates (Roth et al., 2016; Davison et al., 2011).

Today, the digitization has provided recruiters with endless opportunities to gather information about the applicants. This big amount of information can be used for many purposes but the common notion amongst researchers is that the information affects people's opinions and decisions, whether we want it or not. Information, regardless from where it was collected, is subjectively interpreted by the recruiters and hence influence their decision-making, sometimes so that candidates are eliminated from further consideration without considering other attributes of the candidates (Roth et al., 2016). The next few sections provide definitions and further elaboration on attitudes, values, heuristics and biases, and how they influence decision-making.

2.6.2.1 Attitudes

People's attitudes towards attitude objects, e.g. a political party, environmental friendliness or social media, influence their selections, decisions and evaluation of alternatives. The attitudes affect and guide both how people weigh information and how the information is being processed (Sanbonmatsu et al., 2014), and they also serve as the principal basis for valuation of options. Thus, attitudes' role in decision-making is not to be neglected when analyzing decision-making processes (Davison et al., 2011).

2.6.2.2 Heuristics and biases

Heuristics and biases influence our judgements even though we want them to or not (Bazerman & Moore, 2009). Focus in this section will be aimed at the more general heuristics and the cognitive biases linked to them, i.e. affect heuristic, availability heuristic, confirmation bias and representativeness heuristic, which to various degrees affect all people in their decision-making process.

2.6.2.2.1 Affect heuristic

Kahneman (2003) states that a majority of our judgements are evoked by affective and emotional evaluations which happen before any logical reasoning has taken place. Even though they occur with no higher-level reasoning and most of the times unconsciously, people tend to rely on these heuristics as a basis for decision-making anyway (Slovic et al., 2002). This type of emotional response, leading to a judgement of some kind, could occur in relation to almost anything. It could be regarding what type of car you choose to buy or which candidate to employ at the firm you work for. Evaluations of potential employees could be affected by lots of different factors influencing the recruiting manager's emotional response and judgement of a certain candidate, regardless the candidate's PJ fit (Bazerman & Moore, 2009). These factors could be e.g. the mood of the recruiter, the candidate's choice of clothing for the day or the degree to which the candidate reminds the recruiter of someone associated with negative feelings. Usually negative information has a stronger influence on impressions, judgments, and choices than positive information which may affect the candidate negative in case of an unstructured interview without systematic measurement of the candidate's qualities (Bazerman & Moore, 2009).

2.6.2.2.2 Availability heuristic

People tend to create judgements regarding certain objects, decisions or events by the degree to which similar objects, decisions or events are readily available in the memory of the person (Bazerman & Moore, 2009). For example, an object which evokes emotions and is specific, vivid and easy-to-imagine by nature will make the object more available in a person's mind. Events which occur more frequently than others will also be more available to us than the other way around (Bazerman & Moore, 2009). Although this heuristic often leads to correct judgements, it also comes with a negative side to it. The fact that the availability heuristic makes us value readily available things higher in decision- and judgement-making, there is a risk that e.g. recruiters and managers favor less relevant decision criteria over more relevant ones in the candidates (Bazerman and Moore, 2009).

2.6.2.2.3 Confirmation bias

Nickerson (1998) defines the confirmation bias as “the tendency to acquire or process new information in a way that confirms one’s preconceptions and avoids contradiction with prior beliefs”. The confirmation bias is a cognitive bias which makes people search for, interpret and recall information selectively depending on what they already believe, or want to believe (Plous, 1993). People tend to search for and interpret information that confirms our hypotheses, theories, values, attitudes, opinions or beliefs, and when encountering such information people usually accept it without greater questioning (Bazerman & Moore, 2009). For example, if a manager has already taken a decision to fire an employee, the confirmation bias implies that the manager would listen more to people bad-mouthing the employee, arguing for how it is the right decision to fire him, than asking for all his good sides and pros. This would then justify the manager’s decision to fire the employee.

2.6.2.2.4 Representativeness heuristic

The representativeness heuristic implies that people make subjective judgements about an individual, object or event, and make decisions based on similarity to stereotypes (Bazerman & Moore, 2009; Baker & Nofsinger, 2011). For example, HR managers predict candidates’ PJ fit based on pre-existing stereotypes, whether it is a conscious choice or not, meaning that if the manager thinks employees that are ex-athletes, white men and extroverts are better at their job, the manager will tend to favor those candidates in recruiting (Bazerman & Moore, 2009). This heuristic leads to systematic misinterpretations and also distortion of human judgement (Tversky & Kahneman, 1983), and representative information tend to mislead people from making accurate judgements, e.g. interviewers rely on imperfect information when determining what they think is extraordinary employee job performance (Bazerman & Moore, 2009).

A subset of the representative heuristic is the similarity heuristic, which is when decision makers use this heuristic to determine if a person, object or event is a member of one category by the degree to which it is similar to other people, objects or events in that category (Read & Grushka-Cockayne, 2011). It could be a person getting symptoms of a disease he or she has had before, immediately causing the person to conclude that he or she has received the same disease again. Also, it could be an HR manager looking at a candidate’s resume or SNW, establishing a belief that the tall and skinny, sporting, non-smoking candidate must be a good fit in the organization because “*I am tall and skinny, I like sporting and I don’t smoke, and I am a good fit in the organization*”. According to research, employers and managers tend to prefer candidates that are similar to themselves in terms of hobbies and interests, even when these traits do not correlate with job performance (Ideal, 2017).

2.6.2.3 Ingratiation and self-promotion

Not only can heuristics and biases affect the recruiters’ opinion and decision, but ingratiation and self-promotion are often used by candidates in interviews to give them a positive effect on the outcome of the interview (Higgs & Judge, 2004). Ingratiation is a tactic used by individuals to increase e.g. the interviewer’s liking of the individual by performing actions such as opinion conformity i.e. changing your opinion in order to fit in. It is often used in a way so that the candidate agrees on opinions expressed by the interviewer, making the recruiter believe that they share similar attitudes and beliefs. This kind of attraction may lead to a positive bias in evaluation of the candidate (Higgs & Judge, 2004). Self-promotion is the way of promoting yourself and your positive characteristics to elicit attributions of competence (Stevens & Kristof, 1995).

2.7 Social media's role in recruiting

The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) has published a research in their report stating that employers increasingly are relying on social media for the recruiting of new employees (SHRM, 2016). The main reason for using social media for this purpose is to take part of the huge amount of information available on the social networking websites (Kluemper & Rosen, 2009). The following section aims to create the necessary understanding of how recruiting and SNWs are interlinked.

2.7.1 Recruiting

Human resource is often seen as one key component to achieve the organizational goals, and it is important to have an effective and efficient process to be able to adapt in a dynamic environment (Khullar & Panday, 2014). The recruitment process is for most companies seen as extensive, time consuming and expensive in monetary terms, and many companies rely on their ability to find the right people through an extensive interview process. Jeske and Shultz (2016) argues that interview situation enables two-way communication like no other recruitment tool does, and therefore simplifies the collection of information regarding the candidates' characteristics and values, i.e. their PO fit (Kristof, 1996). Face-to-face interviews of various forms are the key selection tool for many organizations in order to find new employees (Bazerman & Moore, 2009). Meanwhile, the interviews are often unstructured and research regarding employment interviews as the best way of predicting future job performance have been a recurrent topic of research for many industrial psychologists lately. Schmidt and Hunter (1998) state that job interviews do not work well as many think, and that employment interviews only predict and explain a low percentage of employee performance. The low percentage is due to the difficulty to predict a candidate's job performance with so few assessment tools. Bazerman and More (2009) state that there are assessment tools that predict performance substantially better than unstructured interviews and to a lower cost.

2.7.2 Social networking websites

As previously stated, social media as referred to in this report only includes SNWs whose main content is user-generated, such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. The SNWs is divided into two different types based on their characteristics and purpose: professional SNWs and on-professional SNWs. LinkedIn is categorized as a professional SNW where users provide information about their current and past job positions, their network and KSAs, contributions to professional organizations and projects that they either have been or are involved in. Facebook and Instagram are categorized as non-professional SNWs since the main content published on such websites is personal information, e.g. private photos, private conversations and information regarding events in people's private life (Aguando, Rico, Rubio & Fernandez, 2016). Twitter has a little bit of both sides and is therefore harder to place correctly into one of these categories.

LinkedIn market themselves as *"the world's largest professional network with more than 562 million users in more than 200 countries and territories worldwide"* and their mission is to *"connect the world's professionals to make them more productive and successful"* (LinkedIn, 2018). Bologna (2014) states that LinkedIn has become one of the most important tools for professionals using social media, and Labovich (2014) argues that *"job-seekers without a LinkedIn profile are putting themselves, and their careers, at a severe disadvantage"*. An SHRM report from 2016 published a research stating that 96 per cent of the employers already using social media favor LinkedIn in their recruitment process and 73 per cent of the companies think that LinkedIn is the most effective site for recruitment (SHRM, 2016).

Facebook's mission is to *"Give people the power to build community and bring the world closer together"* (Facebook, 2018). According to the SHRM report from 2016, Facebook is used in 66 per cent of the companies for recruitment purpose and 14 per cent of the companies think that Facebook is an effective site for recruitment (SHRM, 2016). Instagram is used in 7 per cent of the companies and less than 1 per cent of the them think that Instagram is an effective site for recruitment. Twitter market themselves as *"Twitter is what's happening in the world and what people are talking about right now"* (Twitter, 2018). Twitter is used in 53 per cent of the cases and less than 1 per cent of the them think that Instagram is an effective site for recruitment (SHRM, 2016).

2.7.2.1 *Private settings social media*

There may potentially be a mismatch between the purpose for recruiting personnel to use social media in the recruitment process and the actual usage of the data collected from social media (Kluemper & Rosen, 2009). Sensitive and irrelevant information that has no direct connection or relevance to the job might be found by the person searching a candidate's SNWs - information like religiousness, political opinions, race, ethnicity or pregnancy status, which candidates may not be willing to share. Many people are unaware of the opportunity to have privacy settings turned on or how they work, which cause a social media landscape in which lots of candidates keep their details accessible for everyone without knowing that they are open for everyone to see. Vicknai et al. (2010) presents a research from the HR specialist (2010) stating that the three major reasons to reject candidates after social media screening are that they have posted unappropriated photos or information, posted content of themselves drinking or doing drugs, and slander a previous employer or co-worker.

2.7.3 Social recruiting

Due to the drastic change in the social media landscape over the last decade, new recruiting possibilities have come and replaced traditional job ads and added a new way of digital hiring through online portals (Khullar & Panday, 2014). The SHRM has in their report stated that employers increasingly are relying on social media for recruitment of new employees (SHRM, 2016). In a survey from April 2015, SHRM found out that 84 per cent of its members reported that they are using social networking websites in their recruitment process, compared to 56 per cent in 2011. SHRM said its members' main purpose is to look for active and passive candidates, and to market themselves by posting information about their organization (SHRM, 2016).

The phrase "social recruiting" has been used in the recruitment industry for several years. It is defined as "the process of using social media for sourcing, attracting, and initiating contact with candidates in recruitment purpose through sites as LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter" (Kashi et al., 2016; Headworth, 2015). Even though there is a growing recognition of the benefits gained from social recruitment technologies, little research has been devoted to examining this recruitment method's organizational adoption (Roth, 2016). SNWs provide a large amount of information on the candidates - information used to evaluate the fit between the candidate's attitude and personality (Kluemper & Rosen, 2009; Faliagka et al., 2012) on the one hand, and the organizational values, culture and job requirements on the other hand (Kashi, Cheng & Molineux, 2016).

There are several benefits for organizations to adopt SNWs on a functional level, e.g. the possibility to search for potential candidates, to engage in headhunting and specifically target niche skills or defined profiles (Kashi et al., 2016). However, there are not just benefits with social recruiting. Kashi et al. (2016) argues that there needs to be a formal policy and/or standardized process designed for using social media in recruiting, which can guide the HR personnel in how to use social media in order to gain as much benefits as possible. Lack of such a standardized process may lead to that the candidate will be

rejected even though the information found on SNWs is not relevant to the candidates' job-performance (Kashi et al., 2016).

Even though many organizations implement social media in the recruitment process, little theoretical studies have validated the operational use of social media as an assessment tool. Roth et al. (2016) state that organizations should consider avoiding the use of social media during the recruitment phase if it is used in an unstructured way. Adding to the thoughts of Kashi et al. (2016) regarding the lack of formal policies in relation to social media in the recruitment process, Roth et al. (2016) state that an unstructured use may lead to reliability problems and lack of consistency in the final evaluation process. Singh and Sharma (2014) conclude that recruiters today do not have to abandon the traditional process of hiring but rather broaden it and use as an effective screening tool. They continue by stating that successful recruitment today should be a combination of traditional methods and a screening of SNWs in order to gain efficiency (Singh & Sharma, 2014).

Due to the lack of discrete and formal policies in relation to the use of social media as an assessment tool, it is hard for recruiters to evaluate the credibility of the information available at SNWs. The lack of validity track record is partly why Roth et al. (2016) do not recommend the use of social media as an assessment tool at this point in time and they continue by arguing that it is hard to evaluate job-related KSAs for candidates because of the fact that SNWs' primary purpose is to facilitate social interaction. The information found on SNWs differs a lot between different candidates, which causes complexity for the recruiters to evaluate a standardized checklist. Further studies regarding SNWs' reliability and validity as an assessment tool should be conducted in order for it to be considered as a legit tool in screening candidates (Roth et al., 2016). Presented below is a short introduction to the most common social media platforms that are referred to in this report. Also, a short introduction to how they see themselves and how they compete.

3 Methodology

This chapter presents the execution of the research, and the objective of this chapter is to describe and discuss the research strategy, approach and design that have been applied for this research. In addition, an evaluation of the process is laid out as well as the methods used to enhance the quality. The methodology is split into three parts: research strategy, research approach and research design. These different aspects of the methodology are further described in the three upcoming sections.

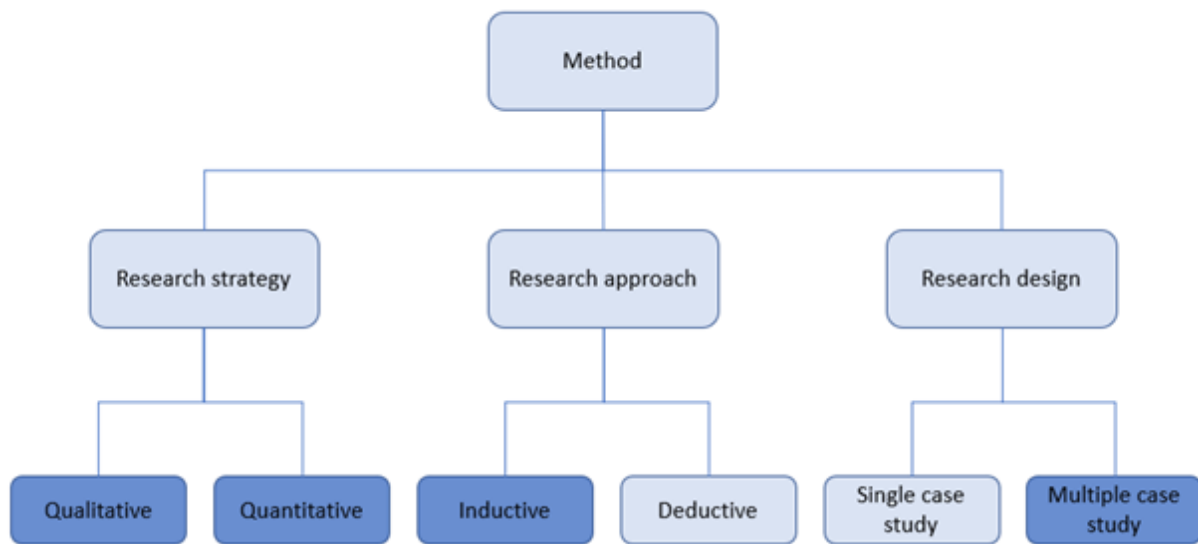


FIGURE B. A breakdown of the method used in this research

3.1 Research strategy

In order to answer the research questions, it is necessary to design a research strategy that suits the purpose, and it is essential for the research that all collected data is critically analyzed (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2015). Thus, the research strategy must include methods and tools that are relevant in order to accomplish the research. Furthermore, it is important to highlight the reliability and validity of the data collected through interviews, surveys and secondary sources (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015).

The initial part of the research strategy for this research included the gathering of information about the MCFs' through their websites and by contacting them via email and phone. During the same early phase, a literature study was initiated in order to understand the concept of social media in relation to recruiting. This initial research also contributed to a great part of the theoretical framework which was revised continuously throughout the research. Thereafter, the research questions were decided and a survey for IEM students were created and sent out to the IEM students in Sweden. The results of the survey and the literature on social media in relation to recruiting set the scope for the interview questions.

The results from the primary data collected through surveys and interviews were deeply analyzed and discussed to identify the most important results. The research questions were first discussed, and then answered in the conclusion.

3.2 Research approach

The research approach depends on the type of studies that will be conducted. It is quite clear that a qualitative approach is more suitable in order to answer the research questions, since this research is

focusing on attitudes toward student exposure on social media. Interviewing employees directly involved in the MCFs' recruiting enabled an enhanced understanding of the MCFs' attitudes on students' exposure on social media. However, quantitative methods are also used in this research to collect data from students regarding their exposure on social media, i.e. how they use it, and which are their preferred options in terms of different SNWs.

There are mainly two different theories regarding the relationship between research and theory: inductive and deductive theory. The difference between the two is whether the data is collected to test theories or to build theories (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015). Inductive reasoning makes broad generalizations from specific observations while deductive reasoning is a basic form of valid reasoning which means that it starts out with a general statement, or hypothesis and then examines the opportunities to reach a logical conclusion (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015). This research is conducted with an inductive reasoning approach, which is a better approach for research with a qualitative strategy.

3.3 Research design

A case study is according to Bryman and Bell (2015) either seen as a single case study or a multiple case study. Furthermore, they also state that the number of case study objects should be limited to one if the research is focused on one organization (Bryman & Bell, 2015). On the other hand, a case study with more than one object is called a multiple case study if each case (1) is analyzed separately, and then (2) put together as one whole case in order to explore patterns of similarities or differences (Bryman & Bell, 2015). This research involves interviews with more than one organization or source, and all interviews are analyzed separately and as a whole, which makes it a multiple case study research.

3.4 Research process

This section presents how the research was conducted and the research process, laid out in detail in the upcoming sections. A literature study was done to get a deeper knowledge about the area and a case study was chosen, and empirical data was collected through online surveys with IEM students and interviews with MCFs. The results were processed and analyzed, leading up to a final discussion and conclusions.

3.4.1 Initiator of the study

The research is conducted on our own initiative to identify, analyze and map the MCFs' attitudes in relation to candidates' social media exposure. The research has no sponsors. The topic and work process are decided on after continuous dialogue between the authors and the supervisor Erik Bohlin. The research began by creating the scope and narrow it down to a purpose.

3.4.2 Literature study

After the initial purpose was set, a literature study was conducted to gain deeper insight in the research topic, and to create awareness regarding definitions and concepts associated with the research area. According to Backman (2016), a literature study should give the researcher an overview of existing research within the subject. The literature study created further understanding of the subject and set the basis for the research questions, the design of the study, the design of the interview guide as well as the survey. Most of the literature was found via Chalmers library's search function online or by using Google Scholar. The main sources used in the report are written articles, but also a few books retrieved from Chalmers library were used. The articles' summaries were first studied in order to see if they were relevant for the research. After that, an evaluation of the source's reliability was made, and the selected

articles were compiled to create an overview of its context. The literature study set the content for the student survey and interview questions.

3.4.3 Empirical data collection

Research regarding data collection through online surveys and interviews was an ongoing process during the time of the literature study. Ghauri and Grønhaug (2005) state that there are two specific types of data: the data is either primary or secondary. Easterby-Smith et al. (2015) describes primary data as information that the researcher gathers on his own, as in this case through interviews and surveys, whereas secondary data refers to data such as documents and literature collected by other institutes or researchers (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015). This research is mainly based on primary data collected through interviews and surveys, with additional secondary data presented in the theoretical framework.

3.4.3.1 *Data collection methods*

Easterby-Smith et al. (2015) state that there are two common types of research methods which are normally used when collecting data, being the quantitative and qualitative methods. This research gathered quantitative data from online surveys and qualitative data through interviews and these different research methods is described in the following sections.

3.4.3.1.1 Qualitative data

The qualitative methods consist of three sources: collecting data through surveys, using secondary data sources and collecting data through observations (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015). The most common types of qualitative data used in research are interviews recordings and transcripts, images, videos, documents and written notes of observations. Qualitative data can be defined by their non-numeric form and by the explanatory and interactive process in which they are created (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015). According to Bryman and Bell (2015) qualitative research is good approach for research in business and management administration. When the primary aim is to learn about perceptions and attitudes, interviews are the most appropriate strategy (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015).

There are different types of qualitative interviewing; unstructured, semi-structured and structured interviewing. An unstructured interview might start the conversation with a question and then the interviewer listens to the respondents who answers it freely, while a semi-structured interview follows a more structured schedule of topics and questions that the interviewer wishes to cover during the session (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The main advantage with a semi-structured interview in this case is that the different interviews are similar at the same time, but it gives a degree of flexibility to the respondent in how to reply. The interviewer is allowed to depart from any schedule that is being utilized when new questions and topics may arise during the interview (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Structured interviews are highly monitored, and the answers are often seen as quantitative data rather than qualitative (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

3.4.3.1.2 Quantitative data

Quantitative studies are primarily based on mathematics and statistics and the data collected is transformed into numbers which are empirically tested to find if there are any relationships to be found, and also if it is possible to draw conclusions from the results gained (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015). So, whereas qualitative research handles soft values such as opinions, quantitative research generally consists of hard values such as numbers (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

3.4.3.2 Surveys

Primary quantitative data was gathered through a survey conducted in the beginning of the study, which brought clarity to the IEM students' social media behavior as well as their attitudes and expectations on recruiters' use of social media. The purpose was mainly to get some valuable information before conducting the interviews with MCFs. This research used a self-completion questionnaire with Likert scales between one and five which make the data easier to quantify (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015). The scale is balanced on both sides of a neutral option, which creates a less biased measurement compared to unbalanced scales (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015). The survey was web-based, and it had the advantage that there was low cost per respondents compared to face-to-face methods as interviews. The negative side with this type of data collection is the low percentage of respondents' rate (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015).

3.4.3.3 Interviews

The primary data is primarily based on data from eleven interviews performed with MCFs and from a web-based survey with 236 answering students from IEM programs at Chalmers (Gothenburg), KTH (Stockholm), Lund, Linköping and Luleå. The interviews held with employees directly involved in recruiting at the MCFs were of semi-structured character and conducted both in person and over phone.

3.3.3.4.1 Respondents selection

The eleven respondents were interviewed due to their knowledge in their organizations' recruitment process but were not specifically chosen by the authors. Instead, the MCFs were free to choose whomever they felt were the most suitable to be interviewed in relation to their recruiting. Table 3.1 below gives an overview of the participating companies and the title of the respondent. All companies are given anonymity and are therefore referred to as company A-L.

Code	Description	Title
A	Management consultancy firm, Gothenburg	Partner
B	Management consultancy firm, Stockholm	Consultant
C	Management consultancy firm, Gothenburg	Manager
D	Management consultancy firm, Stockholm	HR Manager and Consultant
E	Management consultancy firm, Gothenburg	Manager
F	Management consultancy firm, Gothenburg	HR Manager
G	Management consultancy firm, Gothenburg	Manager
H	Management consultancy firm, Stockholm	Consultant

I	Management consultancy firm, Malmö	Consultant
J	Management consultancy firm, Gothenburg	HR Partner
K	Management consultancy firm, Stockholm	Consultant

TABLE A. participating management consultancy firms and title of the respondent.

3.4.3.3.1 Interview guide

The interview guide is composed in a semi-structured manner, and main reason for choosing the semi-structured interview technique is to encourage the respondents to discuss freely about their own opinion regarding student exposure to social media. This interview method allowed for the researchers to adjust the schedule and questions depending on the different firms, position of the respondent, recruitment methods used, and other types of situations faced during the sessions. Semi-structured interviews offer the opportunity to change the order of questions and to give the respondents the possibility to expand ideas and target diverse subjects along the interview (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The interview guide with the questions will be distributed in appendix.

3.4.4 Data analysis

All interviews were recorded and then transcribed so that the transcribed interviews could be read and therefore simplify data collection and analysis. Thereafter, the transcribed interviews were coded, and comparable information from different interviews were categorized into relevant topics which Easterby-Smith et al. (2015) claims is important when analyzing data from qualitative interviews. The data was placed in pre-designed categories or became a new category in a separate document containing all quotes organized under different headlines, which enabled analysis of the data.

3.5 Research quality

Many scholars have criticized the qualitative approach to research as it is seen as too subjective, hard to generalize, difficult to replicate and that there is great lack of transparency (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The criticism comes from subjective perception of what is important for different researchers and they find it hard to know what has been done to obtain the results which makes it hard to replicate (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Replicability in research refers to the possibility of replicating someone else's research or results to establish its validity (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Due to the aim, uniqueness and time limit of this research it is hard to validate the results by replicability. Regarding the ethical aspects of this research, anonymity has been held to all participants and the collected raw data have been treated carefully with high confidentiality and will be destroyed afterwards.

Bryman and Bell (2015) highlight validity and reliability as two very important concepts to take into consideration when conducting a qualitative research since they help to determine the objectivity of the research. The two concepts illustrate the level of trustworthiness and credibility of a research study and Bryman and Bell separate them into two different categories: external and internal. Internal reliability evaluates the consistency of results across items within a test which means how well a survey or test measures the right thing. External reliability refers to how much a measure varies from one use to another use. It is often difficult to achieve high external reliability since the rules may change from the time of the original research and the time of the next one (Bryman & Bell, 2015). To achieve high

reliability in this research, this chapter contains a detailed description on the process of collecting data as well as how the interviews were conducted.

Validity is to which degree the research findings provide accurate representation of the things they are supposed to describe. Internal validity means to what degree the researchers internally agree upon the same thing and come to the same conclusions based on their observations and theoretical thoughts (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Basically, do they interpret the empirical data and the theoretical data in the same way. External validity refers to how well theories and data from one setting apply to another one. A tell-show was used in the empirical data to allow the reader to determine the accuracy of the data found. This will also increase the transparency of the research and especially the conclusions, hence if the results are true which is referred to as the internal validity (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015). All transcriptions will be written in Swedish due to that the interview language is Swedish and won't be a part of the report due to confidentiality. The fact that the interviews were held in Swedish may have led to some minor translation mistake or that some sentences were incorrectly interpreted.

4 Empirical data

The following chapter presents the empirical material extracted from eleven different employees at eleven separate management consultancy firms. The chapter aims to give an understanding to the MCFs' attitudes on social media in a recruitment context and how candidates' social media exposure influences their hireability in the eyes of the respondents (and thus the MCFs). The data presented in the chapter is based upon interviews with the above-mentioned employees. These employees, hereafter referred to as "respondents", have different roles and titles, but all of them are directly involved in HR questions and recruiting at their respective firms.

4.1 Respondents on social media evolution

The fact that people now live in the era of digitization finds support in the fact that not only all respondents are active users on social media, but also all of the MCFs are present at least one social networking website. There is a common notion amongst the respondents that being a part of the social media community adds value in people's lives - both privately and professionally - but what that value consists of and how it is perceived differs depending on several factors. Generally, the opinion about social media is that (1) it has become a major part of both work- and private life, and (2) its purpose has slightly changed and continues to do so. Going back ten years in time, showing presence at any sort of social networking website was not a necessity for firms. In 2007, LinkedIn still had not reached 15 million users and Facebook was not, with its 58 million monthly users, the institution it has become today. However, times have changed and ignoring social media as a valuable business tool today is not even an option if a firm's intention is to be sustainable competitive, according to the respondents. Quoting one of the respondents: *"I think of it this way- if you are not on social media today, do you even exist?"*.

When allowed to speculate freely on the purpose of social media, and how it has changed, the respondents all agree on one thing - the gradual shift from being a means for communication between private individuals towards being more of a market just like any other. SNWs are now a natural habitat for advertisers, and they provide endless opportunities for firms to market themselves. The stream of content has gone from being of mostly private character, to be a mixture of job ads, news, influencers, humoristic videos and traditional advertising. Even if this is still to be considered information sharing, the information being shared has changed in character and widened the purpose of SNWs.

4.2 Respondents on organizational social media exposure

The evolution of social media has changed the way people look at communication and information sharing, and even though there are lots of drawbacks with digitization and social media, there seems to be a predominate positivism amongst the respondents, in relation to the social media movement. All of the respondents outlined how they think social media has revolutionized the employer-employee interplay. As of today, social media is an unmatched tool when it comes to employer branding and creating awareness amongst potential employees. To the MCFs, posting content on social media is a valuable complement to business events, fairs and physical posters inside university buildings in terms of creating awareness of the company brand. However, whereas brand awareness is simplified by social media, i.e. making people aware of the MCFs' presence on the market, several of the respondents highlight employer branding as the main and most important reason to being on social media, i.e. creating the notion of the MCFs being attractive employers to work for in several aspects. The motivation given is that it is not only about getting the exposure and create awareness, but also to show transparency. In creating transparency *"we can display to the clients and potential employees not only what type of firm we are, but also what we stand for, what we do and how great we are at doing it"*.

One of the respondents explains the employer branding side of social media as a means to create favoritism towards their firm amongst the potential employees, saying *“if the candidates acknowledges us as a transparent employer who takes care of its employees and makes them have fun and learn new stuff all the time, the candidates will spread the word of us as an attractive firm to be at regardless of whether they have ever met with us”*. The transparency speaks more directly to a candidate’s expectations about the culture at the firm than the work characteristics and, as several of the respondents point out, being seen as an employer who values relationships and team spirit is important. Another respondent further emphasizes social media transparency as a valuable tool in employer branding by stating that it *“establishes relations with e.g. students and applicants without us even having to meet first”*. The respondent elaborates by arguing that the social media activity and transparency make the candidates feel as they are already involved with the firm in some sense, and that this lowers the doorstep for candidates to reach out and make contact (both in terms of asking questions and applying for job).

Therefore, it is no overstatement when saying that social media has become a display window for the MCFs. With, in some cases, well-developed social media strategies they have great influence over candidates’ perspective of the firms’ attractiveness as an employer. Most respondents are very aware of this fact and stresses the likeliness that benefits to be gained by using social media will be even greater going forward. This being said, not everyone highlights the employer branding aspect of social media exposure; less than half of the respondents use words like employer branding and transparency. Instead, there seems to be more emphasis put on the traditional marketing aspect of social media exposure, with “traditional marketing” meaning to find new clients and having them find you, to create awareness amongst students and graduates, as well as to create brand awareness in general.

From a brand awareness perspective and in an information sharing context, respondents struggle to find any real drawbacks with firms being present in social media. One respondent brought up the fact that being present but not active on social media may create a negative attitude towards the firm, arguing that *“when I applied for a job some years ago, me and my friends found it unprofessional if a firm was not active on social media”*. This is a purely speculative statement from the respondent, built upon own experiences when being in a job application process, but something the respondent and its former classmates obviously actively discussed.

4.3 Respondents on professional and non-professional social networking websites

The respondents are in consensus on the need to separate professional SNWs (e.g. LinkedIn) from non-professional SNWs (e.g. Facebook and Instagram). Although the different SNWs all consist of communicating and information sharing, and therefore also have the potential to fulfill the same purpose, they should be separated by their characteristics and practical purpose. Starting with the non-professional SNWs, the respondents argue that websites such as Facebook and Instagram are great platforms for awareness purposes. People today, including IEM students, show activity on these websites several times every day and thus, the companies can reach out to numerous of people in their target group with just one simple post. Such a post contains information usually regarding internships, events, company activities and application dates, according to the respondents. Several MCFs use their Facebook profile in order to gain attention and then, via hyperlinks and such, people to the MCFs’ websites, i.e. using SNWs in redirection purposes. As mentioned in a previous section, some firms also have well-established employer branding strategies, consisting of outspoken approaches on how to navigate non-professional SNWs and use them for employer branding purposes.

The other category - professional SNWs - contains LinkedIn and, according to the respondents, close to nothing else. Some other professional SNWs were mentioned during the interviews, but only very briefly

and as something not even remotely comparable to LinkedIn. Listening to the respondents, LinkedIn has seemingly become an institution in the social media landscape. All respondents were on LinkedIn (although with varying frequency) and all the firms use it to some degree in their recruiting, something that will be further elaborated on in a later section. Two words are used more frequently than others during the interviews: network and resume. Using existing networks on LinkedIn is a preferred method amongst the firms in order to both reach out to existing clients as well as to market themselves to potential clients. LinkedIn provides possibilities beyond those of non-professional SNWs; its capability in helping the respondents finding the right contacts, knowing who to reach out to and where to direct the marketing efforts is unmatched, state the respondents. They also appreciate the simplicity of the website in this regard and one HR manager admits to “*spending several hours a day on LinkedIn in business purposes*”. Presented in table D is the different respondents’ attitudes on professional and non-professional media.

4.4 Respondents on PE fit in relation to recruiting

Regardless the use of social media, recruiters and firms have different ways of determining the PE fit for the candidates applying for a job or an internship. The firms use tools like logic tests and mathematical tasks to test the candidates’ intelligence, case-based tasks to solve alone or in groups with other applicants to test the candidates’ ability to tackle problems under stressful conditions, and interviews to evaluate the candidates’ social abilities and core values. All these tests and tasks prove the importance for the firms to not only find the right skills, but also the right fit, which corresponds with the common view of the respondents. The following two sections describe the respondents’ view on PE fit.

4.4.1 Respondents on PJ fit

The PJ fit is by no means downplayed by the respondents, but they did not spend as much time talking about it than they did talking about “values”, “culture” and PO fit. The importance of PJ fit cannot be disregarded though, since the initial step of every firm’s recruitment process is designed solely with the purpose of determining the level of PJ fit of the candidates, i.e. evaluating their KSAs. Without extrapolating on who is feeding who, the MCFs have a clear understanding of where to look for talent and potential employees. When they were asked about what programme was the most common by new employees, eight out of eleven answered Industrial Engineering and Management (IEM) whereof two reportedly hired “exclusively” from IEM. One of the respondents, with many years of experience in recruiting, said “*IEM students are generalists. Their knowledge and skills span over several dimensions and they are usually very competent*”.

Although several of the respondents point out that grades are not a vital part of an applicant’s resume, the majority of them admits to putting some level of emphasis on the grades when screening candidates. Other merits - having a hobby aside from school, playing a sport, work-life experience or whatever it may be - are also considered KSAs and part of the PJ fit evaluation, according to the respondents. The common notion amongst the them, however, is that the other merits may be of equal or more value to a candidate’s PJ fit than grades. Apart from the initial resume scanning in relation to PJ fit, all MCFs except one has either case-based tests or logic tests incorporated in their recruitment process, or both. The case-based tests and tasks are especially important for the firms, forcing the candidates to prove their capabilities in problem solving. Without wasting too much breath on the PJ fit, the respondents’ information tells enough to state the vital importance of finding the right KSAs in candidates.

4.4.2 Respondents on PO fit

If PJ fit means finding the right KSAs in candidates, PO fit is more about finding KSAs in the right candidates. The respondents spent significant time talking about the importance of finding the candidates who fit in, who have suitable characteristics, who are team players and who share the same core values as the firm. Although just a few of the respondents refer to their firms as “values-based organizations”, almost everyone speaks in terms of “core values”, “inherent culture” and “characteristics needed to work here” and the importance of these factors.

They dedicate time and resources to try and find the candidates with high PO fit. This often includes the candidate to be interviewed by between two and five different employees at the firm. Not seldomly, these interviews involve employees from different functions and positions in the firm hierarchy, and in most cases a partner or president takes part in the process as well. *“We create a profile which describes what type of person we want the applicant to be - both in terms of experience and personality”* one respondent from organization A. Another pointed out the importance of managing the recruiting in-house by saying *“it is hard to explain to someone else what type of person we want at our firm - who will fit in and who will not”*, continuing by stating *“we believe that we are the only people capable of knowing this”*. A third argued that *“our culture at the firm is present in everything we do and is a huge success factor for us, which of course makes our values extremely important in our recruitment process”*. Common for everyone is the notion that it is not easy to determine a candidate’s PO fit, although very important, and thus significant resources are allocated to this purpose.

4.5 Respondents on social networking websites’ role in recruiting

All components of the recruitment process - resume screening, tasks, tests and interviews - fit into one sole purpose: gathering information about the candidates. All respondents speak about “information” and “information gathering”, and all but one firm use social media (in some form) as a tool in their recruitment. The one firm stating that they do not use social media in recruitment purposes also state that they have a formal policy prohibiting them from doing so, but also admits to informal usage by saying *“the formal policy is that we do not look at a candidate’s LinkedIn profile since all decisions should be based upon the information the candidate put into his or her application, although I know that employees sometimes, and out of pure self-interest, look up the person online”*. Although this one firm’s formal opinion is not to use either professional or non-professional SNWs, answers point towards the notion that all firms, to some degree, use social media in their recruitment process, especially professional SNWs such as LinkedIn. In addition to this, the majority of all respondents think that other MCFs use social media in their recruiting.

4.5.1 Respondents on professional SNWs

Regarding the professional SNWs, the respondents show a high level of concurrence. Their attitude towards e.g. LinkedIn, which has been outlined in a previous chapter, establish a reality in which professional SNWs have great influence in recruiting. This type of social media is designed for professional purposes and therefore a legit source for information-gathering, according to the respondents. *“The candidates know the purpose of being on LinkedIn and they choose themselves how much information they want to reveal”* one respondent said, making the comparison to a physical resume. The respondents think LinkedIn is such a natural part of today’s social media landscape that they expect candidates to be active participants and have updated, polished profiles. Professional SNWs and especially LinkedIn provide information which is hard to collect in any other way, such as the candidate’s relationships with other professionals and the character of his or her network, which makes LinkedIn a very useful complement to other sources for information. Several respondents highlight the

importance of having a relevant and professional LinkedIn page, just because of the fact that it is a golden opportunity to show what you have done and whom you may be interlinked with through networks. More elaboration on how candidates' social media exposure affects their hireability will be conducted in a following chapter.

4.5.2 Respondents on non-professional SNWs

The respondents' attitude towards the non-professional SNWs as a source for information in a recruitment context is more ambivalent. They are very aware of the fact that, as much as this question relates to information gathering just like with the professional SNWs, it also relates to personal integrity, moral standards and private information. Some respondents state they use any type of social media to gather information, one arguing that *"all information we can get about the candidates is valuable to us"*. These respondents reportedly tend to start with googling the candidate's name and then see where that may lead them, i.e. there is no formal policy telling them where to look and what to look for. One of the advocates of using non-professional SNWs as information source said, *"what they [the candidates] decide to publish publicly is their choice - we try to create a total impression of the candidates and all information we can get our hands on add to that impression"*. Another admits to having searched a candidates' social media profiles from time to time - not from a scanning perspective, but because some questions did arise during interviews. The same person continues by stating *"really, it did not affect the recruiting since I had already made up my mind regarding these candidates"*. Additionally, there is nothing in the MCFs' formal recruitment process saying they must or must not scan social media (neither professional SNWs nor non-professional SNWs) for information.

The other respondents, well in majority over the above-mentioned advocates, all state that they do not use non-professional SNWs at all in recruitment purposes. One respondent said she does not scan candidates' Facebook or Instagram profiles, arguing that *"it is too private, and people must be allowed some personal integrity and privacy"*. Further, another respondent stated that the firm has no interest in what candidates post on non-professional SNWs and continued by saying that it is *"their headache, not ours"*. *"LinkedIn is work, Facebook is play"* are words from a third respondent in this category. However, these respondents tend to agree that non-professional SNWs can provide information regarding a person's characteristics and PO fit, even though they actively stay away from these websites. Although the majority of the respondents in this category do not want scanning of non-professional SNWs to be included in the recruitment process, a few of them embrace the possibility of doing so.

The more negative part of the respondents (about half of all respondents), i.e. those who (a) do not use non-professional SNWs as a recruitment tool and (b) do not want them to be either, explained their standpoint by using words like "ethics", "morality", "moral compass", "personal integrity", "privacy" and "irrelevant". In simpler words, digging into people's non-professional SNWs intrudes on their privacy and stands in direct conflict with the respondents' basic values. The same respondents were later in the interview asked a question relating to their attitude in this matter. The question was if and how the respondent would react if, in e.g. the coffee room, someone amongst the employees explained that he or she had just scanned a candidate's Facebook profile and found compromising content. Only one of the respondents commented on the employee's decision to scan the candidate's Facebook profile, saying it was wrongfully acted by this specific employee in the first place. All the other respondents focused on the disturbing content, either asking what was found, why he or she was looking for it or stating it was a good thing the disturbing content was revealed before hiring the person.

4.6 Respondents on social media exposure in relation to candidates' hireability

On the question whether candidates should be considering what they publish on social media in relation to their hireability, nine out of eleven respondents answered "yes". The common notion is then that candidates' published content affects their hireability to some degree - either positively or negatively. First instinct amongst the respondents suggests that social media content is more likely to harm the candidate rather than the opposite from a recruitment perspective. This is embodied by quotes like "*i think candidates could feel comfortable as long as they do not post things that oppose common, societal norms*" and "*I do not put any emphasis on the content if it does not violate any of our firm's core values*". Presented below are some of the factors affecting candidates' hireability in terms of social media exposure.

4.6.1 Respondents on candidates' exposure on LinkedIn

Most of the candidates being recruited to MCFs are so while still studying, often during the final year of their education. Being such a candidate without having a presence on LinkedIn appears strange to the respondents. One of them states that LinkedIn is the biggest and most relevant recruitment tool and another states that "*if you as a student is searching for jobs at firms like our and does not have a LinkedIn profile, it is almost as if you do not exist at all*". A second respondent says a candidate's absence on LinkedIn cause questions like "*why?*" and "*how are you supposed to network with people?*".

The general opinion amongst the respondents suggests that the candidate's activity on the website and the candidate's network are two factors affecting the candidate's attractiveness to the firms. The network stands out as one of the most influential factor in the eyes of the respondents, both in terms of the number of contacts and how they are interlinked. "*The network is the number one priority - it is extremely valuable*" says one respondent, getting support from another stating that "*hiring a person with a valuable network means adding that network to the firm*". Also, factors like how well the LinkedIn profile matches the physical resume, what recommendations the candidate has gotten and what type of content the candidate engages in affect the hireability. Further, an outstanding and polished LinkedIn profile is better than the opposite, but at the same time, answers suggest that the respondents rather expect the profiles to be well-made.

4.6.2 Respondents on candidates' exposure of party pictures

When asked about what type of content the respondents think worries the candidates themselves, the vast majority answers, "extremist opinions" and "embarrassing party pictures". We will come back to the former, but starting with the latter, the respondents all downplay the importance of such pictures. However, one respondent admits to having rejected one candidate due to the profile picture on the candidate's Facebook profile. According to this respondent, "*the picture suggested that he was not a good fit for us*". Aside from this example, several of the respondents propose that party pictures show a perfectly normal part of students' and candidates' lives, and that posting such pictures should worry the candidates.

4.6.3 Respondents on extremism and radical political opinions

Quite intuitively, all respondents dissociate themselves and their firm from any sort of extremism and radical opinions such as racism and anti-feminism. "*We cannot have co-workers who does not support equality between genders or race. That is so far away from our values that it just wouldn't work*" as one respondent simply put it. They use different words, but the underlying opinion is that that being part of any group or party expressing racism or sexism has no benefits at all. One respondent said, "*racist statements on e.g. Twitter or Facebook eliminate the candidate as a possible hire*".

4.6.4 Respondents on candidates' transparency and openness on non-professional SNWs

The respondents are unified in the notion that a hidden profile on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter does not imply that the candidate wants to hide something. Instead, over half of the respondents spontaneously proposed rather the opposite and said that a student or candidate using full privacy settings could be seen as a sign of integrity and the appreciation of privacy. No one of the respondents argued that a hidden profile would imply any sort of negative behavior.

4.7 Student survey

The survey was published in two Facebook groups - "I-sektionen Chalmers" which includes students and graduates from IEM at Chalmers, and "I-Sverige" which includes students and graduates from IEM programs all over Sweden - and also in e-mail dispatches going to IEM students at Chalmers. Of those who answered the survey has 16,9 per cent already graduated. About one third of the surveyed are women. Presented below is information regarding IEM students' approach to the MCFs, social media behavior and social media's role in recruiting.

4.7.1 IEM students' interest in MCFs

Relating to IEM students' interest in the management consultancy business and working therein, only 13,6 per cent of the surveyed answered "no" on the question "are you interested in working as a management consultant?" - the rest either answered "yes" or "maybe". Also, of those surveyed who are still in school, 82,4 per cent answered 3 or higher (on a Likert scale 1 to 5, where 1 is "not likely at all" and 5 is "very likely") of how likely it is for them to apply for a management consultancy job when they graduate. As shown in the answers from recruiters working for the MCFs, the interest goes both ways and IEM students are of great interest to the MCFs.

4.7.2 IEM students' social media presence and behavior

The three most popular non-professional SNWs amongst the surveyed students are Facebook (99,2 % are registered users), Snapchat (90,3 %) and Instagram (86,0 %). Twitter, which in several aspects is a hybrid between a non-professional SNW and a professional SNW, is less common amongst the surveyed (52,1 %), whereas 83,1 per cent have an account at the major professional SNW LinkedIn. However, when looking only to the master students and graduates, that number increases to 91,4 per cent.

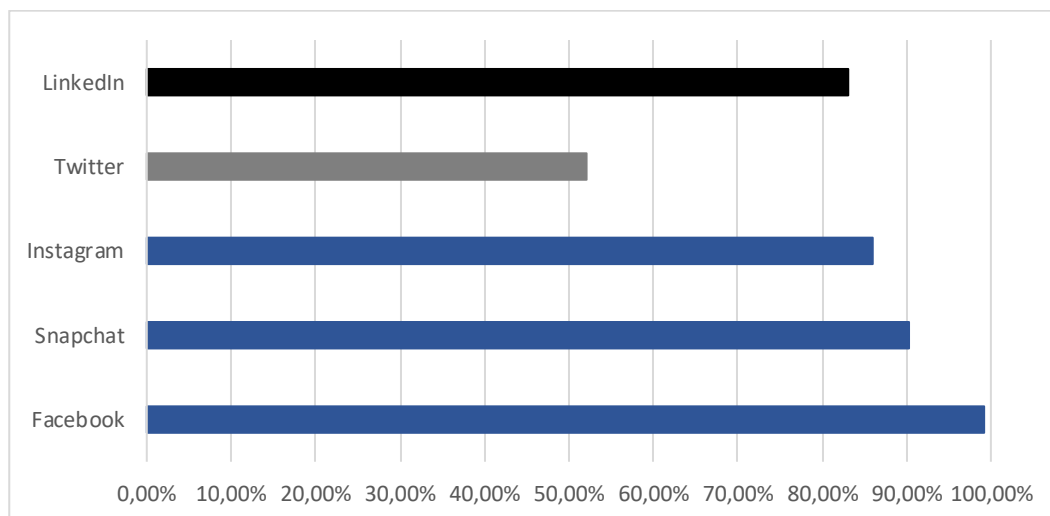


FIGURE C. IEM students' social media presence percentage

Although 50,4 per cent of the surveyed think they spend “too much time” on social media, not that many actively publish content on their SNWs. When asked to answer what alternative best fits in on the survey respondent, 11 per cent state that they never post anything at all, 43,6 per cent say they only post content a few times per year, and 25,8 per cent answered, “once a month”. Only 9,7 per cent state that they post material to their SNWs once a week or more. 27,5 per cent of the surveyed answered “yes” when asked if they have posted anything on social media that they do not want a recruiter to see - 15,7 per cent were unsure. Meanwhile, a question in the survey asked the surveyed to answer to a statement saying, “I have full knowledge about who are able to see what is publish on my SNWs”, and 30,6 per cent answered either 1 or 2 on the 5-point Likert scale, where 1 is “do not agree at all” and 5 is “agree completely”. In relation to this, 52,5 per cent state that they have a private profile on Instagram and 77,6 per cent say they have either a partly or completely private profile on Facebook.

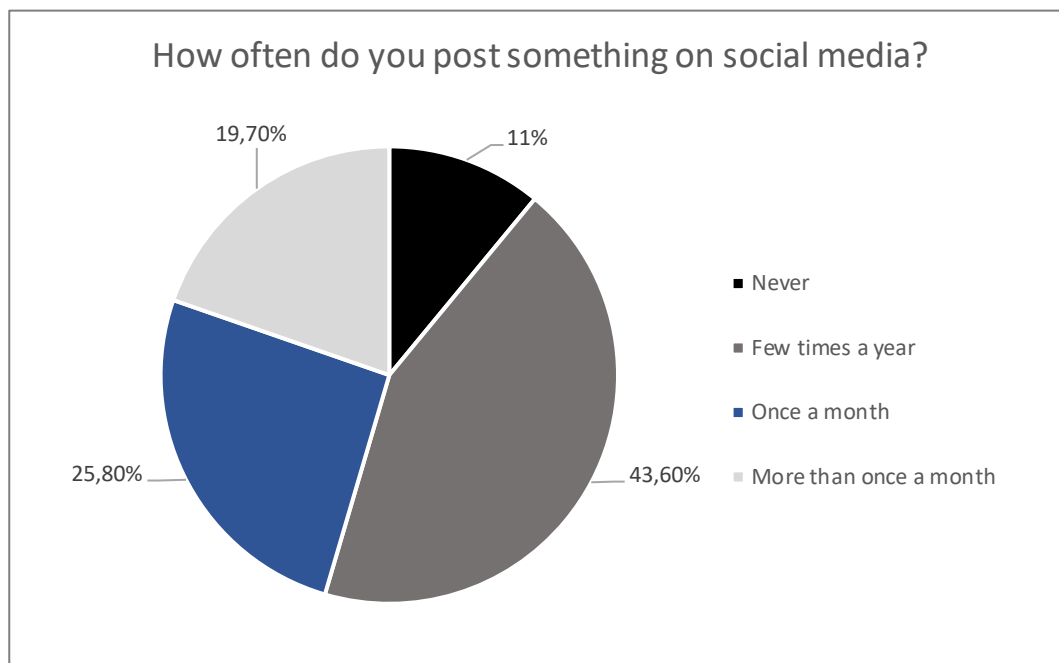


FIGURE D. IEM students’ social media activity

4.7.3 IEM students’ attitude on social media’s role in recruiting

The vast majority of the surveyed doesn’t to spend very much time reflecting over how their social media exposure can affect future job life. However, many of them admit that their current or future contacts with organizations in application purposes influence how they expose themselves in social media. 66,5 per cent of the surveyed believe that an IEM students’ exposure on social media affect their future hireability at a MCFs, and answers show that the surveyed think social media exposure is more likely to decrease hireability than the opposite. Once again using the 5-point Likert scale (where 1 is “do not agree at all” and 5 is “agree completely”), 52,2 per cent answered either 4 or 5 on the statement “Through their exposure on social media, IEM students can increase their chances to employment at an MCF”. When posing the same thing but instead switching “increase” to “lower”, 73 per cent either answered 4 or 5. Despite this, few agree that it should have any essential importance for IEM students’ hireability. Also, only 21,2 per cent of the surveyed believe that recruiters at the MCFs have the right to take part of the applicant’s social media content. When instead the surveyed answered to whether the recruiters should have the right to ask if they could take part of the applicant’s social media content, still less than 50 per cent answered “yes” (46,2 %).

4.8 Attitudes and quotes

Presented below are the respondents' quotes and attitudes in relation to the key areas of the empirical findings.

Org.	Attitudes regarding values, norms and culture
A	It is very important for us. We have found it difficult to explain to someone else what kind of people we are looking for. As for the personality, someone that we believe fits here but do not have the right skills for being a perfect management consultant yet. We will employ such a person and let him/her grow and evolve in our company. We cannot pick too many, and we must be selective with whom we pick.
B	It is important for us. We usually meet students at events in order to get to know them, but also test them with cases and thinking / reasoning tasks. I do not want to go into exactly what we are looking for, but the candidate must fit in, it is very important for us.
C	It is important to meet the basic requirements, but it is even more important to fit our company's values.
D	Values are important to us; a strong resume can of course make you stand out but it is very important to fit in here.
E	It is important to fit our values, person-organization fit is important for us.
F	Personality is most important for us and we are good at finding the right people. It is important that you want to work here, that you are good at handling customers and that you have been involved in activities outside the studies.
G	We have professional stands, some kind of framework with different standard which are formal, how to fit in and what you can do and cannot do. It is highly important to us that you fit our norms and values. We have a strong international culture here.
H	We are quite clear with our values and standards and they are important for us in our business.
I	We believe in clear communication regarding our values and what we stand for. In other words, our culture is superstrong here.
J	We have a few written values that we communicate internally. Their main purpose is to clarify how we should behave against each other within the company and together with customers. We want to find the people with the right personality for us.
K	We have some building blocks e.g. values that we are working with. Leadership and courage are very important for us. When a candidate has met our screening requirements, we are completely focusing on the person to fit with our organization, and with our values.

TABLE B. MCFs' attitudes regarding values, norms and culture.

1	Applying with their resume, personal letter and grades.
2	Doing either a logical test or a mathematical test, or both.
3	Being interviewed by one or more recruiters and junior consultants.
4	Being evaluated during an assessment day with the firm consisting of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a case-based interview (or test) and, • an interview with one or more consultants at the firm.
5	Doing one or more interviews with senior consultants/executives at the firm.
6	Doing one or more interviews with one or more executives/partners at the firm.
7	Being either rejected or employed.

TABLE C. the typical recruitment process at an MCF.

Org.	Should candidates consider what to post online or not?	LinkedIn	Non-professional SNWs
A	Yes, if we find posts that do not fit our values would that not be positive for the candidate.	LinkedIn is a great recruitment tool. The resume should reflect the information available on LinkedIn.	Can provide us with good information about the candidate from a recruiting point of view.
B	Of course, you should always consider what to post online or not.	If you have graduated but are not on LinkedIn, it's almost like you do not exist. It is a very important recruitment channel.	We see them as platforms for both work and private where you always find the latest information. Also, a marketing channel towards graduates.
C	Yes! The picture and post you show on social media creates an image of how you might be and behave, and it is easy for us to get an idea of how you are and behave even though it is not true.	It's important to have a good LinkedIn profile. Not only for students, but also senior people looking for employment.	You are a private person and you are a public person, and, for example, Facebook is private. Information displayed there - religion or sexual orientation is completely unimportant. It has to do with integrity.
D	Yes, but we think that you should be yourself and try to be honest about your opinions and try to show who you are on social media.	It is important to show that you have a strong network. A strong network is very important for us management consultants.	It is positive that anyone can reach almost anyone at any time and it is easy to gain insight into people's lives and to share information.

E	Yes, I think so! One gets some kind of sense of how people behave by checking someone's social media profile. So, you should think one extra time.	Formally, we do not look at people's LinkedIn profiles. You could get a job here without having a LinkedIn but informally, we do it by curiosity. However, it will not affect a decision.	If I had to decide on the recruitment myself, we would have done more extensive scanning of Facebook etc. One may want privacy, but today's privacy is public. I have definitely scanned candidates' social media.
F	Not really. You may be aware of some companies that will check your profile, but we will probably not.	I think we can be better at complementing the material we receive by match LinkedIn profiles to our demand and the people applying.	It is rather a great way for us to reach out to potential candidates, although everyone is entitled to their own privacy on social media.
G	I think that you can feel safe as long as you do not post such stuff that goes against "normal norms" or social standards.	LinkedIn is a very powerful tool, it is our main channel for senior recruitment. We expect that people have updated profiles. However, it feels a bit like LinkedIn is getting more and more like Facebook was before. People post to much sometimes.	Does not add much values in the recruitment process for us. I want to try to be as unbiased as possible when I evaluate candidates. Information from e.g. Facebook can really give the wrong signals.
H	Yes, to some extent, to post like unethical things is not so smart if you want us to hire you because we do not share those values.	If a candidate does not have LinkedIn, and I do not mean first year university student, rather graduates that are looking for a job. I just want to say, "Why are you not on LinkedIn?", "How will you network with others?". I do not say it is negative, but it is clear that it raises questions.	I know that when I applied for jobs, I wanted my profile on Facebook to be locked. Negative things tend to bubble on social medias like Facebook.
I	Absolutely, but not just from a recruitment point of view but from a human perspective, I believe.	We rather see it as a platform where we can reach out with information rather than a platform where we look for information. I would not include it in the evaluation process if I were to evaluate a candidate.	Facebook is a tool to reach out with what you think and get people's opinions. The bad thing with social media is that everyone does not take responsibility for what they say and how they behave. If you are not on social media, do you even exist?
J	Our solid recruitment process makes it no big deal - if you do not fit in, social media will not help you. Having that said, you can assume that if you are looking for a job, someone	We relate more to grades, CV and personal letter in our recruitment process. LinkedIn is just a computerized version of this but with minimum effort. From a awareness perspective, LinkedIn is a good tool.	It's mostly private but what is left open to the public to view, I see no wrong in using as a source for information. The wrong type of images can cause problems to people.

	will search information about you online.		
K	No, I do not think it will weigh into the assessment of a candidate, but if you have gotten a link to the candidate's profile and you have seen a lot of strange things in the profile. You would get a reaction, of course.	LinkedIn is an extremely important channel for us for exposure, but in the recruitment, it is more like "double job" for us. The profile often reflects the CV and cover letter. However, I understand those who value LinkedIn highly in their recruitment process.	This kind of information of social media is not relevant for a job purpose. They are used for purposes not primarily related to working life and should be classified accordingly.

TABLE D. MCFs' summarized opinions regarding professional and non-professional SNWs.

Org.	What guidelines do you have in relation to scanning candidates' social media profiles?	What are you searching for when scanning a candidate's social media profiles?	Which social media do you use for collecting information about the candidates?
A	No guidelines. Not really. I have never heard of such guidelines or rules.	The resume should reflect LinkedIn, and whether the candidate has "thought one extra time" before posting stuff on Facebook.	LinkedIn and Facebook are usually the first hits on Google which means that is where you go and peek.
B	We have such guidelines regarding marketing and communication, but not in relation to recruiting.	We hire senior consultants because we have a need for specific skills. It is those skills we look for on LinkedIn.	We do not check social medias when recruiting graduates, but we check LinkedIn in our senior recruiting.
C	No guidelines.	I never scan someone's social media profiles in our graduate recruiting, but I have to admit that it looks professional to have a good, fact-based LinkedIn profile.	If I had to, I would use LinkedIn. We use LinkedIn in our senior recruiting.
D	We do not have any formal guidelines saying we should screen social media profiles or not. It is everyone's own choice to make.	If there is a lot of information available, then I try to use it to paint a picture of the candidate - it could be anything posted on the profile.	I usually do a quick search on google which often leads to a look at social medias like LinkedIn and Facebook
E	There is no formal policy in place about social media, no, but there are guidelines saying that nothing outside our formal recruitment process can affect whether to reject a candidate. So, indirectly you are not allowed	If I do it, it is more for my own interest, more for my own excitement. I sometimes wonder "who is this superhuman applying for a job here?" and then I check the candidate out on social media. However, this happens when I have already	I would use LinkedIn and Facebook, like in the recruitment of senior candidates.

	to base any decisions on information from social media.	made my decision about a candidate, so it does not affect my decision.	
F	We do not have any guidelines in relation to this.	Whether the content on the profile is consistent with the information in the resume.	I do not do it myself, but I think that there are some consultants here that use LinkedIn.
G	We do not have specific guidelines for looking up students on social media.	I looked up a candidate one time to see why he rejected our offer and which firm he ended up working for. I used LinkedIn for that.	We use LinkedIn when we look for candidates in our senior recruitment.
H	There are no guidelines - there is nothing stating that we can or cannot look at a candidate's social media profiles. not as far as I know, anyways. It is up to us if we look someone up or not.	If we were to check, it would be to check for e.g. extreme opinions.	We use LinkedIn when we look for candidates in our senior recruitment, but it is hard for me to know whether other employees use sites like Facebook to check on people.
I	We have no policy for that.	I use it to potentially straighten out some of the question marks I might have gotten during an interview with the candidate, e.g. comparing resume with LinkedIn to see if there is something there.	We use LinkedIn and sometimes Facebook as well.
J	We do not have a formal policy or guidelines.	We look for both positive and negative information about the candidate. We have rejected candidate due to compromising pictures.	We use LinkedIn, Facebook or anything that we can find.
K	As far as I know there are no formal guidelines.	Nothing, we do not use social media in graduate recruiting.	We use LinkedIn when we look for candidates in our senior recruitment.

TABLE E. THE MCFs' OPINIONS REGARDING PROFESSIONAL AND NON-PROFESSIONAL SNWS.

Org.	What would your reaction be, as part of the recruiting team, if a colleague of yours said to you during a coffee break that he or she had scanned a candidate's non-professional social media profiles and found compromising information?
A	Good we found out about that!
B	I do not want to answer that question.

C	I think that it is good for us to know if a person has extreme views. I mean, we do not want anyone here that do not support our values and maybe has harassed someone in job situations on a previous workplace.
D	I would ask what my colleague found.
E	Were not asked the question.
F	It is good that we get more information about the person.
G	Yes, that would have been strangely done by the colleague. Things like what you vote for and such is irrelevant.
H	I do not think it would be negative that I or someone else said anything like that. "Let's bring the person in anyway and see" would probably be my thought. But maybe, if it would be anything that is very extreme I would think "What is this and why?". I don't really know.
I	I think that I would have used the information and asked the candidate about it during the interview.
J	What did the colleague find? We do not care if the person votes left, right or up. It is totally irrelevant for us.
K	Information on non-professional social media is irrelevant, we do not take it into account.

TABLE F. the respondents' reactions to a colleague's discovery of compromising information on a candidate's non-professional SNW.

5 Analysis

The following chapter aims to, with support of the theoretical framework, analyze the information presented in the empirical data chapter. Whilst the analysis puts empirical data into theoretical context, it also serves as the basis for the discussion chapter. The chapter starts with an analysis of the MCFs' values and culture in relation to recruiting, creating a greater understanding about the design and purpose of the recruitment process. The second and final section constitutes the analysis of the MCFs' attitudes on social media in a recruitment context.

5.1 Analyzing values and culture in relation to MCFs' recruiting

Wei (2013) states that PO fit affects organizational effectiveness, performance and turnover, which makes certain values and culture-enhancing characteristics valuable to the MCFs. Below is the analysis of the relation between the MCFs' values, culture and their recruitment process.

5.1.1 Values and culture in MCFs

Kristof-Brown et al. (2005) argue that both PO and PJ fit are important factors to consider when evaluating candidates, which is something that both the respondents and the MCFs are aware of considering the answers presented in relation to the MCF's recruitment process. The recurring notion amongst the respondents implies that the firm-specific culture is very distinct and important to each and every firm, and that the underlying core values are equally important, which according to Kristof-Brown (2000) describe as features included in the PO fit theory. The MCFs' recruitment process, which will be further analyzed in a later section, is therefore centered around finding candidates with values similar to the core values at the firms and features which suit the current culture.

The fact that so much emphasis is put on the candidates' characteristics and values, and also the firm-specific culture, indicates that several of the MCFs are values-based organizations - this according to Viinamäki (2012) who describes values-based organizations as striving to increase motivation and commitment of the employees to create a strong culture in the firm, consisting of shared core values amongst the employees. Viinamäki states that values-based organizations enable this by their aim to align personal values with organizational values, a statement which further proves that the MCFs, to various degrees, operate as values-based organizations. Considering the above stated, analysis hitherto aligns the MCFs' attitudes and operations in relation to values and culture with the theory of PO fit and values-based organizations.

Although analysis of the respondents' view on values and culture suggests that the MCFs are to be seen as values-based organizations, other aspects speak against this arguing. It is clear that every firm has preferences regarding what type of personality they aim to find when evaluating candidates (organization B has a set of profiles they seek in candidates). Except from proper KSAs, the MCFs mention "team spirit" and values similar to the firms' core values as desirable characteristics. Whereas the respondents truly trust their firms' own capability to find suitable candidates, they also agree to the complex nature of the task as previously noted.

Analyzing the answers from the respondents, there is a need to highlight the fact that most respondents do not have a clear picture of what their firm-specific core values are or even imply, and neither do they have a satisfying explanation of the firm-specific culture. Having this in mind when referring to Viinamäki (2012), who states that the internally shared values are partially what creates values-based organizations and constitutes a central part of the organization's definition, makes up for questioning of the correctness in classifying the MCFs as values-based. The practical implication of the analysis made above is that respondent' take part in evaluating the candidates' fit with the firm-specific values and

culture without being able to define the culture or outlining the underlying values. In all fairness to the respondents, most of them do not take part in the final hiring-decision. Instead, the decision is often made by either an executive or partner, which according to the respondents are the best ones suited for evaluating the PO fit of the candidates. Further research needs to be conducted in order to bring clarity to how capable executives and partners are to evaluate PO fit, and what that process consists of.

The respondents' idea that PO fit is very important to their firm is well supported in theory. Not only do Kristof-Brown et al. (2005) argue that high PO fit increases organizational commitment, but also Wei (2013) claims that PO fit increases organizational effectiveness, performance and turnover by helping organizations to run smoothly and create stronger relationships between the organizations and their employees. Therefore, the emphasis on the candidates' PO fit will help the MCFs to stay competitive by finding employees who in their turn will care about the firms' success. Such employees will share the organizational values and develop the organizational commitment needed to establish and maintain a firm-specific culture. Further establishment of the MCFs' core values throughout the whole firm hierarchy, making all employees aware of the whats and whys of these values, will guide the employees towards common goals and thus reinforcing the MCFs' position as values-based organizations. This would not only benefit the organization, but also its members, stakeholders and the society (Viinamäki, 2012).

5.1.2 The MCF recruitment process

Presented in table 5.2 is the typical recruitment process at the MCFs. The MCFs have developed their own framework for trying to hire the best candidates possible, i.e. those having the best outlooks to (1) handle the problems and work tasks constituting the work life of a management consultant, and (2) fit in with the firm- and business-specific cultures, values and norms. Great problem-solving skills, specificity and high intelligence are desirable traits in candidates (respondent G referring to them as the "brains"), which is why they have to go through, and pass, logical and mathematical tests as well as case-solving tasks in the recruitment process. Sekiguchi (2007) supports the firms' endeavor to find above-average intelligent employees, stating that higher intelligence will result in an overall better job performance.

According to e.g. Kubr (2002), management consulting is much about identifying and solving business and management problems. The PJ fit definition by Higgins and Judge (2014) implies that PJ fit concerns the employee's KSAs and how well they match the needed requirements of the job to be performed. Since the PJ fit serves an indicator of how well the candidate will later perform in his or her job (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005), it is therefore safe to say that being a competent problem-solver would increase the candidate's PJ fit and thereby also increase the candidate's chances of performing well as a management consultant. So, having case-solving tasks try the candidates' problem-solving ability adds valuable information to the MCFs, helping them to evaluate the candidates' future job-performance and therefore also to continue being competitive as a MCF. Thus, their highlighting of problem-solving skills as a vital part of the recruitment process finds support in theory as well.

The answers from the respondents suggest that Information-gathering of candidates' characteristics, values and traits often relies on interviews, which Bazerman and Moore (2009) highlight as the most common way for organizations in general. Bazerman and Moore further state that interviews, preferably face-to-face interviews, often serve as the key tool in making hiring decision at organizations overall. The interview situation enables two-way communication like no other recruitment tool does (Jeske & Shultz, 2015), and therefore simplifies the collection of information regarding the candidates' characteristics and values, i.e. their PO fit (Kristof, 1996). The MCFs are no exception to other businesses, making hiring-decisions heavily based on impressions and information gathered during

interviews. The vast amount of time and resources dedicated to interviewing the candidates shows its importance to the MCFs when trying to evaluate the candidates' PO fit, and this approach finds some support in theory although interviews as a decision-making tool come with a number of different problems as well.

Although interviews being a key tool in hiring decisions, there is a need to also analyze the problems with conducting interviews as well. The MCFs often use the semi-structured or unstructured interview format, which allows for the direction of the interview to vary from one interview to another. Information collected during such interviews will be subjectively interpreted by the recruiter, with interpretations varying from one time to another, and depending on what pre-existing attitudes, biases and heuristic influence the recruiter, the unstructured interviews may lead to evaluators and recruiters treating candidates differently (Roth et al., 2016). For example, one candidate might be questioned about a specific topic whereas another candidate might not, and the candidates will therefore be evaluated differently due to different information collected by the interviewer. Also, candidates actively influence how recruiters evaluate them, and by using ingratiation and self-promotion candidates make it hard for recruiters to find which candidates really fit into the values and culture of the firm. This further complicates the attempt to evaluate a candidate's true PO fit, where the sole nature of the interview situation causes a reliability problem hard to overcome.

5.2 Analyzing the MCFs' attitudes on social media in a recruiting context

There is a necessity to state that the summarized opinions presented in table B represent the attitudes and beliefs of individuals and cannot be strictly equated with the official attitudes of the MCFs. However, all of the respondents are chosen to be directly involved in recruiting candidates by their respective firm - some being managers or partners with the ultimate recruiting responsibility - and thus have great knowledge and influence in the recruitment process. Already stated by Sanbonmatsu et al. (2014) is that attitudes affect how people weight and process information, and therefore influence decisions. Thus, it is safe to say that the attitudes of the respondents influence the MCFs general attitude and approach to selecting candidates in the recruiting.

When displayed next to each other in a table, the difference in attitudes between the two types of social media becomes obvious. LinkedIn have found its place as a credible, useful and essential entity in today's business landscape - the management consulting business included - and its importance for recruiters cannot be neglected. The attitudes towards LinkedIn are mostly, not to say completely, positive and no one has distinct criticism to LinkedIn as a recruitment tool. On the other hand, the attitudes towards non-professional SNWs in a recruitment context are not nearly as positive as those towards LinkedIn. Both are sources for information, but only three of the respondents showed clear positivism about the non-professional SNWs when used to gather information. On the contrary, more of them are positive regarding the use of non-professional SNWs to send out information and as a means to simplify employer branding.

Needless to further elaborate on, recruiters feel professional SNWs have more to do with recruiting than non-professional SNWs. This is in accordance to Bologna's (2014) statement that LinkedIn has become the most important tool for professionals, and also with LinkedIn's self-declared mission to "*connect the world's professionals*" (LinkedIn, 2018), which implies that the respondents' approach to professional SNWs makes sense. Labovich (2014) argue that "*job-seekers without a LinkedIn profile are putting themselves, and their careers, at a severe disadvantage*", a standpoint which obviously, at least to some degree, reflects also the Swedish management consultancy business.

The respondents were asked to answer the question “do you believe graduates and job candidates should consider what they post on social media from a job-seeking standpoint?”, and the answers are supposed to picture their conscious or unconscious attitudes towards candidates’ social media exposure. The answers pose a somewhat contradicting opinion compared to the respondents’ view on social media in general, and specifically non-professional SNWs. When being faced with the above-mentioned question, it is obvious that the respondents in their answers (1) refer to the non-professional social media, and (2) rather unconsciously indicate that exposure on such media really matters in a hiring context. Such indication stands in direct conflict with the respondents’ attitudes regarding non-professional SNWs as a phenomenon, especially in a hiring context.

Trying to analyze the above-mentioned ambivalence is not simple, but research on heuristics - or “mental shortcuts” - propose a theory about availability and affect heuristics in relation to this (Read & Grushka-Cockayne, 2011). The question asked to the respondents comes in a very direct way and leaves little time to the respondents to think, form an opinion and give an answer. Kahneman (2003) argues that a lot of our judgements are made affectively and based on emotional evaluations, especially when under time pressure, which the respondents very likely feel they are during the interviews. Also, emotional answers in affect could be sparked by almost anything, e.g. things as simple as the words “social media” or the way the interviewers ask the question (Bazerman & Moore, 2009), which could lead to the respondents answering a certain way over the other. More research would be needed to analyze this further.

Theory regarding availability heuristic, explained by Bazerman and Moore (2009), suggests that the recruiters’ judgements and opinions regarding social media are influenced much by similar things readily available in their memory. In other words, when being asked about whether candidates should consider what they post online, the respondents’ brains unconsciously start to form an opinion based on previous experiences, events and objects regarding social media exposure. Thus, if the respondents themselves have had recent bad experiences with social media exposure - not just in relation to recruiting, but in any context - chances are that they will associate social media exposure with risks (Bazerman & Moore, 2009), and therefore answer “yes, the candidates should consider what they post on social media”. This also signals that regardless of the respondents’ saying that information on non-professional social media is irrelevant, their attitudes might differ from what they say.

5.3 Analyzing the management consulting firms’ use of social media in recruitment purposes

According to a report published in the Society for Human Resource Managements (SHRM) (2016), the usage of social media in recruitment processes has increased quite drastically lately. The report is based on a survey from April 2015 stating that 84 per cent of the members of SHRM reportedly use social media in their recruitment process compared to only 56 per cent back in 2011. The fact that organizations’ presence at social media has increased this significantly since 2011 supports the respondents when they describe a change in the use and purpose of social media over the past decade, saying they are more professional nowadays. As previously mentioned, the majority of the respondents say they use social media to collect information about candidates in the recruitment process, and even more think that other MCFs use social media to collect information in their recruitment process. Kluemper and Rosen (2009) state that the main reason for using social media in recruiting is the enormous amount of information available on their platforms, which is also capturing the essence of the answers from the respondents in relation to what value the use of social media might bring to a recruitment process.

The MCFs' attitudes on professional SNWs as LinkedIn establish a reality in which the professional SNWs have great influence in the recruitment process, even more when recruiting to senior positions than when recruiting graduates. Part of LinkedIn's tagline says, "*we connect the world's professionals*" (LinkedIn, 2018), and this statement is strongly supported by the respondents. "*A great thing with LinkedIn is that you can now see and evaluate the candidates' relationships with other professionals and the character of his or her network*" said one respondent, and another stating that "*an employee's network is also our network*". Quotes like these in addition to the respondents' gathered attitudes underline the potential value to a MCF of having employees with a great network of contacts. Thus, using LinkedIn in the recruitment process, with the purpose of evaluating candidates' networks, may be beneficial to some degree. The MCFs are not alone in doing this; as Bologna (2014) states, LinkedIn has become one of the most important recruitment tools for professionals worldwide today, and according to SHRM (2016), 73 per cent of the companies in the published report think that LinkedIn is the most effective site for recruitment.

Analyzing the usefulness of non-professional SNWs would be complicated to this day, due to narrow research on their impact on recruiting and later organizational performance. Roth et al. (2016) stress the fact that there is a lack of validity track record on the usage of Social media as an assessment tool, and they even recommend firms not to use them at this point for assessment purposes. The respondents show skepticism towards using non-professional SNWs in recruiting - most respondents find candidates' non-professional SNW exposure irrelevant and that it should have little or no influence on hiring decisions. Only three out of eleven respondents spoke in positive terms about non-professional SNWs as a legit source for information about the candidates. This approach finds support in Kluemper and Rosen (2009) who state that there may be a mismatch between the purpose of scanning a candidate's SNWs and the information actually retrieved from those sites. Simply put, recruiters may look for one piece of information but end up finding other information which affects the recruiter's opinion of the candidate. In such cases, irrelevant information might be subjectively interpreted and turned into relevant information, leading to MCFs rejecting perfectly good employees due to the preferences, biases and attitudes of the recruiter.

Although Kashi et al. (2016) state that there are several benefits for organizations to adopt SNWs on a functional level (e.g. the possibility for organizations to search for potential candidates, to engage in headhunting and target specific niche skills or defined profiles), they also point out that there are drawbacks as well. The respondents share the same view, suggesting that social media's entrance in recruiting is associated with both benefits and drawbacks. As will be more elaborated on in the discussion section, things like morality, core values, and attitudes complicate the approach on social media in recruiting. Also, not having a well-established structure for the use of social media in a recruitment purpose, like most of the MCFs, creates reliability and validity problems (Roth et al., 2016) as well as making recruiters treat candidates differently due to unclear guidelines on how find and treat information.

Cheng and Molineux (2016) argue that there need to be a formal policy designed for social media recruiting that can guide the HR personnel on how they should use social media in order to gain as much benefits as possible. Also, Roth et al. (2016) agrees upon this statement and continues by saying that unstructured use of social media may lead to reliability problems and lack of consistency in the final evaluation process of candidates (Roth et al., 2016). The lack of a standardized process and clear guidelines can therefore harm the MCFs' recruitment process, and theory suggests that they improve the structure of the usage of social media in the recruitment process.

6 Discussion

The following chapter discusses the empirical data and the analysis presented in previous chapters. The discussion is conducted with the aim of answering the research questions and lead to conclusions in order to fulfill the purpose of the thesis.

6.1 How do values and culture influence the MCFs' recruiting?

The values serve as culture's cornerstones, and when discussing culture in this report there is a need to separate the values and culture inside the firms from the culture surrounding them, and of course how they affect the MCFs' recruitment process. Therefore, this section is divided into two parts, both of which discuss culture's influence on recruitment although separated into business-specific and firm-specific standpoints.

6.1.1 Business-specific culture

Like any other business, the management consultancy business has its own culture created by business-specific values and norms, in which the MCFs are independent entities with inherent firm-specific culture - something several of the respondents point out during the interviews. Although all the MCFs have their own specific set of values and norms, they share many ideas regarding what type of people they want as consultants and how to find those people. It is safe to say that the management consulting business culture has influenced the recruitment process at the MCFs and what the stereotypical management consultant should be like. The vast majority of the MCFs look for candidates at the same places and evaluate them with the same type of tasks and tests, creating an environment which does not allow for great variety. However, one could question to what degree of variety is really needed, when the PJ fit criteria are as established as for the management consultants. After all, and in accordance with Kristof-Brown et al. (2005), the PJ fit is an indicator of the future task performance of the employee.

Clients to the MCFs pay high consultancy fees in order to "get the job done" as soon as possible, i.e. to solve the problem quickly. It could be any type of problem in almost any type of business, which calls for consultants with knowledge spanning over several different fields and dimensions. With the business idea of selling high-priced solutions to often advanced productional or managerial problems, the MCFs cannot afford to do a job just "good enough". As much as the clients expect the work to be done fast (many consultants bill by the hour), they also expect thorough and rigorous solutions and plans for implementation. Thus, norms in the business are to produce high quality solutions without compromising the time frame of them. These norms have created a demand for what one of the respondents described as "hard-working generalists" with "great problem-solving skills", "preferably immune to stress". Although it could be debated whether IEM students are more suitable than other students to be working as management consultants, the business culture has influenced the MCFs' into using IEM programs in Sweden as their main recruitment pool.

6.1.2 Firm-specific culture

Whereas the PJ fit criteria for a management consultant are more related to the nature and culture of the business, the PO fit relates more to firm-specific dimensions; Kristof-Brown et al. (2005) have shown that high PO fit correlates with the level of organizational commitment in the employee. The respondents are very outspoken regarding values and culture, and as stated in table B, every one of the respondents did, at some point during the interviews, highlight the importance of "finding the right fit" in the candidates. The interviews point out how valuable it is for the MCFs to have employees who (1) share their values and thus (2) fit into their culture. The cultural dimension covers everything from teamwork to dedication and organizational commitment, and the culture is very well correlating with the

underlying values. However, despite the well-developed answers about the importance of matching values between the candidate and the firm, most of the respondents had troubles describing the values of their specific firm. Even though not all of the firms were asked to describe their values, none of those asked had anything against revealing them. The problem was that more respondents than not simply did not remember or know about the values (just that they existed).

One might find it very interesting that the claimed importance of values lies that far away from how the values are practically used in the recruitment process. There is of course also a possibility that the respondents felt obligated to answer that a candidate's values and attitudes are more important than they really are, and that the firm-specific culture is stronger than it really is. Unfortunately, this would be very hard to verify. The MCFs' values are supposed to guide the employees into a culture that will help the firm to increase parameters like turnover, and there might be of value for the people involved in the early stages of the recruiting to have more information in the firm's values when they decide which candidates to reject and not. If nothing else, it would increase the chances that the candidates when meeting with executives and partners will show a higher degree of matching values. One could of course argue that the respondents, regardless their respective titles, are not those responsible for matching candidates' and the firm's values. In fact, several respondents point out that executives and partners have the main responsibility for cultural fit when interviewing the candidates during the final rounds of the recruitment process.

Whereas executives and partners might very well be the best at evaluating a candidate's PO fit, that does not directly imply that the process of doing so is easy in any way. As theory shows, there are numerous factors that influence judgments and decision-making - both factors inherent in the decision-maker (e.g. heuristic, biases, attitudes, and the experience and skills of the interviewer) and outside factors (e.g. candidates implementing ingratiation and self-promotion to purposely try to influence the way interviewers evaluate them), making it hard for the evaluators to paint a true picture of the candidate's PO fit.

6.2 What are the MCFs' attitudes on candidates' social media exposure in relation to recruiting?

The respondents' attitudes on social media in a recruitment context vary mostly depending on (1) the type of social media (professional or non-professional), and (2) the purpose of using it (for marketing or collection of information). According to the respondents, LinkedIn is an incredibly useful tool in recruiting, both in terms of organizational exposure and information-gathering, and candidates' exposure on LinkedIn is almost taken for granted these days. Meanwhile, the respondents' attitudes on candidates' exposure on e.g. Facebook and Instagram are more diverse, although with the majority stating that the candidates' exposure on such websites should have little or no influence on hiring decisions. This is certainly no revolutionizing findings since using professional websites for professional purposes and private websites for private purposes is quite an intuitive and logic thought.

However, answers from the interviews reveal an interesting ambivalence in the attitudes on social media. On the one hand, most respondents find candidates' non-professional SNW exposure irrelevant and that it should have little or no influence on hiring decisions. Only three out of eleven respondents showed clear positivism about non-professional SNWs as a legit source for information about the candidates. But at the same time, nine out of eleven respondents (81,8%) stated candidates should be considering what they are posting online in a recruitment context. Also, eight out of eleven thinks that the other MCFs are using non-professional SNWs to collect information on the candidates, whereas only five of the respondents state they either do or have done it themselves. Adding to these findings, as now known,

both theory and the empirical data show that the usage of private websites for professional purposes in recruiting is widespread today - the management consulting business being no exception.

There seems to exist an underlying assumption amongst the respondents that other recruiters and organizations value information from non-professional SNWs higher than they do themselves. There could be many explanations to this mindset, one being the moral and ethical aspect of collecting information from people's private profiles. Whether the respondents' attitudes are for or against, they all seem to relate to the privacy, integrity and validity issues regarding information-gathering on non-professional SNWs. In other words, they may want to disclose from the interviewers the fact that they actually find information collected from non-professional SNWs valid, useful and valuable to them because the norm says it is controversial to think so. Whereas this might not be the case, it is of value to stress the fact that there is an ambivalence in the attitudes, and that the reason to it might have several explanations - one being that the respondents hesitate to answer truthfully to the questions.

The respondents posing negative attitudes towards scanning candidates' non-professional SNWs claim that people have the right to privacy and that information from such websites is irrelevant to a candidate's fit within the organization. Of course, most people would agree upon everybody's right to some privacy, but one could also argue that privacy is a choice and that choosing to openly expose your life on non-professional SNWs is not choosing privacy. As one of the respondents stated in relation to his attitude on non-professional SNWs: *"it's mostly private but what is left open to the public to view, I see no wrong in using as a source for information"*. Also, the relevance part of the information found on non-professional SNWs could be discussed in terms of who decides what is relevant and not to the firm and why, which is not clearly outlined in formal policies or guidelines at the MCFs. It is important to stress the fact that regardless of the attitude and values of a respondent, research indicates that social media can provide some information that is useful in evaluating a candidate's attitudes and personality (Faliagka et al., 2012). However, as Roth et al. (2016) state, there is still validity problems when implementing SNWs in the recruitment process, i.e. it is hard to know whether the information gathered evaluates what the firm wants to evaluate in a candidate.

Despite the entrance of social media in recruiting during the past decades, the MCFs' attitudes on candidates' social media behavior are still somewhat conservative. Although some respondents put emphasis into what pictures and comments candidates post on their Facebook profile, more respondents think it is irrelevant with the motivation that it is what is in their resume that matters. Worth mentioning is that most recruiters do not seem to be bothered by candidates' self-deemed "embarrassing" party pictures, regardless of what graduates may think. Also, not one of the respondents thinks that a private/locked Facebook or Instagram account implies that the candidate would want to hide anything. Quite the opposite, several of the respondents encouraged a closed profile, saying it makes total sense wanting to hide your private life from the public. These are interesting takeaways which downplay the role of at least some of the content published to non-professional SNWs.

Even though it would be comfortable to rule out the importance of an appropriate behavior on social media, the ambivalence in the respondents' attitudes (i.e. the difference between their attitudes and what they think of others' attitudes) does not support a belief that candidates are safe to post whatever they like on their social media profiles. As the respondent representing organization J stated: *"the wrong type of images can cause problems to people"*, referring to potential candidates. It would be interesting to discuss whether there is one "correct" approach towards candidates' social media behavior, but although that is an interesting angle and could bring some value in this context, it does not answer the research questions or fulfill the purpose of the thesis. Needless to say, though is that evaluators and decision-makers in recruitment processes will face some interesting questions going forward.

6.3 How does the MCFs' implementation of social media in the recruitment process affect the candidates' hireability?

As already outlined, the use of social media as a recruitment tool has increased by the year during the past decade - whether it is for marketing, employer branding, brand awareness or screening purposes. As already lined out, there is a need to distinguish information leaving the organization from information going into the organization. The former does not relate to the purpose of this thesis, whereas the latter has higher relevance and needs to be discussed. Roth et al. (2016), argue that organizational practice has outpaced research on using social media as an assessment tool in recruiting, and one might argue that social media's advancement in recruiting has outpaced also the organizational management's work with policies and guidelines.

Out of eleven respondents, all eleven said they are using social media in their recruitment, five of gave clear, positive answers saying that they use it when recruiting graduates as well. It is not quite as usual to use non-professional SNWs such as Facebook - just five out of eleven respondents answered that they use non-professional SNWs to screen and evaluate candidates. Irrespective of whether they actually use social media for screening and evaluating purposes, none of the respondents say they have any specific guidelines or policies to follow regarding how to do it or what to look for. This means that the respondents are free to choose where to search for information and what information to look for, even if that may be private information, irrelevant to the candidate's future job-performance and information gathered from a private, non-professional SNW.

This unstructured use of social media in recruitment purposes is quite noteworthy and at the same time heavily criticized by e.g. Roth et al. (2016) who state that the inadequate validity track record and the problem with credibility of the information available may cause reliability problems and inconsistency in the evaluation process. This procedure has immediate impact on candidates' hireability since there is no centralized policy controlling what information is being collected and from where. Allowing for recruiters to use non-professional SNWs as a source for information-gathering, the MCFs leave a window open for collecting, processing and subjectively interpreting information regarding factors which one could argue should not influence a hiring decision (e.g. ethnicity, religion, sexuality and attractiveness).

Some of the respondents argue that searching candidates' social media profiles "does not have any impact on the decision-making" and that they only do it for "personal interest". First, separating personal interest from the MCF's interest when involved in recruiting would arguably be very complicated, not so say impossible. As already stated, research highlight the influence different attitudes and biases have on our tendency to like a person over another, and there is reason to doubt that the respondents can avoid being influenced by such attitudes and biases. Second, the belief that a recruiter would be able to take part of information without letting it influence the decision-making is highly debatable and needs to be questioned. The power of affect heuristic, i.e. quick evaluations of the likeability of a person based on superficial features like attractiveness and similarity to self (Bazerman & Moore, 2009), and representativeness bias is reason enough to challenge respondents' beliefs that certain information would not influence their decision-making.

Worth discussing is the fact that there seems to be an ambivalence also in the respondents' attitudes on social media's place in the recruitment process. Whereas five out of eleven respondents admit to using websites such as Facebook in their recruiting, the others do not use it at all and do not plan on using it either judging from their negative attitudes on information collected from non-professional SNWs. However, answers on the "coffee room question" in table F tell a slightly different story, proposing a

somewhat milder approach to screening and evaluating candidates on SNWs. The respondents were asked how they would react to the fact that a recruiting colleague had found compromising information on a candidate while screening the candidate's social media. Out of the six respondents who did not state they use non-professional SNWs for recruitment purposes, only one (representing organization G) questioned the fact that the colleague should not have been looking at a candidate's social media in the first place.

Interestingly, scanning a candidate's profile seems to be justified by the respondents when the scanning (1) is done by someone else and (2) leads to the discovery of compromising information. The end seems to justify the means in this matter, and the compromising information appears to be more remarkable than the 180 degrees turn from respondents' values and attitudes. On the one hand, the respondents do not think it is legit to scan candidates' social media for information, but at the same time, when a candidate posts something that does not rhyme well with the MCF's values or culture, the MCFs want to take part of that information regardless of whether it is legit or not. There seems to be no specific goal with scanning a candidate's social media, which is a symptom of the previously mentioned unstructured use of SNWs in recruitment purposes. If the expectations are that scanning a candidate's Facebook profile will reveal information that most likely would not be of any use and, in some cases, even hurt the candidate, the total neglecting of the colleagues alleged action to scan a candidate's SNWs is spectacular. No further follow-up questions were asked in relation to this ambivalence, but one could argue that there is certainly room for more research on this phenomenon.

There is not a proposed way of conducting information-collection from SNWs other than, like Roth et al. (2016) propose, having it been conducted in a structured manner. Management should create a formal policy for the HR staff and consultants to follow, outlining what information to search for and where to search for it. Doing it like it is done today, especially conducting unstructured Google or non-professional SNWs searches, will lead to candidates being screened and rejected due to features that do not necessarily have any relevance to the candidates' future job-performance. The purpose here is not to point finger at the respondents or the people involved in the recruitment process, but rather to discuss the problems with not having any guidelines or policies helping the employees involved in recruiting to make unbiased, professional evaluations of candidates.

Although it would be impossible to quantify exactly how candidates' social media exposure affects their hireability at an MCF, it is now safe to say that it actually does affect their hireability. Respondents do not hold back when pointing out the greatness of LinkedIn and how it provides valuable opportunities for both sharing and collecting information. Focusing on the latter, all eleven respondents show positivism towards LinkedIn and five of them openly admits to using LinkedIn to gather information in the graduate recruitment process (all eleven use it in the senior recruitment). Little surprisingly, students and graduates have adapted to this fact and, as shown in our student survey, 91,4 per cent of all IEM master students and graduates are currently using LinkedIn, which makes LinkedIn a double-sided marketplace where both candidates and MCFs can market themselves for each other. Again, this is old news and so far, no ground-breaking information; candidates expect their LinkedIn profiles to influence their hireability. Likewise, the MCFs expect candidates to have updated information about anything that the candidates might think matter to the MCFs.

More interesting is how the candidates' LinkedIn exposure - both presence and activity - matters to the MCFs. First, not being on LinkedIn does not ruin a candidate's chances to employment at an MCF - not all of the firms use LinkedIn when recruiting graduates, and some say that looking at a candidate's LinkedIn does not influence their decision-making process. This being said, not having a presence at LinkedIn reduces a candidate's chances to employment quite significantly. Several of the respondents highlight the candidate's LinkedIn network as interesting and valuable to the firm, with one arguing that

“an employee’s network is also our network”. The foundation of an MCF’s business plan is to sell services to other organizations and understandably, a candidate with lots of contacts in different business areas is of higher potential valuable to the firm than a candidate whose network is small or unknown. Discussions can be had whether a candidate’s network consists of real, valuable contacts or just “names in a book”, but again, without knowing anything about a candidate’s network, names in a book seem to bring more value than no names at all. The respondent representing organization H said the following in relation to graduates not being on LinkedIn: *“It definitely raises questions. I would ask ‘why are you not on LinkedIn?’ and ‘how will you network with others?’”*.

The same respondent also said that having a clean, professional LinkedIn profile signals ambition and interest, something others tend to agree upon. However, some respondents also state out the obvious in relation to LinkedIn - it is merely a digital version of the candidates’ resume. One could argue that LinkedIn provides information that a physical resume cannot - such as a candidate’s network - and that it, like the respondent working for organization F argued, can be complementary to the physical resume. The respondent working for organization K argued that LinkedIn only creates “double work” for them, and that they would expect the LinkedIn profile to reflect the resume and cover letter anyways. There are opinions on both sides of the spectra regarding the real and practical value of a candidate’s LinkedIn exposure, but having a well-organized, valuable network, to engage in relevant discussions and having an updated LinkedIn profile would not negatively affect a candidate’s hireability - rather the opposite.

6.4 What are the IEM students’ recruitment-related expectations on how MCFs view the students’ use of non-professional SNWs?

The relation between IEM students and MCFs has already been clarified to some degree in previous sections, but there is room for further elaboration on this relationship. The making of this report has received genuine interest from both sides, i.e. from both the IEM students and the MCFs, where the common denominator seems to be how to enhance your business- or personal brand and likeability with the help of social media exposure. The respondents agree upon the hypothesis that the magnitude of social recruiting will increase in the coming years, and they do not want to be left behind when the train leaves the station. Quite intuitively, the interest from the MCFs is centered more in the way they can increase their brand awareness with social media, and not so much on what actually affects the candidates’ hireability. One could therefore argue that the purpose and findings in the thesis are more beneficial for the students and their social media behavior in relation to recruitment, although several of the MCFs showed curiosity in getting to learn more about the competitors’ use of social media.

The survey showed that 86,9 per cent of the students are interested in getting to learn more about the MCFs’ attitudes on IEM students’ social media exposure, and the majority of the surveyed were in compliance with the proposition that knowledge on this topic would change their social media behavior. Taking this into consideration further establishes the relationship between IEM students and MCFs. What it may also suggest is an expectation from the IEM students that using social media has real influence on their hireability and that using social media a certain way could in fact increase the chances on being employed by an MCF. Only 17,8 per cent of the surveyed stated that they do not think social media exposure affects their hireability at all, which one might find strange in its own way considering people’s and businesses’ online habits today.

The survey showed that the IEM students’ expectations on how recruiters view candidates’ social media behavior are somewhat negatively biased. Simply put, the IEM students find it more likely that social media exposure will hurt a candidate’s hireability than the other way around. The survey results shows a quite expressive difference between how the IEM students think social media exposure can increase

and decrease their hireability. The 'fear' of getting ruled out of the recruitment process due to compromising material on their SNW profile seems to be more real than the notion that a splendid LinkedIn profile will get them the job. To some degree, the expectations about the respondents' attitudes match the reality, based on the answers from the interviews. Even though not all MCFs uses SNWs to evaluate candidates in their formal recruitment process, the underlying attitudes suggest that students should be careful with what they post on social media. To further confirm the IEM students' expectations, a great LinkedIn does not take you all the way. Whereas a polished LinkedIn page may be valuable when recruiters occasionally scan the candidates, it is worth mentioning that the recruiters expect the candidate profiles to be polished.

When it comes to decision-making, the surveyed are very clear on SNWs' influence. Although one might think that candidates today, having used social media for the greater part of their teens and early adulthood, would accept their presence in recruiters' decision-making, that is not the reality. Despite the fact that the vast majority (82,2 %) of the surveyed are convinced that social media exposure affects hireability, very few thinks that social media should have any deciding value or significance in a recruitment process. Furthermore, 64 per cent of the surveyed do not even think that recruiters should have the right to take part of the candidates' social media content, referring to non-professional SNWs. One might find the IEM students' attitudes interesting, which seemingly say that "yes, we expect you to scan our SNWs and yes, we believe you evaluate us by scanning our social media content and yes, we can therefore affect our hireability both ways but please, leave us alone and do not judge us by our social media lives".

7 Conclusion

The objective of this research was to identify, analyze and map the MCFs' attitudes in relation to job candidates' social media exposure. By identifying and analyzing the attitudes of the MCFs, a deeper understanding of how graduates' social media behavior affects their hireability at a MCF in Sweden has been developed. Furthermore, the purpose was also to map how values and culture influence the MCFs recruitment process and how they relate to candidates' future job-performance and organizational commitment.

What are the management consultancy firms' attitudes on professional and non-professional social networking websites as a resource in their recruitment process?

The MCFs' attitudes on social media as a recruitment tool differ drastically depending on whether it is of professional or non-professional character and purpose. Regarding professional SNWs, the respondents spoke almost exclusively about LinkedIn, presenting attitudes mostly, not to say completely, positive towards LinkedIn and thus professional SNWs as a recruitment tool. Although not all MCFs implement LinkedIn or other professional SNWs in the recruitment process, no one has distinct criticism to LinkedIn as a recruitment tool in general.

In total opposite of the attitudes on professional SNWs, the MCFs are very hesitant to use non-professional SNWs, such as Facebook and Instagram, as a recruitment tool; only three out of eleven respondents show clear positivism regarding non-professional SNWs as a relevant source for information about candidates. However, there is an undeniable ambivalence surrounding these attitudes and the presented findings show that searching non-professional SNWs for information seems more legit if (1) someone else than the respondent conducts the search, and (2) the search results in finding compromising information adverse to the values of the MCF.

There is a unanimous attitude amongst the MCFs posing that both professional and non-professional SNWs are valuable in a brand awareness and marketing purpose. All MCFs use at least one SNW in order to create attention and awareness, sending out information to potentially new employees.

How does Industrial Engineering and Management students' social media exposure affect their hireability at a management consultancy firm in Sweden?

Although the findings suggest that candidates' social media exposure does affect their hireability, it is difficult to conclude exactly how it affects their hireability. Therefore, the only general conclusion that can be drawn is that the recruiters at MCFs are likely to scan the applying candidates' social media profiles - most likely either LinkedIn and/or Facebook, depending on which MCF a candidate applies to.

Here is a need to separate exposure on professional SNWs from exposure on non-professional SNWs. Considering professional SNWs, and especially LinkedIn, the MCFs expect the candidates to have a LinkedIn profile. Not having a LinkedIn profile does not hinder a candidate from getting employed by a MCF, although it affects the candidate's hireability negatively. Having an unpolished LinkedIn profile and/or non-updated information therein also affects the candidate's hireability negatively. On the other hand, to most MCFs candidates increase their hireability by exposing a broad, relevant and coherent network, updated qualifications and general knowledge by taking part in relevant discussions on LinkedIn.

Most respondents state that candidates' non-professional SNW exposure is irrelevant and that it should have little or no influence on hiring decisions. However, the findings show that candidates should be

aware of their non-professional social media behavior and what they post there. Information to be found on e.g. Facebook, such as signs of extremism or other compromising details, has led to candidates being rejected by MCFs and stated in the report is also that such information will affect recruiters' decision-making unconsciously through attitudes, heuristics and biases, regardless of what the recruiter self may think. The findings show that none of the MCFs has anything against private/closed non-professional SNW profiles, and thus present a recommendation that encourages candidates to use full privacy settings on their Instagram and Facebook profiles.

How do the values and culture in the management consulting business and firms influence the MCFs' recruitment process?

The values and the firm-specific culture are seen as strong in all the participating MCFs, and all the MCFs to some degree fall under the category "values-based organizations". They find it very important to get the right characteristics and values in candidates, similar to the characteristics and values of the MCF, i.e. finding candidates with as high PO fit as possible. Therefore, the recruitment process at the MCFs is heavily weighted towards finding PO fit over PJ fit, e.g. conducting multiple interviews of various types with the candidate and involving employees from different levels of hierarchy at the firm. The findings show that senior consultants, executives and partners have the ultimate responsibility to determine the PO fit, whereas employees involved in the initial part of the recruitment process mostly evaluate the PJ fit of the candidate. Results from the report shows that, despite the very high importance values and culture to the MCFs, the respondents had little or no knowledge in what the organizational values actually consisted.

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Appendix

Interview template

Questions:

Starters

1. Describe your current position.
2. How did you end up there?
3. What did you study?

Social media in society

4. How do you view the evolution of social media for the past ten years? (Open question)
5. What pros and cons comes from an increased amount of time spent on social media?
6. What is the main purpose with social media today? Why?
7. What is your main purpose for be on social media?
8. Where do you have an account?
9. Where are you active?
10. Do you spend too much time on social networking websites?
11. Do you think the people in general spend too much time on social networking websites?

The recruitment process

12. Do you headhunt candidates?
13. How do you headhunt candidates?
14. Do you use social media?
15. For what type of job positions is headhunting relevant?
16. Have you ever headhunted students?

The firms core values

17. How do you work with values in your firm? Norms?
18. What type of values is reward vs dissociated?
19. Describe your culture
20. Do you search for information regarding if a candidate has the right PE fit, values, norms etc.?
 - a. Do you use social media?
21. How does a person's values in relationship to the company's values affect his/her performance?

Recruitment and social medias

22. How important in social media for your company? What is the main purpose for you exist on social medias? Where is your company active?
23. How do you screen candidate's social medias? Do you have any guidelines?
24. Do you think that other MCFs' screen social media?
25. When is it relevant in the recruitment process?

26. How does a closed profile on a social media affect a candidate's chances?
27. How do you view a candidate's exposure on social media? Speak freely
28. Do you think you have the right to ask a candidate about the access to their published material on social media during an interview?
29. How does the candidate's exposure on social media affect their chances to an employment at your firm?
30. What type of exposure is positive for a candidate?
31. What type of exposure is negative for a candidate?
32. Do you think that LinkedIn will replace resumes in the future?
33. Do you think that candidates should reflect one extra time before posting something on social media?

Survey template

Industrial Engineering and Management students' attitudes towards and exposure on social media

This is a survey which aims to help two students writing a master's thesis on the management consultancy firms' (MCFs) attitudes towards Industrial Engineering and Management (IEM) students' use of social media.

Please answer truthfully.

Thank you!

1. Birth year

- ☐ 1998 or after
- ☐ 1995-1997
- ☐ 1992-1994
- ☐ 1991 or before

2. Gender

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

3. I am studying:

- ☐ IEM - bachelor
- ☐ IEM - master's programme
- ☐ I have graduated from IEM
- ☐ Other

4. Year:

- ☐ 1 (bachelor)
- ☐ 2 (bachelor)
- ☐ 3 (bachelor)
- ☐ 4 (master's)
- ☐ 5 (master's)
- ☐ I have graduated

5. Which university are you studying at (or graduated from)?

- ☐ Luleå tekniska universitet (LTU)
- ☐ Chalmers tekniska högskola (CTH)
- ☐ Linköpings universitet (LiU)
- ☐ Kungliga tekniska högskolan (KTH)
- ☐ Lunds tekniska högskola (LTH)

6. Are you interested in working as a management consultant?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

7. How likely is it that you will apply for a job at an MCF right after graduation?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not at all likely	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very likely

The use of social media

8. On which social media platforms do you have a profile today?

- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ Instagram
- ☐ Snapchat
- ☐ LinkedIn
- ☐ Twitter
- ☐ I do not have a profile on either of the above-mentioned
- ☐ Övrigt: _____

9. On which two social media platforms do you spend the most time?

- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ Instagram
- ☐ LinkedIn
- ☐ Twitter
- ☐ Snapchat
- ☐ Other

10. **How often do you post content (such as text, pictures or files) on Instagram, Facebook or LinkedIn?**

- ☐ Several times a day
- ☐ Once a day
- ☐ Several times a week
- ☐ Once a week
- ☐ Several times a month
- ☐ Once a month
- ☐ A few times a year
- ☐ Never

11. **Do you think that you spend too much time on social media?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ No opinion

12. **Do you use privacy settings on Twitter?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I do not know
- ☐ I do not have a Twitter profile

13. **Do you use privacy settings on Facebook?**

- ☐ Yes, fully
- ☐ Yes, partly
- ☐ No
- ☐ I do not know
- ☐ I do not have a Facebook profile

14. **Do you use privacy settings on Instagram?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I do not know
- ☐ I do not have an Instagram profile

15. Do you have privacy settings on LinkedIn?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ I do not know
☐ I do not have a LinkedIn profile

16. Have you posted something on social media which you do not want a recruiter to see?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ I do not know

17. How important is it to you how you are being perceived on social media by people around you?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not at all important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very important

18. How often do you reflect upon how your social media exposure can affect your future professional career?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Never	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very often

19. Proposition: I have full knowledge in which people can take part of what I post on my social media platforms.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Do not agree at all	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Agree completely

20. Proposition: Current or future interactions with firms (in job-application purposes) influence how I expose myself on social media.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Do not agree at all	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Agree completely

21. How comfortable would you be in giving recruiters at the MCFs full insight in your social media platforms?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not at all comfortable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Completely comfortable

Attitudes towards social media in a recruitment context

22. Do you think a IEM's social media exposure affects his or her hireability at an MCF?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ No opinion

23. Proposition: An IEM's social media exposure should have decisive importance for his or her hireability at an MCF.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Do not agree at all	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Agree completely

24. Proposition: IEM students can, by certain social media exposure, increase their chances to employment at an MCF.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Do not agree at all	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Agree completely

25. Proposition: IEM students can, by certain social media exposure, lower their chances to employment at an MCF.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Do not agree at all	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Agree completely

26. Påstående: Full privacy settings on e.g. Instagram or Facebook implies that the IEM student wants to hide something.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Do not agree at all	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Agree completely

27. Do you think that the recruiter at the MCF you are applying to has the right to take part of what you publish/have published on your social media?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ No opinion

28. Do you think that the recruiter at the MCF you are applying to has the right to ask you whether he or she can take part of what you publish/have published on your social media?

It could be things like asking you to show your social media profiles or send a friend request on Facebook or Instagram etc.

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ No opinion

29. **Would there be of interest to take part of the MCFs' attitudes towards IEM students' social media exposure?**

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ No opinion

30. **Proposition: Knowledge in recruiters' attitudes towards social media exposure would change my social media behavior.**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Do not agree at all	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Agree completely