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Article

The role communication, informativeness, and social presence play in the social media recruitment context of an emerging economy

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MANAGEMENT | RESEARCH ARTICLE

The role communication, informativeness, and social presence play in the social media recruitment context of an emerging economy

Kai Si¹, Tariq Jalees², Syed Imran Zaman^{3,4*}, Syed Hasnain Alam⁵ and Sherbaz Khan⁶

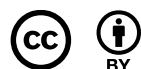
Abstract: Both individuals and organizations extensively use the internet and social media for communications and other purposes in the present era. The study examines the impact of social media effectiveness on informativeness and communication. It also explores the effect of informativeness and communication on the recruitment process. The study also examined the mediating roles of informativeness and communication and the moderating role of social presence. The study has focused on the banking sector of Karachi, Pakistan. The study's enumerators distributed 450 questionnaires to the HR departments of the targeted banks and received 427 valid questionnaires. For data analysis, the study used Smart PLS version 3.2. It includes reliability, validity analyses, and generating a structural model for testing the hypotheses. The study's results support seven hypotheses and reject one hypothesis. The study found that social media positively affect informativeness, communication, and recruitment. The study also validated the (i)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

In recent years, collaborative research endeavors have notably increased, offering the distinct advantage of pooling ideas and fostering mutual learning. Our research team consists of five seasoned professionals, including a distinguished Professor, three Assistant Professors, and a Senior Lecturer. Collectively, the team boasts around eighty years of professional experience, spanning diverse fields such as advertising, management, and banking. At present, four of our empirical studies are undergoing review in prestigious international journals. Since its establishment, the team has made substantial contributions to studies related to business, brand development, and purchasing behavior.

PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

In the contemporary landscape, both individuals and corporate entities have substantially increased their dependence on the efficacy of social media platforms, such as Facebook and LinkedIn. Traditional recruitment tools are increasingly seen as outdated, prompting many organizations to turn to social media as a means to attract and retain talent. Recognizing the pivotal role of social media, our study delves into its impact on informativeness and communication. Furthermore, we explore how both these factors—informativeness and communication—influence the recruitment process. Additionally, we investigate the indirect effects of these two elements on recruitment. Certain variables, termed “moderating variables”, can amplify or mitigate these relationships. This study also evaluates the moderating effects of a firm's social media presence on recruitment outcomes. Data collected from Karachi's banking sector underscores the significance of all examined variables, including informativeness, communication, social media efficacy, and social presence, in enhancing the recruitment process.



mediating role of informativeness on social media effectiveness and (ii) the mediating role of communication on social media effectiveness and recruitment process. The study also supported the positive moderating roles of social presence on informativeness and the recruitment process, but it failed to support that social presence positively moderates communication and the recruitment process.

Subjects: Organizational Communication; General Psychology; Human Resource Management

Keywords: social-media effectiveness; social media presence; informativeness; communication and recruitment process

1. Introduction

Social media (SM) serves as a dynamic platform for consumers, facilitating interactions via computer networks. Such networks enable the creation, modification, and sharing of diverse content types, ranging from audio and visual media to text (Marion & Fixson, 2021). Beyond mere interactions, consumers also leverage social media for skill acquisition, gathering pertinent information, and even attaining certifications to bolster their employability prospects (Xu, 2020). While social media often presents a more informal interface, professional online entities tend to prioritize formal data exchanges (Chen et al., 2022). With the advent and proliferation of the internet, communication through social media platforms has surged. This increased connectivity empowers organizations to disseminate vital information seamlessly to their workforce (Nguyen, 2021). Concurrently, a significant number of employees integrate social media into their daily routines (Yoganathan et al., 2021). Rozelle and Landis (2002) posit that social media stands as a crucial reservoir for both actively searching and passive job candidates. It's notable that platforms like Facebook and LinkedIn have become particularly instrumental for job seekers in recent years (Jeelani & Hussain, 2023).

The recruitment process encompasses the screening, selection, and solicitation of potential employees who possess the requisite experience, skills, and competencies (Melanthiou et al., 2015). It is a structured approach to talent acquisition, often involving several decision-makers in the process (Taylor, 2018). Talent management is not only integral to recruitment and selection but also instrumental in identifying the optimal talent for an organization (Russomanno et al., 2019). In the current digital age, web-based recruitment has gained significant traction. This is evident with the proliferation of job boards, social networking platforms, and dedicated online recruitment sites (Nguyen, 2021). While many large corporations employ formal and exhaustive recruitment strategies, which can be both resource-intensive and time-consuming, smaller enterprises tend to adopt a more informal, agile, and efficient approach to the recruitment process (Kuhn & Yu, 2021).

Technological advancements have ushered in an era where companies increasingly rely on social media for talent acquisition and retention. These digital platforms empower firms to harness web-based recruitment tools and techniques, such as sophisticated databases, virtual interviews, and online personality assessments (Ptel, 2020). Such tools not only streamline the recruitment process but also offer significant cost savings (Mochi et al., 2017; Stone et al., 2013). Numerous organizations have adeptly integrated social media into their recruitment strategies, yielding notable success in talent attraction and retention (Melanthiou et al., 2015). Taylor (2018) asserts that E-recruitment has become the *modus operandi* for external talent sourcing, providing a convenient platform for candidates to submit resumes and job applications (Black & Van Esch, 2020). Contemporary studies indicate a dwindling reliance on traditional recruitment channels like newspapers, television, and radio (Carpentier et al., 2019). In a compelling observation, Helm et al. (2022) noted that approximately one-fifth of the population maintains a presence on social networks, revealing a strong predilection for internet-based recruitment approaches.

Social media is characterized by two primary attributes: informativeness and social media presence (Frasca & Edwards, 2017). The former, informativeness, serves as a potent tool for disseminating information to employees (Fitriani et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2019). On the other hand, a robust social media presence within an organization fosters an environment where employees feel encouraged to engage and interact in a collegial manner. Historical research indicates that effective communication plays a pivotal role in identifying and appealing to prospective candidates (Allen et al., 2013; Carpentier et al., 2019). Fundamental components of any communication process include the recipient, the content of the message, and the medium through which it is conveyed (Son et al., 2019). To achieve success in recruitment, it is imperative to maintain an efficient and effective communication system (Franke et al., 2019).

The Marxist school of thought has prominently criticized capitalist scholars for their oversight of women's domestic labor contributions (Jafarli & Doroudi, 2020). With the ascent of information-driven economies, there has been a burgeoning interest among researchers in understanding the significant implications of "invisible labor" or concealed work in today's landscape (Cherry, 2016). Such labor encompasses tasks that are either directly income-generating or imperative for job retention, yet the efforts are often overlooked by employers. Furthermore, the economic value of this labor is frequently undervalued or outright dismissed by employers, consumers, and prevailing legal and cultural norms (Mills & Owens, 2021). The advent of the internet and digital technologies has spotlighted the significance of this hidden labor, particularly in roles such as online community managers, gig-based task workers, and content moderators (Duffy & Sawey, 2022).

Drawing upon prior literature, it is evident that effective communication plays a pivotal role in the banking industry. The nuances of informativeness and social presence are integral determinants in shaping recruitment strategies via social media platforms. The ascent of e-recruitment in Pakistan can be attributed to the widespread accessibility of social media across various income groups and its growing integration within business paradigms. Distinct from preceding research endeavors, the present study postulates these variables as mediating factors, positing that such a perspective can offer a more nuanced understanding of the subject. In light of these considerations, the research seeks to elucidate the following:

- (1) To ascertain the impact of social media effectiveness on informativeness and communication in local banks.
- (2) To examine the impact of informativeness and communication on the recruitment process of local banks.
- (3) To examine the mediating role of informativeness on the relationship between social media effectiveness and the recruitment process in local banks.
- (4) To examine the mediating role of communication on the relationship between social media effectiveness and the recruitment process in local banks.
- (5) To examine the moderating role of social media presence between informativeness and the recruitment process relationship in local banks.
- (6) To examine the moderating role of social media presence between communication and the recruitment process relationship in local banks.

2. Literature review

2.1. Recruitment process

Drawing upon the tenets of Signaling Theory, it can be inferred that the organizational framework, encompassing the recruiter, recruitment tools, and processes, is strategically designed to serve the interests of potential job candidates. This theory critically assesses the dynamics between job aspirants and recruiters. An aspirant's commendable attitudes, behaviors, and demeanor command the attention of recruiters, leading to a more respectful engagement (Thompson et al.,

2008). Talent, defined as an employee's capacity to execute tasks, is characterized by key elements such as knowledge, character, expertise, and practical experience (Jothi & Savarimuthu, 2022). Securing and preserving such talent is imperative for an organization's trajectory towards growth and enduring success (Mujtaba & Mubarik, 2022). Given the intensified competition in the contemporary landscape, organizations grapple with the challenges of attracting and retaining such exceptional individuals (Dasan, 2022).

Drawing from contemporary literature, recruitment can be defined as the systematic approach of sourcing, evaluating, shortlisting, and onboarding prospective employees (Juicharoen et al., 2023). This procedure, often intensive in terms of time and financial investment, necessitates judicious allocation of resources to yield a strategic advantage for organizations. Consequently, during the hiring phase, it becomes imperative for enterprises to ascertain that the proficiencies and expertise of potential hires align seamlessly with the institution's requisites (Masenya, 2022).

Across the global business landscape, enterprises deploy a combination of formal and informal methodologies in their quest to secure talent. The act of recruitment is intricately interwoven with an organization's broader mission and guiding principles. Bell et al. (2020) posited that the retention of skilled human capital is paramount to ensuring the enduring viability of commercial entities. This underscores the necessity for firms to cultivate and sustain environments conducive to employee welfare and growth. With the proliferation of social media and its manifold advantages, businesses are increasingly leveraging these platforms for the acquisition and selection of adept professionals. These digital avenues foster a realm where employers and potential employees can disseminate and converse about job prospects, both through formal channels and casual interactions (Feng, 2019). Furthermore, the velocity and efficacy with which information is exchanged on these platforms bridge the potential disconnect between communicators, ensuring a more streamlined flow of information (Mcfarland & Ployhart, 2015).

In the contemporary recruitment landscape, a significant number of enterprises and talent acquisition specialists sustain dedicated online portals, inviting aspirants to submit their curricula vitae. This strategy enables the establishment of a rich talent reservoir, positioning organizations to swiftly reach out to candidates for emerging roles (Wheeler & Buckley, 2021). Alongside these portals, companies increasingly harness the power of social media platforms, notably Facebook and LinkedIn, to further their recruitment objectives. Notably, the current epoch has witnessed a surge in professionals curating and updating their profiles on LinkedIn. A testament to its ubiquity, recent literature indicates that an overwhelming 95% of recruiters employ LinkedIn as a tool for talent acquisition (Villeda et al., 2019). Mcfarland and Ployhart (2015) assert LinkedIn's prominence, suggesting that it emerges as the preferred platform for employers in the quest for the ideal candidate. Conversely, Hosain et al. (2020) posit that while LinkedIn excels in sourcing seasoned professionals, it may not be as efficacious for roles at the entry echelon.

An empirical investigation encompassing 561 employees across 16 Chinese banks underscored the salient role of social media integration within Human Resource Management (HRM), associating it with enhanced employee well-being and a sustainable work milieu (Cooper et al., 2019). Delving deeper into the banking realm, research predicated on HRM feedback accentuated the multifaceted nature of the employment process upon leveraging a "social footprint." This multifariousness yields dividends in terms of cost-effectiveness, temporal efficiency, and overall operational optimization. Additionally, this modus operandi provides prospective employees with a lucid insight into the bank's ethos, encapsulating its moral compass, behavioral expectations, and intellectual paradigm. Expanding upon this narrative, the research emphasized the continued pertinence of social media within HRM even post the recruitment phase. A consequential takeaway from this study was the pressing need for HRM professionals to continually refresh their acumen and proficiency vis-à-vis the dynamic realm of social media (Boudlaie et al., 2019). Building on this discourse, Kargas and Tsokos (2020) postulate that when banking entities harness social media to sculpt their employer brand narratives, they metamorphose into "influencer employers." The

scholars further contend that this strategic adoption of social media has invariably uplifted both the volume and caliber of candidate applications flowing into these financial institutions.

An empirical investigation encompassing 561 professionals from 16 banking institutions in China underscored the indispensability of integrating social media within Human Resource Management (HRM) frameworks, linking this integration directly to enhanced employee welfare and the creation of a sustainable work atmosphere. Another exploration within the banking arena, which sought insights from HRM, revealed that harnessing a “social footprint” introduces intricacies into the hiring process. These intricacies, while intricate, are often synonymous with the recalibration of cost structures, efficiency improvements, and temporal optimizations. Furthermore, such a paradigm offers aspirants a transparent window into the bank’s cultural matrix, encompassing its moral ethos, behavioral norms, and cognitive perspectives. The research further posits that the resonance of social media in HRM isn’t confined merely to the recruitment phase but extends beyond it. Consequently, the study advocates for HRM specialists to perpetually refine their skill sets and cognizance apropos of the evolving domain of social media. Complementing this narrative, Kargas and Tsokos (2020) postulate that as banking institutions adeptly wield social media to sculpt and disseminate their employer branding, they metamorphose into “influencer employers.” Such an evolution, the scholars contend, has precipitated a discernible uptick in both the sheer volume and the intrinsic quality of applications coursed to these establishments.

2.2. Social media effectiveness

Users increasingly populate social media platforms with their profiles, driven by a desire to forge connections with individuals of similar interests and engage in enriching dialogues (Mcfarland & Ployhart, 2015). The digital ecosystem offers a diverse array of social media options, each tailored to satisfy specific user preferences and purposes (Carpentier et al., 2017). While some platforms cater to informal social exchanges, others are oriented towards professional networking. Notably, Cheng et al. (2019) highlight a pronounced consumer inclination towards platforms designed for professional networking as opposed to casual social spaces. Given this, many individuals not only establish their presence on these platforms but also allocate significant portions of their daily lives, both for work-related and recreational activities. In the corporate domain, there is a growing recognition of social media’s potential as a tool for talent acquisition and retention. However, many enterprises still grapple with effectively allocating resources to maximize their online presence (Malik et al., 2023). Beyond the initial technological investments, companies also face ongoing expenses related to platform maintenance, content curations, and visual optimizations, all of which aim to captivate potential hires (Bissola & Imperatori, 2013; Butts, 2008). Complementing this trend, Feng (2019) underscores the escalating emphasis firms place on e-recruitment in their talent acquisition strategies.

Emerging from the vast body of literature is the understanding that platforms such as Facebook and LinkedIn facilitate user profile creation, serving as digital arenas for individual representation (Korzynski et al., 2020). Organizations, in their quest to onboard adept talents, often turn to these digital platforms as reservoirs of prospective candidates (Kaur et al., 2015). The integration of social media into recruitment strategies can culminate in substantial cost savings for firms in the talent acquisition process. Notably, these platforms permit firms to tap into expansive talent pools without incurring exorbitant costs, making it a more economical alternative to conventional recruitment methodologies (Qureshi, 2022). Amplifying this perspective (Villeda et al., 2019), identify four cardinal pillars that underpin social media’s superiority over traditional channels: “create, connect, communicate, and consume.” These dimensions collectively enhance social media’s efficacy and appeal in the contemporary recruitment landscape.

2.3. Communication

Communication entails the dynamic transfer of information, ideas, emotions, and thoughts among individuals or groups (Barker et al., 2002; Dance, 1970). This process is an intrinsic component of human engagement and holds paramount importance across diverse spheres of our existence, be

it in personal affiliations, workplace environments, or broader societal dialogues. The architecture of communication is multi-faceted. Gibbs et al. (2015) underscore the significance of the sender, the genesis of the message. Krieger and Neil (2016) elaborate on the message itself as the encapsulated content or ideas shared. The channel represents the chosen modality for dissemination, be it verbal articulation, written discourse, or nuanced non-verbal gestures (Luhmann, 1992). Concluding this communicative journey is the receiver, the individual or entity discerning the message (Dance, 1970). Integral to the full communicative cycle is feedback, serving as a reflective response to the disseminated message.

2.4. Informativeness

Informativeness is delineated as the caliber or extent to which pertinent and valuable insights are conveyed. It encapsulates the transmission of salient knowledge, facts, or specifics that resonate with significance for the recipient (Lee & Hong, 2016). Goodrich et al. (2015) and Moldovan et al. (2019) posit that informativeness stands as a linchpin in communication, facilitating individuals in knowledge assimilation, fostering sagacious decision-making, and augmenting comprehension across multifarious domains. Najiba et al. (2016) articulate that informativeness gauges the precision, value, and trustworthiness of the information disseminated among employees. Essentially, it measures the degree to which content amplifies user comprehension, underpinned by its pertinence and credibility (Lee & Hong, 2016). It's noteworthy that the spectrum of informativeness across social media platforms is heterogenous, influenced by the nature of the platform, content character, and the participating audience.

2.5. Social media presence

Social presence encompasses a brand's prominence and engagement on digital social platforms. It signifies the depth of a brand's connection with its consumer base. Enhanced visibility on such platforms can foster heightened trust and allegiance among consumers (Aragon, 2003; Lowenthal, 2010). In the realm of digital communication, the manifestation of social presence is shaped by multifaceted determinants such as the inherent traits of the communication channel (Cobb, 2009), the caliber of interaction (Argo et al., 2005), and the perceived intimacy within the virtual milieu (Tu, 2002).

2.6. Hypothesis development

In the following sections, we have presented the literature on the articulated hypothesis.

2.6.1. Social media effectiveness and informativeness (H1)

Researchers have discussed informativeness in the context of recruitment. Informativeness is communicating job-related information and firm values to existing and potential employees through social media (Hunkenschroer & Luetge, 2022). Its usage is important and provides authenticity. Firms in the present era use social media extensively to promote employer branding, which helps firms retain existing talent and attract new ones (Gupta et al., 2019). Sümniç et al. (2018) believe that a firm that uses social media to communicate information about the firm enhances employees' perception and is more attractive to potential employees. Signal and symbolic theories postulate that social media mechanisms and recruitment outcomes correlate positively. This interaction helps potential employees assess an employer's brand personality (Hosain et al., 2020). Lievens and Slaughter (2016) believe that social media effectiveness and informativeness are highly correlated.

H1: Social media effectiveness positively affects informativeness.

2.6.2. Social media and communication (H2)

Social media forums allow firms instant communication and real times updates. At the same time, individuals can also share information and messages instantly. Additionally, social media has

a broader reach. All these aspects enhance the timeliness and effectiveness of communication. Given these arguments, we have postulated the following hypothesis.

H2: Social media positively affects communication.

2.6.3. Informativeness and recruitment (H3)

Social media allows organizations to update information related to firms' values and announcements about upcoming positions with distinct job descriptions and requirements for the job in the context of experience, skills, and educational requirements (Giannantonio et al., 2019; Singh & Finn, 2003). Such information in social media is shared instantly and has a wider reach, which helps potential employees to align their profiles with the announced jobs. It also ensures that employers only receive relevant applications for their open positions. Thus, we argue that:

H3: Informativeness positively affects the recruitment process.

2.6.4. Communication and recruitment process (H4)

Extant studies suggest that communication affects a firm's attitudes, recruitment, pre-hiring outcomes, and attitudes and behaviors. These factors are precursors of recruitment effectiveness. Researchers also believe that communication in social media significantly depends on media capacity (S. Mnig et al., 2018). Traditionally firms used media such as radio, newspapers, and brochures to communicate with stakeholders. However, due to the effectiveness of social media, firms in the present era are allocating resources to social media (Gelinis et al., 2017). Golovko and Schumann (2019) conclude from their empirical study that business entities' communications posts on Facebook about the environment and recruitment processes lead to more applicants. Similarly, Williamson et al. (2010) found that posting more detailed descriptions of open positions on social media result in more applications from potential employees.

H4: Communication positively affects the recruitment process.

2.6.5. Social media effectiveness, informativeness, and recruitment process (H5)

Social media effectiveness plays a significant role in disseminating information about the firms and the cultural values of an organization (Campbell et al., 2022). Consequently, it is key to attracting and retaining talented employees (Giannantonio et al., 2019). Extant literature suggests that informativeness directly and through social media affects recruitment. Thus, we have articulated the following hypothesis.

H5: Informativeness mediates social media effectiveness and the recruitment process.

2.6.6. Social media, communication, and recruitment (H6)

With the growth of social media, the recruitment process is changing. Now many firms extensively use social media to attract and retain employees. In addition, firms also use social media to develop an organization's social interaction culture. Such a culture increases employees' performance, satisfaction, and attitudes toward work (Gupta et al., 2019). The internet is growing rapidly, and the recruitment process is changing. Because of social media, organizations attract the right employee to a broad audience without any communication agreement. The internet provides connectivity to users in an organization. It allows users to exchange and share experiences through messages and post their experiences on consumer-generated social media. This social interaction improved organizational communication effectiveness, improving the recruitment process (Carpentier et al., 2017; Mcfarland & Ployhart, 2015).

H6: Communication mediates a positive relationship between social media and the recruitment process.

2.7. Informativeness communication, social media, and social presence

Giannantonio et al. (2019) and Mazgaj et al. (2021) assert that higher social presence based on interactive and engaging communication enhances the association between informativeness and the recruitment process. At the same time, lower social presence may reduce informativeness's effect, leading to a decreased impact on the informativeness and recruitment process. Thus, we contend that a strong social presence would positively affect the relationship between informativeness and recruitment.

H7: Social presence positively moderates the relationship between informativeness and the recruitment process.

2.8. Communication, social presence, and recruitment

Mazgaj et al. (2021) suggest that high social presence in communication significantly improves communication, enhancing the relationship between communication and recruitment. Conversely, low social presence in communication decreases the quality of communication, which reduces the effect between communication and the recruitment process. Thus, we argue that a high social presence would positively affect the relationship between communication and recruitment.

H8: Social presence positively moderates the relationship between communication and recruitment.

2.9. Conceptual framework

Based on the above discussion, we developed a model containing the following six variables: Social media effectiveness (independent variable), informativeness (mediating variable), communication (mediating variable), social presence (moderating variable), social presence (moderating variable) and recruitment process (dependent variable) as shown in Figure 1.

3. Methodology

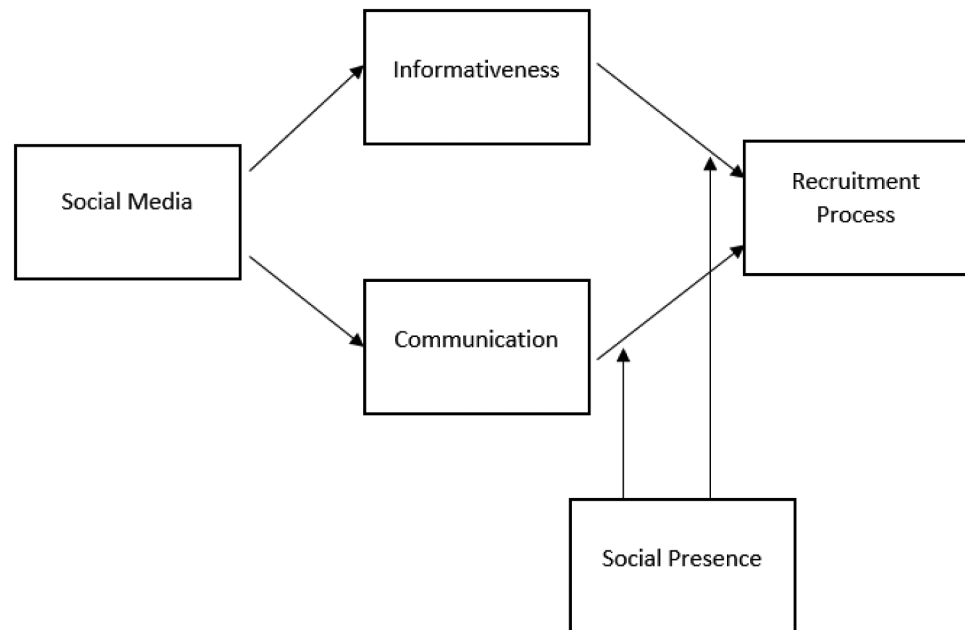
3.1. Data collection and sample participants

The study has focused on the banking sector of Pakistan as it uses technology and social media extensively. It also contributes significantly towards employment generation. We have targeted the leading banks in Pakistan: Habib Bank Limited, National Bank of Pakistan, Meezan Bank, Bank Alfalah, MCB Bank, and United Bank. The total number of employees employed in the banking sector is 162,629 (Ahmed et al., 2019). We have used a sample size calculator to estimate the minimum sample size (Calculator, 2023). Using the target population of 162,629, a 95% confidence level, and a 5% margin of error, we found that the minimum required sample will be 384.

However, the recruited enumerators distributed 450 questionnaires to the HR departments of the targeted banks and received 427. We recruited five graduated students from a local university to collect the data. Due to the non-availability of a sample frame, the enumerators used non-random sampling. Table 1 shows the respondents' profiles.

The results show that 17% of the respondents are upto 25 years age group, 25% are in the age group 25 to 35 years, 27% are in the age strata 36 to 45 years, 21% are in the age strata 46 to 55 age group, and the rest 10% were at least 56 years old. Regarding experience, 17% have an experience of upto 5 years, 25% have an experience of 6–10 years, 27% have an experience of

Figure 1. Conceptual framework.



11–15 years, 21% have an experience of 16–20 years, and 10% have an experience of 21 years plus. Regarding education, 16% of respondents are intermediate, 54% have a Bachelor's Degree, and 30% have a Master's Degree. Regarding gender, 67% of the respondents are male, and 33% are female. Marital status shows 47% were single and 53% were married. Also, 17% of respondents' incomes were upto 25,000, 27% of respondents' incomes ranged from Rs.26000–Rs.35000, 32% of respondents' incomes ranged from Rs.36000–Rs.45000, 15% of respondents' incomes ranged from Rs.46000–Rs.55000, and 9% of respondents' income were at least Rs.56000.

3.2. Scales and measures

The questionnaire for the study has two parts. Part one relates to demographics and has a nominal scale to categorize demographic-related data. The second part of the questionnaire relates to the main study. It has five constructs, and each construct has three items (as shown in [Appendix](#)). The study measured the respondents' opinions on a five-point Rating Scale, One shows strong disagreement, and five shows strong agreement. Constructs used in the questionnaire are shown in [Table 2](#).

3.3. Common method bias

We employed Harman's one-factor test to check the common method biases and found that the total variance for a single factor is less than 5. Additionally, all the VIFs presented in [Table 3](#) are less than 3, suggesting the data do not suffer from common method bias and multi-collinearity.

3.4. Statistical method

This study uses the Smart PLS software version 3 for empirical analysis (Ringle et al., 2005). Structural equation modeling (SEM) simultaneously calculates the relationship between the dependent, mediation, moderation, and independent variables. The PLS (Partial Least Square) modeling method provides various advantages. Compared to other software, it is user-friendly (Wilson, 2010). PLS also decreases the effect of measurement error (Chin et al., 2003). This method is selected for this research because it explores the relationship between multiple factors (Vinzi et al., 2010).

Table 1. Respondent Profile

Fields	Items	Percentage
Age	Up-25 Years	17%
	25-35 Years	25%
	36-45 Years	27%
	46-55 Years	21%
	56 Years Plus	10%
Experience	Upto-5 years	17%
	6-10 Years	25%
	11-15 years	27%
	16-20 Years	21%
	21 Years Plus	10%
Education	Intermediate	16%
	Bachelors	54%
	Masters	30%
Gender	Males	67%
	Females	33%
Marital Status	Single	47%
	Married	53%
Income	Upto Rs. 25K	17%
	Rs.26K- Rs.35K	27%
	Rs.36k-Rs.45K	32%
	Rs.46K-Rs. 55K	15%
	Rs.56k plus	9%

Table 2. Constructs used in the questionnaire

Constructs	Sources	Variable Type	Items
Social Media Effectiveness	Caers and Castelyns (2011) and Ollington et al. (2013)	Independent	3
Recruitment Process	Broughton et al. (2013)	Dependent	3
Social Media Presence	Allen et al. (2004)	Moderator	3
Communication	Sponci & Gitimu (2013)	Mediating	3
Informativeness	Williamson et al. (2003)	Mediating	3

4. Results

4.1. Measurement model

Initially, we generated a measurement model for reliability, validity, and discriminant validity, the model's predictive power, and fit indices. The measurement model presented in Figure 2 shows Beta values in the path diagram.

4.2. Descriptive analysis

The descriptive analysis presents results related to the constructs' reliability and convergent validity in Table 4

Table 3. Variance Inflation factor (VIF)

Items	Values
Communication-1	1.000
Communication -2	1.000
Communication-3	1.122
Informativeness -1	2.004
Informativeness -2	2.349
Informativeness -3	2.845
Recruitment process-1	1.036
Recruitment process -2	1.576
Recruitment process -3	1.557
Social media effectiveness -1	1.329
Social media effectiveness -2	1.118
Social media effectiveness -3	1.124
Social media Presence -1	2.154
Social media Presence-2	1.869
Social media Presence-3	1.261

The results show that the highest Cronbach's Alpha value is for communication (0.871) and the lowest for social media (0.770). Since these values are greater than 0.70, it is safe to assume that the constructs used in the study have acceptable internal consistency (Osburn, 2000). The results also show that AVE values are at least 0.70 and composite reliability values are greater than 0.70, suggesting the constructs do not deviate from the requirements of convergent validity (Laborde et al., 2022).

4.2.1. Discriminant validity (Fornell and Larcker)

The study has examined discriminant validity based on Fornell and Larcker (1981). Table 5 illustrates the summary of the results.

The results suggest that the square roots of AVE values are greater than Pearson Correlation values, suggesting that the constructs are unique and distinct (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

4.2.2. Discriminant validity (HTMT)

Although many studies use Fornell and Larcker (1981) criteria for assessing discriminant validity, many researchers, including Ab Hamid et al. (2017), suggest using the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlation as it is more stringent than Fornell and Larcker (1981) criteria and results with it have specificity and sensitivity rates (97% to 99%). Table 6 depicts discriminant validity based on the HTMT ratio and confirms that the constructs used in the study are unique and distinct, as HTMT values are below the threshold level of 0.85.

4.3. Outer loading

Overloading shows "how well an indicator variable represents the underlying construct." Table 7 shows that all the outer loading values are greater than 0.70 suggesting all the indicator variables represent the respective latent variables (Ab Hamid et al., 2017; Munir, 2018).

4.4. Structural model

We generated the structural model for the results related to the hypothesis by bootstrapping with a sub-sample of 5000. We have depicted the Structural Model in Figure 3 and the results in the following section.

Figure 2. Measurement model.

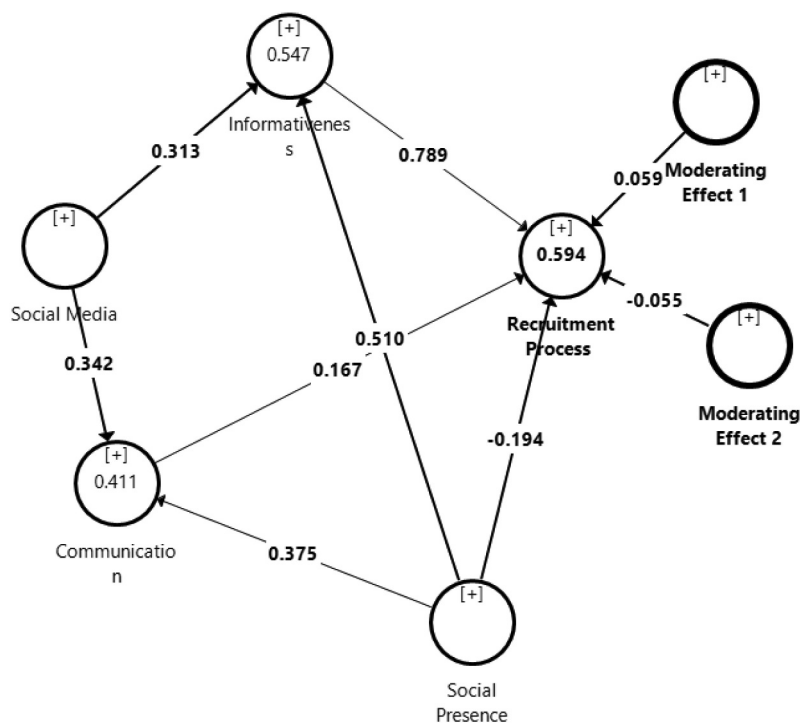


Table 4. Descriptive analysis

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Communication	0.904	0.906	0.933	0.778
Informativeness	0.813	0.823	0.877	0.770
Recruitment Process	0.868	0.892	0.919	0.791
Social Media	0.770	0.770	0.868	0.721
Social Presence	0.871	0.874	0.912	0.731

4.5. Hypothesis results

We have presented the summary of hypothesis results showing Beta, F, and P values in Table 8. The results support all four direct, two mediating, and two moderating hypotheses. In the case of direct hypothesis, we found the (i) strongest effect is on the association of “informativeness and recruitment ($\beta = 0.789$),” followed by the (ii) association between “social media effectiveness and communication ($\beta = 0.342$),” (iii) social media effectiveness and informativeness ($\beta = 0.313$), and (iv) “communication and recruitment” ($\beta = 0.167$).

5. Discussion and conclusion

5.1. Discussion

The results suggest that social media positively affects informativeness ($\beta = 0.313$, $t = 11.071$, $P < 0.05$) (H1). The result aligns with earlier studies (Kim et al., 2014). Social media is vital for the recruitment process as it provides information for the organization to prospective employees (Cheng et al., 2019). At the same time, studies have also found that consumers' attitude toward social media depends on informativeness and creativity (Sponci & Gitimu, 2013). Thus, social media and informativeness have a bi-directional relationship. Signaling theory postulates that

Table 5. Discriminant analysis (Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion

	Communication	Informativeness	Recruitment Process	Social Presence	Social Media
Communication	0.882				
Informativeness	0.602	0.877			
Recruitment	0.824	0.723	0.889		
Social Presence	0.579	0.701	0.569	0.849	
Social Media	0.707	0.662	0.685	0.700	0.855

social media and web pages send signals to existing and new employees, which they interoperate according to their perceptions (Connelly et al., 2011). The existing employees decide whether they want to continue working with the organization. At the same time, potential employees decide whether to join the organization (Lievens & Slaughter, 2016). Thus, we argue that organizations must communicate essential information through social media about their vision, culture, and what they expect from their employees.

Hypothesis 2 states that social media effectiveness positively affects communication ($\beta = 0.342$, $t = 17.007$ $P < 0.05$), which our results and past studies support (Sponci & Gitimu, 2013). Social media promotes connectivity and a forum where users can exchange their views and experiences (Zhuravskaya et al., 2020). In the present technological era, many firms use social media for communication and recruitment (Gupta et al., 2019). Besides providing connectivity, social media allows users to freely exchange their experiences and views (Carpentier et al., 2017). Compared to conventional communication tools, social media is more cost-effective and efficient and has a long reach (Gupta et al., 2019). Thus, many firms spend considerable resources (Carpentier et al., 2017). Thus we believe social media effectiveness

The study found that informativeness positively affects the recruitment process ($\beta = 0.789$, $t = 17.560$ $P < 0.05$) (H3). This result is consistent with the study of (Carpentier et al., 2019). Extant literature documents that firms use social media to display policies, procedures, culture, and vision apart from conventional mediums (S. Mnig et al., 2018). This information helps prospective employees align their values with the firms. If they find it matches their requirements and values, they will be more attractive to the firms (Hosain et al., 2020). We argue that HRM, apart from conventional practices, must use social media and other mediums to enhance a firm's brand image, which makes it more attractive to existing and potential employees (Jalees et al., 2021). Therefore, we argue that informativeness is helpful in the recruitment process because it provides relevant information to the potential employee.

Table 6. Discriminant validity (HTMT ratio)

	Com.	Informa	Recruit.	Social Media	Social Presence
Communication	-				
Informativeness	0.698				
Recruitment Process	0.599	0.846			
Social Media	0.677	0.787	0.523		
Social Presence	0.650	0.838	0.504	0.727	-

Table 7. Outer loading

	Communication	Informativeness	Recruitment Process	Social Presence
Com-1	0.896			
Com-2	0.921			
Com-3	0.876			
Info-1		0.827		
Info-2		0.832		
Info-3		0.854		
RP-1			0.832	
RP-2			0.868	
RP-3			0.818	
SP-1				0.868
SP-2				0.873
SP-3				0.721

Our results support hypothesis 4, which states that communication is positively associated with recruitment ($\beta = 0.167, t = 34.038, P < 0.05$). This result validates the earlier studies that also found communication process is a strong predictor of recruitment (Allen et al., 2004).

Our results support that “informativeness mediates social media effectiveness and the recruitment process ($\beta = 0.402, t = 16.502, P < 0.01$) (H5). Informativeness effectively provides data and statistics about the firms and job requirements to potential and existing employees. The result aligns with the findings (Carpentier et al., 2019). The above discussions show that social media stimulates informativeness, and informativeness positively affects recruitment. Therefore, informativeness mediates social media and recruitment (S. Mnig et al., 2018).

Hypothesis 6 states that communication mediates social media effectiveness and the recruitment process, which our results support ($\beta = 0.057, t = 5.722, P < 0.01$) and validates earlier literature (Allen et al., 2004; Sponci & Gitimu, 2013). Firms’ reliance on the communication process for attracting and retaining talented employees has increased significantly (Allen et al., 2004; Sponci &

Figure 3. Conceptual model.

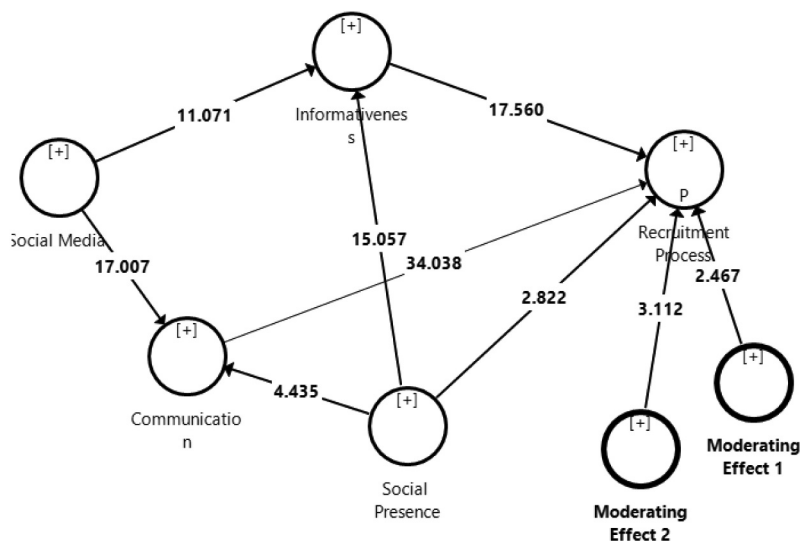


Table 8. Hypothesis result

Paths	β	T Stat.	P Values	Result
Social Media -> Informativeness (H1)	0.313	11.071	0.000	Accepted
Social Media -> Communication (H2)	0.342	17.007	0.000	Accepted
Informativeness -> Recruitment Process (H3)	0.789	17.560	0.000	Accepted
Communication -> Recruitment Process (H4)	0.167	34.038	0.000	Accepted
Social Media -> Inform. -> Recruitment (H5)	0.402	16.502	0.000	Accepted
Social Media -> Com. -> Recruitment (H6)	0.057	5.722	0.000	Accepted
Moderation Relationship (H7) ^A	0.059	2.467	0.009	Accepted
Moderation Relationship (H8) ^B	-0.055	3.112	0.025	Rejected

Notes: We tested all the significance values at a 95% confidence level. ^AThe moderator is a social presence, the independent variable is informativeness, and the dependent variable is the recruitment process. ^BModerator is social presence, the Independent variable is communication, and the dependent variable is the recruitment process.

Gitimu, 2013). Researchers believe effectiveness promotes communication leading to an effective recruitment process (Sponci & Gitimu, 2013).

Hypothesis 7 suggests that social presence positively moderates informativeness and recruitment, for which we found empirical support ($\beta = 0.059$, $t = 2.467$, $P < 0.05$). A high level of a strong social presence increases potential employees' trust in the firms, and they perceive information displayed by the firms is relevant, leading to positive moderating effects of social presence on the recruitment process (Wade et al., 2020). This finding is consistent with past studies that also found the same results (Gupta et al., 2019).

Hypothesis 8 supported the negative moderating role of social presence in the relationship between informativeness and the recruitment process ($\beta = -0.055$, $t = 3.112$, $P < 0.05$) but failed to support the hypothesized relationship (H8) that social presence positively moderates the relationship between communication and the recruitment process. Our results align with Tu and Mcisaac (2002) and Gupta et al. (2019) findings. Headworth (2015) asserts that when potential employees find the social presence of a firm "overwhelming and intrusive," they are more likely to find communicated information irrelevant and not useful, adversely affecting the moderating effect of social presence on the recruitment process. Many past studies have documented that social presence has "varying associations" with (i) informativeness and communication and (ii) communication and recruitment (Carpentier et al., 2017; Cheng et al., 2019).

6. Conclusion

New recruitment and selection methods open up as the internet and social networks change. With the rise of social media, many businesses have set up profiles on social media to introduce themselves, their products, and their brands to the public and to maintain relationships with their various stakeholder groups (Etter et al., 2019). Since most job-seekers (active and passive) use these sites, companies' social media pages can potentially serve as powerful recruitment tools (Carpentier et al., 2019). The exponential usage of social media in recruitment has significantly increased worldwide, and many organizations use it extensively for recruitment and communication. Given its importance, the study has developed and tested a model that contains six variables which are: Social media effectiveness (independent variable), informativeness

(mediating variable), communication (mediating variable), social presence (moderating variable), social presence (moderating variable) and recruitment process (dependent variable). We decided to focus on the banking industry because its employees are dissatisfied due to their lengthy work hours. Therefore, banks must emphasize recruitment via social media, which would assist them in aligning their values with prospective employees. The researchers distributed 450 questionnaires to the human resources departments of the targeted banks and received 427 valid responses. The study found that social media positively affect informativeness, communication, and recruitment. The study also validated the (i) mediating role of informativeness on social media effectiveness and (ii) the mediating role of communication on social media effectiveness and recruitment process. The study also supported the positive moderating roles of social presence on (i) informativeness and the recruitment process, but it failed to support that social presence positively moderates communication and the recruitment process.

6.1. Theoretical implications

This study has made a significant contribution to the literature on recruitment. Our results have validated that the variables (i.e., informativeness and communication) significantly mediate social media effectiveness and recruitment. A few studies examined the moderating role of social presence compared to our studies. Our study found social media presence positively moderates (i) the communication and recruitment process and (ii) the informativeness and recruitment process.

6.2. Practical and managerial implications

Human resource managers and others involved in candidate screening will benefit from the results of this study, and job seekers can use it to improve their chances of getting hired. Conventional hiring and recruiting employees are challenging and time-consuming processes. Social media has made it convenient to attract and retain employees. Social media technologies have numerous applications for professional purposes (Yen et al., 2020). For banking organizations to achieve the desired results from their use of social media, they must account for the configurational effects observed in this study. When utilized properly, social media can enhance workplace communication and collaboration. LinkedIn and Facebook are forums that help employers to search for talented employees. HR departments of banking organizations must spend their resources on developing and maintaining their social media network. Moreover, social media increases transparency via opportunities for open information sharing and participation (Men et al., 2023). Therefore, bank managers must ensure their social media presence to attract talented employees and improve their banks' reputation. Facebook is the most widely used social media site in Pakistan. As a result, it is imperative that the banks consistently add new information to it. Based on the findings of this study, we suggest that banks find out which social media platform their target audience uses. Subsequently, they should create and maintain a page on those platforms. In addition, to improve the public's impression of the bank as a reliable employer, the institution's social media accounts must feature ample information useful to job seekers. To accomplish this, a collaboration between a company's communication or public relations department and its recruitment department is necessary (Carpentier et al., 2019). Overall, if managed properly, social media present unique opportunities to cultivate a mutually beneficial platform for employers and candidates.

6.3. Limitations and future research recommendations

Although this research has produced some novel and intriguing perspectives, it has limitations. Future researchers may employ mixed research methodology to validate the study's conceptual framework and determine its relevance.

Further, to comprehend the applicability of the conceptual framework, it is strongly suggested that future research should investigate it from the perspective of young adults currently interning at the organization. It will allow the study to establish validity and comprehend possible discrepancies between young adults and individuals in the employment phase. Since the study focused on the service-based banking industry, future researchers should cautiously extrapolate it to other industries. In addition, we used a cross-sectional survey design which precludes drawing any conclusions about cause and effect. However, the survey could only capture a snapshot of this

iterative process of relationship building since relationships are founded upon patterns of interactions (Men et al., 2023) and are thus subject to variation over time. As a result, longitudinal studies may shed more light on this issue.

We also think that future studies might include ethical and servant leadership styles in their conceptual framework. It may increase satisfaction with the information and communication provided by the company and improve the satisfaction of potential candidates (Ruiz-Palomino et al., 2021) and, therefore, the company's recruitment process. Also, including servant or ethical leadership styles in the conceptual framework could improve the firm's social capital (Zoghbi-Manrique-de-Lara & Ruiz-Palomino, 2019) and social media effectiveness.

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No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Correction

This article has been corrected with minor changes. These changes do not impact the academic content of the article.

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Appendix

Annexure 1: Items used in the constructs

Scales: 1 shows Low Agreement and 5 shows High Agreement

Social Media Effectiveness

Rate the alignment level of your bank's social posts and goals.

Rate reach of the social media used in your bank.

Rate the real-time response of the social media used in your bank.

Recruitment Process

Rate the effectiveness of the interviewing process and other selection instruments used in your bank.

Rate how well the HR of your bank finds good candidates from non-traditional sources when necessary.

Rate the HR department's overall performance in recruitment and selection of your bank.

Social Presence

Rate the importance of social media presence to receive quality resumes.

Rate your satisfaction level on the social media presence in the bank.

Rate the importance of social media presence for enhancing brand image.

Communication

Rate the effectiveness of the communication messages sent by your bank.

Rate your perception of the satisfaction level with the communication messages received by the recipients of your bank.

Rate your satisfaction level with the communication medium used by your bank.

Informativeness

Rate the accuracy level of the information displayed on your bank's social media.

Rate the clarity level of the information displayed on your bank's social media.

Rate the relevance level of the information displayed on your bank's social media.
