The Use of Social Networking Sites in Job Related Activities: A Cross-cultural Comparison

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A B S T R A C T
Objective: The main objective of the paper is to identify the use of Social Networking Sites (SNSs) in job related activities and indicate the interdependencies between these activities and age, gender, as well as education in culturally diversified markets (China, Poland, Turkey, the United States).
Research Design & Methods: In the exploratory empirical study the authors used two research methods: PAPI (*Paper and Pen Personal Interview*) and CAWI (*Computer Assisted Web Interview*). The empirical data were collected in 2016 and the total number of respondents from four culturally diversified countries was 1246.
Findings: The analysis with the use of Kruskal-Wallis and Dunn post-hoc tests showed that the Turkish respondents most often use SNSs for job related activities, while it is the least often done by the studied Americans. Moreover, from among the studied factors (gender, age and education level) that differentiate the SNSs usage for job related activities in a statistically significant way age is of greatest importance.
Implications & Recommendations: The results of the research provide implications for the recruitment policy of multinational enterprises (MNEs). Since more and more enterprises use SNSs in order to look for new employees and advertise themselves as employers (employer branding), the identified interdependencies between the SNSs activities and the analysed factors can support firm attempts to develop the proper recruitment policy taking into account the cultural diversity of potential workers.
Contribution & Value Added: There are not many studies in the literature which present the usage of SNSs for job related activities from the perspective of individual users in the cross-cultural approach. The majority of studies are related to the usage of SNSs by enterprises in the recruitment process.
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INTRODUCTION

The growth of the Internet has contributed to changes in many areas of life. It is a source of information, a tool used for work, an instrument used for entertainment and communication, a place to purchase or sell products, look for business partners, etc. (Correa, Hinsley, De Zúñiga *et al.*, 2009). The number of ways of using the Internet is incredibly large, regardless of the industry or the nature of the entity (individuals, companies and other institutions).

Social Networking Sites (SNSs) are an important stage in the continuous growth of Internet services and their innovativeness. They have become a tool which is used by a large number of people worldwide. It is difficult to estimate the number of SNS users as it is extremely large and the statistics are mainly done with reference to a particular platform or medium of a service. It is worth adding that the number of Internet users worldwide exceeded 3.4 billion and the number of active users of social media amounted to 2.3 billion at the beginning of 2016, including around 1.6 billion users of the most popular portal which is Facebook (Kemp, 2016). The purpose of creating the first SNSs was the need to maintain contact with other individuals and entities (companies, institutions), finding and creating networks of friends, who very often lived in other parts of the world, as well as broadly understood communication (Yang & Wang, 2015). Later on it turned out that the specificity of SNSs allows to use them for many other purposes, as they are a good source of information in terms of purchasing decisions, education, and they play an important role on the job market. According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), SNSs offer a common platform to exchange contents created by users.

This paper presents more broadly the use of SNSs for job related activities by individual users, therefore looking for business contacts through SNSs, presenting one's own professional achievements, looking for job offers and materials needed for the job. From the point of view of enterprises, SNSs are also a source of information about potential employees, thus they contribute to the quality of human resources which are crucial from the perspective of firm competitiveness. According to Gurchiek (2015), social media play a crucial role for firms while looking for talents (Madera, 2012), and can be effectively used in employer branding (Katiyar & Sain, 2016).

The main objective of the paper is to identify the use of SNSs for job related activities in culturally diversified groups and try to verify if the relationship between these activities and age, gender and education exists. An attempt has been made to answer two research questions: firstly, whether the frequency of using SNSs for job related activities differs among the studied countries? Secondly, if there are relationships between the use of SNSs for job related activities and three factors: age, gender and education level? By doing this the authors attempt to formulate some hints which can contribute to the quality of human resources, which are the key source of competitive advantage of a firm nowadays. The analysis of the literature has been complemented with the results of the empirical study, which was conducted in China, Poland, Turkey and the United States. In the exploratory empirical study the authors used two research methods: PAPI (*Paper and Pen Personal Interview*) and CAWI (*Computer Assisted Web Interview*). The empirical data were gathered in 2016 and the total number of respondents was 1246.

The added value of this study is not limited just to the recruitment policy of MNEs. The great significance of human capital for firms' competitiveness and thus

sustainable growth of economies makes the results important not only from the perspective of particular companies, but even whole economies.

The structure of the article includes the literature overview in the discussed area, the methodology of the empirical study, its results, as well as conclusions and implications.

LITERATURE REVIEW

SNSs and Job Related Activities

The way and character of using SNSs depend first of all on people's needs and on the extent to which the usage corresponds with the needs. For example, the need to share one's travel memories with their friends may be met by using a website or communicator such as Facebook, Instagram or Snapchat (Nadkarni & Hofmann, 2012). The SNSs which connect people into networks of friends that share common features are ones of the first media and are continuously popular among users, e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn or MySpace. Many people also use the media which make it possible for them to express themselves in writing, verbally or with video recordings, e.g. Twitter, YouTube, as well as using the information placed there by other users (*Kim, Sin & Tsai,* 2014; Hamid, Waycott, Kurnia & Chang, 2015).

The literature widely presents the results of various projects relating to the use of the Internet in general, ways and areas of using SNSs (Lin & Lu, 2011; Hamade, 2013), however there are a few studies referring directly to job related activities (Verhoeven, Mashood & Chansarkar, 2011; Manroop & Richardson 2013), as well as cultural and demographic determinants differentiating this use. However, the attempts to show the correlation between the ways of using SNSs and personality features can be observed more often (Ryan & Xenos, 2011; Nadkarni & Hofmann, 2012). Therefore, the presented paper is an attempt to fill the gap in this field in the literature on the subject.

What is the usage of SNSs in terms of job? Using SNSs for job related activities can be examined from two perspectives, i.e. of an employee and an employer. From the viewpoint of an employee, virtual communities help provide information (not always objective) about a potential or current employer when exchanging opinions on forums or social networking sites. Networks of friends on SNSs can also turn out to be helpful when looking for a job. Moreover, SNSs can be a source of new job offers through placing such information on corporate social networking sites, thus sites of potential employers (Williams & Verhoeven, 2008). Moreover, particular media, e.g. LinkedIn, enable employees to present their profile, education, experience and career path (Gerard, 2012), which is extremely helpful during preliminary selection of candidates (Katiyar & Sain, 2016).

The number of the conducted studies in the international literature shows that this field has not been thoroughly explored yet (Manroop & Richardson 2011). Studies conducted more often are related to the usage of SNSs among enterprises – potential employers (Malita, Badescu & Dabu, 2010; Bissola & Imperatori, 2013; Girard, Fallery & Rodhain, 2013; Bondarouk, Ruël, Axinia & Arama, 2013; Landers & Schmidt, 2016; Katiyar & Sain, 2016), rather than for job related activities from the perspective of an individual (Manroop & Richardson, 2013). It is even more difficult to get the information about profiles of individuals (gender, age, education) who use SNSs for job related activities.

SNSs and Cultural Differences

Cultural distinctness is related to values, behaviour, lifestyle or habits recognized in a particular cultural group (Steenkamp, 2001). The values of cultural groups represent cultural dimensions distinguished in the studies conducted among others by G. Hofstede. They include: individualism/collectivism (IDV), low/high power distance (PDI), low/ high degree of uncertainty avoidance (UAI), masculinity/femininity (MAS), long/short term orientation (LTO) and indulgence/restraint (IND) (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2010). Individualism/collectivism distinction refers to the way of perceiving an individual – an individual person and a group. Power distance refers to an extent to which members of a given society accept the fact that there are significant differences in power (jobs, positions) between people both in a society, organisations, as well as in a family. Masculinity/femininity dimension refers to values dominant in a given society, concerning e.g. the quality of life, achieving success, competition, the role of man and woman in the society. Long/short term orientation concerns "the differences in cultures regarding how they view time and the importance of the past, present and the future". Indulgence/restraint dimension refers to the extent to which people are willing and able to control their desires and impulses (Hofstede *et al.*, 2010). Indulgence/restraint dimension refers to the level at which people are prone and able to control their own desires and impulses (Hofstede *et al.*, 2010).

Culture also influences the way and purpose of using SNSs (Furner & George, 2012). However, there are not many studies on how cultural distinctness influences the perception and use of SNSs, as well as the attitude towards them (Suzuki & Takemura, 2013). In those which are presented in the literature the authors mainly refer to Hofstede`s cultural dimensions (Hofstede *et al.*, 2010) and in majority of cases the individualism/collectivism dimension is used. For example, Kim, Sohn and Choi (2011) proved that in cultures emphasising individualistic values (e.g. the USA) SNSs are mostly used as entertainment and as a way of spending free time, while in collectivistic cultures (e.g. Korea) the tendency to get social support in social relations based on SNSs can be observed. Hsu, Tien, Lin and Chang (2015) showed that for users from individualistic countries SNSs are mainly a source of information, while for people from the collectivistic countries socialisation and self-presentation are the main motivators.

The growing significance of SNSs from the viewpoint of a person looking for a job is indicated by the results of the international study conducted by the Randstad Research Institute in 29 countries of Europe, Asia, Australia and both Americas (Salesnews.pl, 2015). SNSs play a particularly important role on the markets which are characterised by a high percentage of young employees using such media, e.g. in Chile (92%), India (90%) or China (90%). All these countries belong to collectivistic cultures with significant power distance and restraint. The results of this project confirm previous statements that SNSs are a source of looking for information about vacancies or a potential employer. For example, among Polish respondents more than a half (54%) emphasised the fact that SNSs are helpful in looking for a job. Moreover, 37% of Polish respondents stated that they use SNS profiles in order to promote themselves as a potential employee. According to experts, the results obtained in Poland do not significantly differ from other researched countries, except for India where 78% of respondents highlighted the use of

such media for professional purposes, especially in order to present their own achievements and experience (Salesnews.pl, 2015).

Another study conducted among the representatives of Generation Y at one of the universities in Dubai Verhoeven, Mashood and Chansarkar (2011) concluded that SNSs are used to look for a job on a regular basis. On the other hand, the results of the qualitative research carried out by Manroop and Richardson (2013) among young Canadians (2 years after graduation) from Generation Y show that there are two groups of young employees. First of all, there are those who are aware of the strength and significance of SNSs in job search. However, the same people claim that they lack knowledge or skills in order to fully use modern technologies. They are people who look for a job through placing their CVs and using SNSs to contact those they already know. Secondly, there are people according to whom SNSs are only used to establish and maintain social contacts with friends and family. They are concerned about their privacy when using SNSs excessively, and when looking for a job they rely solely on traditional methods. The results of those two projects confirm the relation to cultural values referring to individualism and collectivism, as well as distribution of power in the society. Arab countries are collectivistic with large power distance, while Canada is an individualistic country with small power distance.

The results of the presented studies indicate that there are differences between users from different countries in terms of using SNSs for job related activities.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The methodological approach in this paper corresponds to the deductive approach, since the authors attempt to answer the two research questions formulated on the basis of prior literature review and regarding the main objective:

RQ1: Does the frequency of using the SNSs for job related activities differ among the studied countries?

RQ2: Are there any relationships between the use of SNSs for job related activities and three factors: age, gender and education level?

Measurement Development and Data Collection

In the exploratory empirical study the authors used two research methods: CAWI (*Computer Assisted Web Interview*) and PAPI (*Paper and Pen Personal Interview*). Firstly, the authors used CAWI with an online questionnaire as a research instrument, filled in by the respondents themselves in order to collect fast responses. The main advantage of CAWI is time (shorter time than PAPI) and cost (lower cost because of the distribution of the questionnaire via the Internet). But, since the use of the online questionnaire did not produce great feedback, only 3.5% of all the collected questionnaires, secondly, the authors decided to use the PAPI method on each market. This method is more expansive and time consuming, but it gave better results in the case of the presented research. The percentages of PAPI and CAWI in particular groups were: China – 100% of PAPI questionnaires, Poland – 10% of CAWI and 90% of PAPI, United States – 5.4% of PAPI and 94.6% of CAWI, Turkey – 100%of PAPI. These differences were caused by difficulties in respondents` recruitment to participate in the research via the Internet. Nevertheless, in each country the share of questionnaires collected via PAPIs in the total

number of the questionnaires prevailed and was not lower than 90%. The relatively similar distribution of the collected questionnaires in terms of the used method of collecting data contributes in a way to the comparability of the results.

In the research part where CAWI was used, random selection was used but the number of the completed questionnaires was not satisfactory. In the research part where PAPI was used the non-random sampling method was chosen. The data were collected by snowball sampling and there were people designated to collect the questionnaires among the respondents on each market. The research assistants (usually they were Poles who were staying in the studied countries for more than six months) who recruited the respondents who used SNSs, were differentiated by age, gender and education level and agreed to take part in the measurement (initial respondents). Then, they received information from those respondents who had already taken part in the study about others who could participate in the study. In that way the sample was growing till the amounts when the authors decided to stop the measurement. The use of snowball sampling allows to recruit for the study respondents who are ready to answer the questions. Thus, it may help to collect reliable responses.

People are not eager to talk about such personal issues as using SNSs, and in particular using them for job related activities, and to get reliable data we need respondents open for sharing their opinions and eager to reveal their individual perception of SNSs. Since SNSs have become very popular, some people can think that they should enjoy using them and may be afraid of speaking frankly about different perception of SNSs. By using the snowball sampling we were able to control for the respondents' eagerness to cooperate.

The measurement instrument was a standardised questionnaire prepared for the purpose of this research. The element differentiating the research questionnaire on particular markets was the language. In Poland the Polish language was used, in China Chinese, in Turkey Turkish, and on the American market it was English. In the preparation of the different versions of the questionnaire a back translation procedure was used in order to eliminate mistakes stemming from linguistic, lexical or context differences (Craig & Douglas, 2006).

The empirical data were gathered in 2016 and the total number of respondents surveyed in the four culturally differentiated (main criteria of the choice of the markets) countries was 1246, including 295 respondents from China, 296 from Poland, 395 from Turkey and 260 from the United States. The countries were chosen because of different level of development and as examples of `West` and `East` countries. The authors of the paper wanted to investigate if the usage of SNSs for job activities is universal or it differs among countries.

In order to identify the job activities, respondents were asked to specify the frequency of performing them (*very often -1, often-2, from time to time-3, rarely-4, very rarely-5, never-6*) for particular statements which were identified during the trial measurement (conducted before the main study). In the reliability analysis, according to the used scale, Cronbach's Alpha was used. The level of Cronbach Alpha – $\alpha=0.78$ – confirms that the proposed scale is a reliable tool for measuring. The applied statements are: I look for business contacts (W1); I look for new job offers (W2); I look for information and materials for my job (W3), and I place information about my professional achievement (W4).

Trying to answer the first research question (RQ1) Kruskal-Wallis test was used. The authors decided to use Kruskal-Wallis test for the comparison of the results obtained in the four groups of respondents from different countries (if there would be two groups

the U Mann-Whitney test could be used). The requirements for Kruskal-Wallis test were met: the dependent variable measured at least by ordinal scale and the items from the surveyed groups were independent (it means that one respondent can be only in one group being compared). The statistically significant result of Kruskal-Wallis test forces to use multiple comparison tests to determine how and which groups differ significantly from each other. The specificity of the data achieved in the research influenced the usage of post-hoc test which involves comparing the average rank for all groups – the Dunn test. The Dunn test, due to multiple testing, is corrected by the Bonferroni correction.

To examine the relations between gender, age, education level and ways of using SNSs for job activities (in general, without distinguishing particular sites) Pearson's chi-square statistics was used. On the other hand, in order to determine the strength of that interdependence, Cramer's *V* factor was applied. Using the distinguished figures stems from the features of the scales of measure applied in the questionnaire. The independent variable was the respondents' country of origin.

RESULTS

The surveyed respondents in each country were people who agreed to participate and were willing to express themselves on how they use SNSs for job activities. The study was conducted among people of all ages and three age groups were distinguished, i.e. 15-20, 21-30, 31 or more (Table 1). In China, Poland and Turkey the respondents within 21-30 age group prevailed. On the other hand, in the United States most participants belonged to the age group of 15-20. Considering the number of participants within the age ranges, it can be stated that in the studied cultural groups the representatives of the so-called Generation Y are are prevalent. Thus, the results are even of greater significance for firms, since people at this age usually are looking for their first job and those are people open for changes in their life. The smallest number of respondents was observed in the age group of 31 and more.

Table 1. Respondent profile (%)

Categories	China	Poland	United States	Turkey
GENDER				
Women	68.1	70.9	56.5	48.7
Men	31.2	27.7	43.1	49.7
No data	0.7	1.3	0.4	1.5
AGE				
15 – 20 years	14.2	35.5	79.6	9.6
21 – 30 years	66.4	63.5	16.9	76.5
31 years and more	19	0.7	3.5	13.4
EDUCATION LEVEL				
Schoolboy/girl	17.3	4.4	33.1	0.0
Bachelor degree	27.8	78.9	58.5	78.1
Master degree	42.0	16.3	5.8	7.6
Postgraduate – professionally active	11.8	0.3	2.7	14.3

Source: own study.

Taking into account the diversity of the study group in terms of gender, it should be emphasised that it is difficult to determine whether there is significant prevalence of any gender. In two countries gender parity was nearly set (e.g. the United States and Turkey), i.e. almost equal proportions of both genders. The biggest predominance of women was observed in two groups, Chinese and Polish, where their structure in terms of gender is very similar.

When analysing the respondents in relation to the level of education, it should be emphasised that in almost all studied countries young people, schoolboys/schoolgirls, undergraduates (during their Bachelor studies) and graduates (during their Master studies) predominate. The largest group classified as schoolboys/schoolgirls was observed in the United States (33.1%), which is also related to its structure in terms of age. The country where a significant number of participants were also schoolboys/schoolgirls was China (17.3%). On the other hand, in Poland and Turkey undergraduate students predominated, while in China, graduate students formed the largest percentage group. The differences among cultures and education level are caused by the differences in the education system in the studied countries.

In order to examine whether respondents from the examined countries differ in terms of the frequency of using SNSs for job related activities, an analysis with the use of Kruskal-Wallis test was performed (Table 2). In Table 3 the results of the post-hoc test – Dunn Bonferroni are shown to present which groups differ significantly from each other.

Table 2. Kruskal-Wallis test for SNSs' usage for job related activities in four researched countries

Sign of activity	Country	N	M	SD	r	H	p
W1	Poland	283	4.66	1.40	700	**102.72**	**<0.001**
	China	275	4.34	1.47	624		
	Turkey	372	3.58	1.48	453		
	United States	256	4.46	1.36	647		
W2	Poland	278	4.17	1.51	610	**88.71**	**<0.001**
	China	269	4.08	1.41	589		
	Turkey	355	3.45	1.51	456		
	United States	253	4.58	1.42	702		
W3	Poland	278	3.59	1.65	632	**63.56**	**<0.001**
	China	279	3.17	1.47	548		
	Turkey	365	2.99	1.43	508		
	United States	258	3.98	1.69	709		
W4	Poland	278	3.31	1.37	557	**68.01**	**<0.001**
	China	276	3.87	1.59	668		
	Turkey	358	2.88	1.52	460		
	United States	253	3.69	1.67	626		

N – number of the respondents; M – mean; SD – standard deviation; H – result of Kruskal-Wallis test;
p – level of significance for K-W test; r – medium rank
Source: own study.

The analyses demonstrated statistically significant differences among the studied groups in terms of looking for business contacts (W1): H (3, N = 1186) = 102.72; $p < 0.001$. Multiple comparisons showed that people living in Turkey more often used SNSs in order to look for business contacts than respondents living in Poland ($p < 0.001$), China ($p < 0.001$), and the United States ($p < 0.001$) (Table 2). The post-hoc test – Dunn Bonferroni – showed that significant differences concern Poland and Turkey (Turkish respondents used SNSs more regarding to W1 than Polish ones), China and Turkey (Turk-

ish respondents used SNSs more regarding to W1 than Chinese ones), Turkey and the US (Turkish respondents used SNSs more regarding to W1 than theAmericans) (Table 3).

Table 3. Dunn Bonferroni post-hoc test for SNSs' usage for job related activities in four researched countries

Sign of activity	Groups	Post-hoc Dunn Bonferroni [z / p]			
		Poland	China	Turkey	United States
W1	Poland	–	2.61 / 0.054	**9.12 / <0.001**	1.77 / 0.464
	China	2.61 / 0.054	–	**6.26 / <0.001**	0,79 / >0.999
	Turkey	**9.12 / <0.001**	**6.26 / <0.001**	–	**6,98 / <0.001**
	United States	1.77 / 0.464	0.79 / >0.999	**6.98 / <0.001**	–
W2	Poland	–	0.73 / >0.999	**5.75 / <0.001**	**3.18 / 0.009**
	China	0.73 / >0.999	–	**4.92 / <0.001**	**3.87 / 0.001**
	Turkey	**5.75 / <0.001**	**4.92 / <0.001**	–	**8.95 / <0.001**
	United States	**3.18 / 0.009**	**3.87 / 0.001**	**8.95 / <0.001**	–
W3	Poland	–	**2.92 / 0.021**	**4.57 / <0.001**	2.63 / 0.052
	China	**2.92 / 0.021**	–	1.46 / 0.859	**5.50 / <0.001**
	Turkey	**4.57 / <0.001**	1.46 / 0.859	–	**7.27 / <0.001**
	United States	2.63 / 0.052	**5.50 / <0.001**	**7.27 / <0.001**	–
W4	Poland	–	**3.40 / 0.004**	**4.11 / <0.001**	2.36 / 0.110
	China	**3.40 / 0.004**	–	**7.71 / <0.001**	**5.68 / <0.001**
	Turkey	**4.11 / <0.001**	**7.71 / <0.001**	–	1.50 / 0.796
	United States	2.36 / 0.110	**5.68 / <0.001**	1.50 / 0.796	–

z – value of the Dunn test; p – level of significance with the Bonferroni correction
Source: own study.

The analyses demonstrated statistically significant differences among the studied groups in terms of looking for new job offers (W2): H(3, N = 1155) = 88.71; $p < 0.001$. The post-hoc test – Dunn Bonferroni – showed that significant differences concern Poland and Turkey, Poland and the US, China and the US, and Turkey and the US. People living in Turkey more often used SNSs in order to look for new business offers than respondents living in Poland ($p < 0.001$), China ($p < 0.001$), and the United States ($p < 0.001$). Moreover, respondents from the United States used SNSs in order to look for new job offers less frequently than people living in Poland ($p = 0.008$) and China ($p = 0.001$). This result may stem from the age of American respondents.

In terms of looking for job related information and material, we can observe statistically significant differences among the studied groups (W3): H(3, N = 1180) = 63.56; $p < 0.001$. The post-hoc test – Dunn Bonferroni – showed that significant differences concern Polish and Chinese groups, Polish and Turkish, Chinese and American, and Turkish and American groups. Multiple comparisons demonstrated that people living in Poland used SNSs in order to look for job related information and materials less frequently than respondents from China ($p = 0.021$) and Turkey ($p < 0.001$). Moreover, American respondents used SNSs for W3 less frequently than people living in China ($p < 0.001$) and Turkey ($p < 0.001$).

Kruskal-Wallis test demonstrated that there are statistically significant differences among the studied groups in terms of placing information about professional achievements on SNSs H(3, N = 1165) = 68.01; $p < 0.001$. The post-hoc test – Dunn Bonferroni – showed that significant differences concern Poland and China, Poland and Turkey, China and Turkey and China and the US. Polish respondents used SNSs for W4 less frequently than Turkish ones ($p = 0.004$), however more often than people living in

China ($p < 0{,}001$). Moreover, people living in Turkey used SNSs for W4 more often than people living in the US ($p < 0.001$) and China ($p < 0.001$).

The analysis with the use of Kruskal-Wallis test and the Dunn Bonferroni post-hoc test showed the differences among the studied groups. Turkish respondents use SNSs most often for job related activities, while it is done the least often by the surveyed Americans. Thus, the obtained results are convergent with the results of the international research conducted by the Randstad Research Institute in 29 countries in 2015 (Salesnews.pl, 2015).

Referring to the dimensions distinguished by Hofstede and the obtained results on using SNSs for job related activities, convergence in relation to three dimensions can be observed: individualism/collectivism (IDV), power distance (PDI), and indulgence/restraint (IND) (Figure 1).
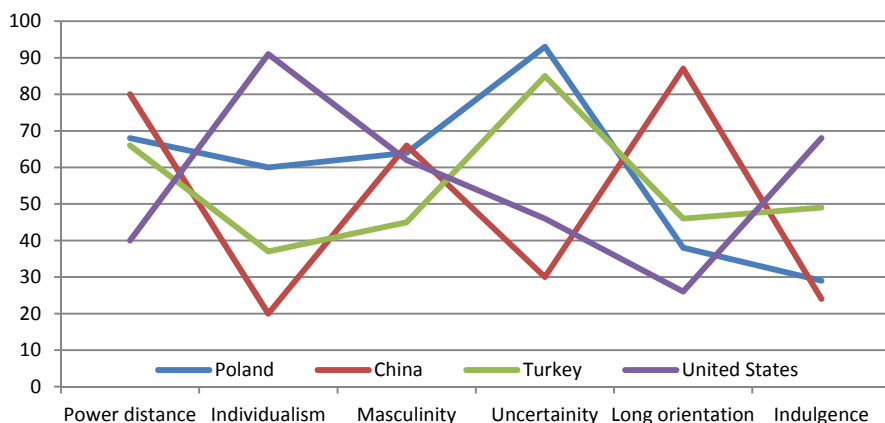
Figure 1. Values of coefficients of dimensions for the studied countries in Hofstede's research
(the max score in particular dimension is 100,
e.g. if the score of IDV is closer to 100 it means that country is classified as individualistic)
Source: Hofstede *et al.*, (2010).

A greater use of SNSs for job related activities by respondents from the Turkish and Chinese groups is related to the lower level of individualism, a higher level of power distance and a higher level of restraint. On the other hand, lesser use of SNSs for job related activities by respondents from the American groups is related to the higher level of individualism, a lower level of power distance and a higher level of indulgence. Turkey and China, according to Hofstede's studies, are collectivistic countries ($IDV_{China}=20$, $IDV_{Turkey}=37$) where behaviours focused on a group, and not the achievements of an individual predominate (Hofstede *et al.*, 2010). These characteristics were the basis for creating SNSs in general, thus networks of friends, exchanging and looking for information, etc. Moreover, these countries are similar to each other in relation to power distance, which indicates the distance and hierarchy among particular members of the society because of education, age or gender, among others ($PDI_{China}=80$, $PDI_{Turkey}=66$) and in relation to the level of restraint which regards "not putting much emphasis on leisure time and controlling the gratification of their desires" ($IND_{China}=24$, $IND_{Turkey}=49$) (Hofstede *et al.*, 2010).

Therefore, it can be noticed that more frequent usage of SNSs for job related activities is connected with a higher level of collectivism cultures, power distance and restraint.

On the other hand, the analysis of correlations with the use of Pearson's chi-square test between W1…W4 and gender, age and education also indicated significant differentiation among the studied groups (Table 4). Taking into account a group where the largest number of correlations was identified, the Chinese group should be observed. Each studied element – gender, age and the level of education – differentiates the use of SNSs for job related activities among Chinese respondents.

Table 4. Correlations between gender, age education level and the way of using SNSs for job activities

Sign of activity	China		Poland		the United States		Turkey	
	χ2	V	χ2	V	χ2	V	χ2	V
GENDER								
W1	11.37*	0.21	2.78	0.1	3.5	0.11	10.2	0.16
W2	11.52*	0.22	21.6**	0.3	3.8	0.12	5.54	0.12
W3	5.48	0.14	4.3	0.12	0.8	0.05	6.31	0.13
W4	31.88**	0.35	1.29	0.07	4.69	0.13	2.7	0.08
AGE								
W1	24.67**	0.25	15.9*	0.17	18.17*	0.19	22.4**	0.18
W2	18.2*	0.18	16.98*	0.18	18.44*	0.19	30.4**	0.2
W3	20.7*	0.2	6.2	0.1	11.06	0.14	13.6	0.13
W4	17.4*	0.19	5.86	0.1	4.53	0.09	18.6*	0.17
EDUCATION LEVEL								
W1	51.95**	0.22	7.6	0.09	18.5	0.15	7.5	0.08
W2	31.8*	0.17	10.05	0.1	14.2	0.13	18.4	0.13
W3	45.5**	0.21	10.9	0.11	19.1	0.15	15.4	0.12
W4	22.23	0.14	10.96	0.11	16.6	0.24	18.9	0.22

*Correlation is significant at the p<0.05 level   **Correlation is significant at the p< 0.01 level
χ2 – Pearson chi2 statistics; V – Cramer`s indicator
Source: own study.

Taking into account the studied criteria, chi-square coefficients show the largest number of correlations between the use of SNSs for job related activities and gender. In each group statistically significant correlations were identified. In all the studied groups age differentiates the usage of SNSs in order to look for business contacts (W1) and new job offers (W2). In all the studied groups respondents from the 21-30 age group do it more often than others. In the Chinese and American groups age differentiates also the usage of SNSs in order to place information about professional achievements (W4).

Referring to the criterion of gender, it needs to be emphasised that in the Chinese group statistically significant correlations between the use of SNSs for job related activities and W1 ($p < 0.05$; $V = 0.21$), as well as W2 ($p < 0.05$; $V = 0.22$) were identified. These relations show that Chinese women use SNSs for both looking for business contacts and job offers more often than men. On the other hand, Chinese men much more often place information about their professional achievements (W4: $p < 0.01$) on SNSs. Moreover, the level of V-Cramer coefficient shows that this correlation ($V = 0.35$) is quite strong. Among the studied groups and activities (W) statistically significant corre-

lation between gender and W2 ($p < 0.01$; $V = 0.3$) was also identified. Polish women more often than men use SNSs in order to look for new job offers.

Analysing the obtained results in relation to education level it needs to be emphasised that only in the Chinese group statistically significant correlations with regard to the usage of SNSs in order to look for business relations (W1: $p < 0.01$; $V = 0.22$), look for new job offers (W1: $p < 0.05$; $V = 0.17$) and look for materials for job (W1: $p < 0.01$; $V = 0.21$) were observed. All these activities are most often performed by Master's students.

DISCUSSION

The analysis of literary studies and empirical research demonstrated that markets are differentiated in terms of using SNSs for job related activities (Verhoeven *et al.*, 2011; Manroop & Richardson, 2013). The results of the empirical research presented in this paper show that SNSs are a tool most often used by Turkish respondents, and companies operating on that market definitely should use SNSs in the recruitment process. SNSs can be used effectively in Turkey both in employer branding (Katiyar & Sain, 2016) and looking for new workers (Gurchiek, 2015; Madera, 2012).

The study also showed that age differentiates the use of SNSs in terms of looking for both business contacts as well as job offers in each of the studied groups. It is most often done by people from the 21-30 age group, i.e. representatives of Generation Y. These results refer to the works presented earlier by other authors (e.g. Verhoeven *et al.*, 2011; Luscombe, Lewis & Biggs, 2013). The information that SNSs should be one of sources of collecting data regarding future employees is crucial for companies looking for employees from this age range.

In the Chinese group, it was observed that the way of using SNSs for job related activities is differentiated because of gender, age and education. When looking for employees with a particular profile, companies on that market can use the fact that Chinese women more often look for job offers through SNSs. On the other hand, Chinese men definitely more often place information about their achievements there. Gender and education level were not variables relating the frequency of SNS usage for job related activities in other studied countries, which is an interesting contribution in the literature. The most important factor is age.

Social networking platforms can be a useful tool in employer branding strategy on the international market (Madera, 2012). They play a particularly important role among young employees from Generation Y, however the way they are used is differentiated in terms of market and culture.

The current literature usually presents the problem of the use of SNSs in job related activities by an analysis carried out in enterprises (from the perspective of enterprises). The results of the exploratory study presented in the paper show the perspective of individual SNS users. This can be a value for managerial implications for enterprises within the framework of their recruitment policy and further their competitiveness. More and more enterprises use SNSs in order to look for new employees who constitute the key source of competitive advantage. It also stems from the research done by Jobvite company in 2011, where 89% out of 800 researched companies indicated using SNSs in the recruitment process. Moreover, an upward trend can be observed in comparison to this study from 2010 where 83% of respondents emphasised using SNSs in the recruitment process (Manroop & Richardson, 2013). SNSs are a valuable source of information used by headhunting companies because from the point of view of an employer analysis of data provided on SNSs it

is an important element in searching for and the preliminary assessment of the qualifications of a potential employee (Bissola & Imperatori, 2013). It is not only about portals used for presenting one's career path, e.g. LinkedIn, Research Gate or GoldenLine (Loiacono, Djamasbi & Tulu, 2011). Employers sometimes, with the consent of a potential candidate, analyse the history of activity on other SNSs, e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram. The main purpose here is to examine whether a given person has a broad network of friends (and is therefore an open person who establishes relationships easily), how often they use social media, what information is placed there, etc. (Kluemper, 2013; Girard *et al.*, 2013). The results of one of the studies conducted among 2667 American managers showed that the analysis of activity and posts of a candidate for an employee on SNSs may be decisive in terms of hiring or rejecting them in the further stage of the recruitment process. The reasons for rejecting a candidate which were most often indicated in this project were provocative or inappropriate photos and information (also from private celebrations), unfavourable opinions about employers, sharing confidential information, poor communication skills, discriminating comments among others. On the other hand, information from SNSs which can help in getting a job includes the appropriate presentation of professional qualifications, creativity of an applicant, good communication with other users, good opinions about a given person posted by other users, etc. (Kluemper, 2013).

Apart from analysing social media profiles of potential employees, many companies also upload information about current vacancies and job requirements to their SNSs profiles or are in dialogue with the applicants through social media (Bruning, Dials & Shirka, 2008). Therefore, SNSs are becoming an important recruitment tool (Malita *et al.*, 2010) and an instrument used for corporate image building on the job market (so-called employer branding) (Bondarouk *et al.*, 2013; Sivertzen, Nilsen & Olafsen, 2013). Both Social Media and Human Resources experts suggest that companies should be more creative in the recruitment process when SNSs are used and for this purpose apply not only LinkedIn, Facebook or Twitter, but also YouTube which would be more attractive for young applicants (Robbins, 2008). The results of the presented exploratory study prove the importance of SNSs in such activities, especially among people from Generation Y.

CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

To conclude the obtained results of the presented research it needs to be stated that, firstly, there is differentiation among the studied groups in relation to the use of SNSs for job related activities (W1…W4). Turkish respondents do it much more often than others. The least use of SNSs for these purposes was noted in the American group (it might have been caused by the age of American respondents). Secondly, from among the studied differentiating factors which influence the use of SNSs for job related activities, age is of the greatest importance. Age differentiates the use of SNSs in order to look for business contacts (W1) and job offers (W2) among all the surveyed respondents regardless of the country. The remaining factors, that is gender and education level, also influence the use of SNSs for job related activities, however only in the Chinese group. Referring to the applied inductive method, it can be stated that the above statements regarding the correlations of using SNSs for job related activities can be research hypotheses on which further, more thorough studies and statistical analyses can be based. That study can be treated as a pilot one and the background for future research. It is because of numerous

limitations related to the presented research problem and its scope. Firstly, in the questionnaires, although a respondent replies to a given question about how they behave (or would behave) in particular situations, it could be that their actual behaviour would slightly differ from the one declared. In this case, qualitative methods could be more effective. However, when undertaking a study across multiple national markets, the qualitative method generates considerable costs and that is why researchers often decide to apply only questionnaire methods (with closed questions). Another limitation of the presented research is that the non-random sampling, the group sizes and the demographic differences among groups lead to the lack of a possibility of extrapolating the results to the whole population for each individual country.

This notwithstanding, research limitations are very often a stimulus to either continue the study or expand it, especially in relation to international activities. The presented exploratory study could be expanded and improved via random sampling, and considering larger and of similar structure samples of SNS users. The authors are aware that the until now the obtained results are a kind of snapshot of the subject matter. Nevertheless, the findings are the foundation for future, cross-country qualitative and in-depth studies focused on the utility of SNSs.

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