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Abstract

The increasing impact of social networking sites in communication and socializing worldwide brings attention to how they affect recruitment processes of graduates in organizations. Many employers are now searching for graduates' data to complement their assessment of job candidates and hiring decisions. While this still is not developed as a common practice by (HR) practitioners and recruiters, existing research remains underdeveloped from the perspective of graduates' use of such sites. In this paper we analyze key impacts of cyber personal data of social networking sites for students and graduates' job opportunities. We use a combination of activity theory and interpretive analysis of data we obtain from graduates participation in several popular social networking sites, which enables us to ascertain more clearly the role that sites could play in recruitment. Findings from graduates' experiences indicate that such sites have been used by a large proportion of them and with a variety of purposes. Graduates use these sites to post their cyber personal data to reflect their daily lives, with no little or no regard for the content and its potential effects on employers. This leads us to suggest the importance for graduates to project an adequate perspective of their daily activity to potential employers on social networking sites and for further clarification on how they can become a common reference for both employers and graduates.

Keywords: Social Networking Sites, Recruitment, Cyber-Personal Data, Activity Theory

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INTRODUCTION

The increasing use of technologies like the Internet has pervaded many aspects of life. Nowadays, people are fond of communicating and interacting through online sites to have different, interesting and worldwide experiences. The growth of social networking websites like Facebook®, MySpace® and others is now a worldwide phenomenon. These websites have gained more than 100 million worldwide up to 2007 (Brockett, 2007), and now store large volumes of data of their users. For instance, a latest reported statistics is that 'Facebook® and MySpace® now carry details of around 12 million people in the UK alone' (Marriott, 2007:25). More recently, in March 2010 it has been reported by the media that Facebook® gets more hits per week than the popular search engine Google® (Financial Times, 2010). This suggests that individuals' data could now be made available online to anyone accessing it.

The impact of such data in areas like employee selection and recruitment has not been fully understood or managed by companies, and both recruiters and recruited could post or access data for different purposes. People, especially college or university students and graduates are interested in so-called 'cool' stuff (e.g. photos, diaries, ideas) to help them signify their individuality, diversity and 'cool' lifestyles (Gittlen, 2008) among other things. Companies might be using social networking sites to verify information provided by candidates through other means (CVs, interviews). How will a person's data affect his/her future job prospects? How could different uses of the same data be reconciled for the benefit of both companies and candidates? In this paper we investigate the impact of social networking sites data in activities of recruitment. We adopt a theoretical perspective based on activity theory which enables us to establish a common ground to appreciate the use of such data by both employers and potential employees (graduates). With a common framework we enquire about the role(s) of sites currently being played according to candidates' perceptions, and we discuss how sites could be better aligned to what companies are currently and should be doing in terms of recruitment. Our insights suggest that there is a mismatch between how different groups use social networking data and that graduates should pay more attention to the data they make available to others, in other words how they present themselves in the cyber-world.

The paper is organized as follows. We first describe how recruitment is currently being impacted by the availability of online data resources (social networking sites). We then

interpret such use in the light of activity theory, a conceptual framework that allows us to find a particular role for social networking sites in connection with other elements of recruitment. We then present the methodology and findings and we finish with practical implications for graduates and companies of online data use.

RECRUITMENT IN A SOCIAL NETWORKING CONTEXT

Today's company recruiters are facing a totally different labor market from those 10 years ago. Many firms and recruiters are finding that traditional job advertising and recruitment methods are not effective and attractive any more for getting new and better recruits (Egan, 2007). Due to the availability and accessibility of abundant personal information of social networking sites, firms are increasingly using the virtual social networking sites as a significant tool which use could *improve* recruitment practices. A great proportion of recruiters and HR practitioners agree that the social networking sites are effective and useful for recruitment and that they might become essential if not the next generation of recruitment 'virtual' organizations. Social networking sites are used as the multi-purpose recruitment tools by recruiters and firms; they are not only used to communicate and attract potential job candidates but also used to help recruiters verify resumes, check background information, assess if candidates could 'fit' within the company's organizational culture, as well as obtaining additional information in order to make a better and informed judgment and decision on their hiring. (Minto-Eversole, 2007).

The above is also being justified by several recent studies. For instance, 'a survey by financial services recruiter Joslin Rowe has found that 40 percent of employers now use social networking sites to run searches on job applicants' (Phillips, 2007: 11). This follows a trend in which 'since 2006, there has been a 17% increase in human resource professionals who use social networking sites as recruiting, resume verification and applicant screening tools at least occasionally' (SHRM Survey in Point for Credit Union Research & Advice: 2008:23). In the UK, another survey of consultants from 30UK IT staffing firms found that 58% think site such as Facebook®, and MySpace® are more useful for recruitment than printed advertisements; in addition, 49% of consider social networking sites more effective then internet banner advertising in finding staff' (Svvas, 2007: 36). These sites are becoming more popular in the recruitment industry (Helene, 2009:6), and used by a numbers of recruitment teams of companies to identify and find out additional information about prospective candidates (Kilby, 2007). LinkedIn® is another good example of application of social networking site in recruitment practices. It is a social network that contains 8 million professionals spread across the world, users include executives from all of the fortune 500 companies, and it is used as the main recruitment tools by a good number of IT companies in both USA and the UK (Langfitt, 2009) (Karl, 2009). In the US, a recent survey Robert Half International highlighted that nearly two-thirds (62percent) of 638 executives interviewed believe professional networking websites such as LinkedIn, will be useful recruitment tools (Robert Half International in HR forces, 2008:9).

Cost and effectiveness are two of the main factors driving networking sites adoption for recruitment. First, their cost of use is much lower than traditional recruitment practices like doing telephone interviews or selecting CVs (Kardon, 2008); sites help employers to filter out unsuitable candidates prior to their interviewing or CV more detailed screening (Berry, 2007:1). This potential benefit has led companies like Ernst & Young® and Cadbury Schweppes PLC® to set up their own company social networking space for recruitment. In the facebook® site, Ernst & Young has a dedicated section that provides not only basic information about job vacancies, but also a social discussion forum for perspective graduates to ask questions about their potential career in the company. In addition, there is an 'experiences sharing' section that enables graduates who already work in the company to share their personal experiences (Personnel Today, 2008). Secondly, through social networking sites a more dynamic and effective two-way communication process can be established between recruiter and candidate so that firms are able to know the candidates more effectively (Svvas, 2007) and help recruiters in conducting required background checks or the veracity of what candidates decide to include in their applications. Thirdly, social-networking sites gives the possibility to candidates to provide richer (and possibly more impressive) information than what they can include in their CVs or application forms: pictures, videos, messages and other items can portray the daily life, personality, social connections and interests of candidates.

But are these benefits fully realized by both employers and graduates? There is no clarity neither guidance on how social networking sites are to be used by firms and moreover, there is a growing concern for the negative effects that their use is having on candidates. According to a recent study conducted by Marriot (2007), 'one in five employers [can] now cyber-vet job candidates by searching these [social networking] websites…around 60 percent of 600 employers surveyed said such searches influenced their recruitment decisions and a *quarter* rejected candidates because of dubious netreps' (p.25) (italics added). Another recent study reported that 'around 12% of 236 recruitment managers acknowledge the influence of available online information in hiring decisions, with over half of those managers rejecting or not hiring candidates because of what they found online' (HRfocus 2007:8). This evidence seems to be mounting against candidates who might be rejected on the basis of the information that they post on social networking sites. It is worth then exploring further and in more detail how they have been using these sites and what can be done to match employers expectations of candidates with candidates own activities whenever possible.

"We will Google® You" or "We will Facebook® you"?

A reported case that illuminates potential negative effects of social networking sites data on candidates and which should be promptly addressed is that of a woman named Mimi Brewster, recruited by the US luxury retail chain Hathaway Jones to be their marketing manager in China (Coutu, 2007). Mimi was the perfect candidate to lead the company's expansion into this new market:

   She had grown up in China, and spoke both Mandarin and a local dialect; she

graduated cum laude from Berkeley with the degree of modern Chinese history and got MBA degree from Stanford. She was recruited after graduation by the West Coast regional office of Eleanor Gaston, the largest clothing, shoes and accessories company in the United States in the last few years. Now she was looking for some general management experiences, preferably in a fast-growing market' (Coutu, 2007, pp.38-40). The decision to hire her was suspended after Virginia, the company HR director 'googled' Mimi and obtained information and pictures showing her as 'the leader of a nonviolent but vocal protest group that had helped mobilize campaigns against the World Trade Organization (WTO)...sitting outside China's San Francisco consulate protesting China's treatment of a dissident journalist' (ibid).

As the story shows, the hiring decisions of firms and recruiters can be affected greatly by the cyber information and data of job candidates posted in different types of social networking sites which can be accessed through internet search engines. Based on this uncertain (potentially detrimental or possibly positive) impact for graduates, we want to further investigate what role(s) in the activity of recruitment social networking sites play from the perspective of both employers and to-be-employees; how they are being used, and what effects they could have in future job prospects, so that graduates candidates can address them more effectively and companies can understand better social networking sites use.

ACTIVITY THEORY

We now provide a theoretical ground to allow us to explore the dynamics of the recruitment activity in the context of recruitment; this theory is extensively used in the design of interactive computing systems; the theory also bears resemblance with analysis of interactions between individuals in the form of connections in a social context (Scott, 1991). An activity system is composed by actions performed by a community of subjects which use certain objects and who are mediated by rules, norms and artifacts. In activity theory, 'A collective, artifact-mediated and object-orientated activity system, seen in its network relations to other activity system, is taken as the prime unit of analysis' (Engeström, 2001: 136). The main elements to be described and analyzed are presented in the following figure in relation to the activity of using social networking websites as an activity performed by a community of individuals.

[Insert Figure 1 here]

In activity theory, the physical human activity and consciousness are defined as unification; in other words, "human mind emerges exists and can only be understood within the context of human interaction with the world and this interaction, i.e., activity, is socially and culturally determined" (Kaptelinin et al, 1999, in Uden et al, 2008:4). Given the initial impetus of networking sites, the activity of posting personal data has been mostly made with no regard or caution or regard for quality. Personal photos, thoughts, experiences and profiles are randomly posted on social network websites and cyber social space (more on this later). This type of 'cyber social space' behavior of

individual college students and graduates can be considered as one of their *own individual activity system*. The individual college student or graduate as cyber social space owner or user can be defined as the **subject** of the activity system. The **object** of the activity system can be any intention or aim that individual students or graduates tend to achieve; for instance, virtual socializing, communicating, experience sharing through posting of personal thoughts, profiles, photos and experiences. 'The relationship between subject and object of activity is mediated by a tool that can be anything used in the transformation process; an activity is undertake by a subject (individual or subgroup) using tools to achieve an object' (Uden et al, 2008:4). The cyber social space or virtual social networking sites can be defined as the mediating **tool or set of signs** that allows individual students or graduates to posting their cyber data in order to achieve the object of socializing, communicating and experience sharing. 'Activities are oriented to motives, each motive is an object, material or ideal, that satisfies a need; actions are the processes functionally subordinated to activities; they are directed at specific conscious goals' (Kaptelinin, 1994: 56).

The **object** of socializing, experience sharing and virtual social group communication can only be achieved through the individual activity of group or community members that students and graduates individually post their personal data and information; this kind of activity and behavior can be identified as the **division of labor**. As illustrated in the figure above, in the case of cyber social space behavior of college students and graduates, the **community** can be considered as the substantial and virtual social group that either has the same group or different group for the individual students and graduates. For instance, students or graduates within same major or same university can form both physical and virtual social group in real life environment and web world through using the virtual social networking sites as the tool and mediation.

The human physical activity and consciousness not only interacted and influenced with each other but also with physical, social and cultural environment components that are defined as the community, **rule** or regulation and division of labor in the human activity model; hence the substantial and virtual social group of college student and graduates can be defined as the community component; the social culture and cyber social group implicit rules can be identified as the rule component of the model; the role of social or cyber social group member of graduates can be seen as the division of labor component: "The relation between object and community is mediate by the division of labor; how the activity is distributed among the members of the community' (Uden et al, 2008:4)"; in other words "the role of individual in the community" (Guilloux and Kalika, 2009:7). Although it is difficult to state explicitly the rules that govern a social networking site community, some trends indicate that often people aim at presenting their individuality within the community by showing a 'cool' lifestyle and what it entails (photos, diaries and personal thoughts). This can go as far as "for example, underage drinking and students' illicit drug use, as well as posting of photographs and text depicting potentially embarrassing or socially objectionable" (Kolek and Saunders, 2008: 6). An individual student and graduate can only be a popular member or a vital part of virtual social group and community by joining the virtual social community and obeying this kind of virtual

and implicit social networking protocol.

Our distinction of the above elements of activity theory in relation to social networking sites is just a preliminary interpretation which we will use to make sense of the findings of our study. It leads us though now to consider issues of appropriateness as what we see as 'online' behavior of students or graduates and how it could be interpreted by recruiters. In terms of activity theory, recruiters could make full sense of this type of behavior if only it could match up *with their own activity*, in other words with what they see as coherent and understandable elements (tools and objects). The diagram below shows how we can interpret the current mismatch and problems with cyber personal data in terms of activity of two different groups.

[Insert Figure 2 here]

The figure is a partial representation of an activity theory diagram and shows that in principle, not all elements of activity of both graduates and recruiters match naturally. This comparison though gives us three new possibilities. Firstly, recruiters and their companies could be more understanding of the other elements of graduates' own activity and its implicit rule (protocol), so they could better assess why people do what they do in such sites (objects). The above examples of Ernst & Young® and Cadbury Schweppes PLC® show that it might be possible to create online communities of graduates looking for jobs. But this would mean isolating them to some extent from the somehow natural communities that they already inhabit in other (more socially oriented) networking sites. The object of socializing needs further attention, in particular how this object can be better shared between recruiters and graduates.

Secondly and in line with the above, the possibility that social networking sites could be also considered *mediating* artifacts between groups of individuals (in this case recruiters and graduates) to share some understandings (meanings). It could be that as part of a mediation process, recruiters could let graduates know of the things they have seen in social networking sites, with a view of enriching further dialogue, discussion and face to face interviewing. And thirdly, that the community of recruiters could be more explicit about their own object, so that graduates become more aware of the online recruitment activity that is going on. In this latter aspect, one can interpret for instance the efforts that websites like Facebook® have now taken in the direction of protecting the confidentiality of users data by allowing them to selectively decide who can see what. Although this could 'close' the doors of a joint activity, it can also be interpreted as an opening of the social networking community to other activities than socialising. With this paper, our aim is to understand in more depth how graduates see and use social networking sites (the nature of their object of activity), so that recruiters can take appropriate action and better align their own activity to the dynamics of these sites. We also intend to suggest some guidelines that could inform the future design of these sites.

METHODOLOGY

The above situation of potential 'mismatch' of understandings and actions between different social groups (recruiters, graduates) requires us to research it in ways that enable us to tap into the meanings and uses of these groups in relation to their use of social networking sites. A combination of quantitative and qualitative data is appropriate to ensure validity of any research that aims to unveil such understandings: "It is quite usual for a single study to combine quantitative and qualitative methods and to use primary and secondary data in order to ensure that the data are telling researchers what they think the data are telling them' (Saunders et al, 2000:98). Given the diversity of uses of social networking sites by recruiters, and the lack of a standard practice of this use (which includes many recruiters not using these sites at all), in the paper we decided to focus on identifying the uses and meanings of social networking sites by graduates, and validate our findings in the light of literature that describes recruitment practices involving social networking sites. A future research effort could deepen into our initial validation with empirical data from recruiters themselves and their organizations.

To identify and interpret graduates' perceptions on social networking sites, a selection of UK students from China, India, and Kenya were selected and sent a questionnaire to be filled online. As Hussey and Hussey suggest (1997), the random sample selection approach can ensure the unbiased and achieve great representative of a large targeted population. A sample of students was chosen randomly; an invitation to fill in the questionnaire was sent and rolled out using lists of contacts in sites like Facebook®, HI5® and others. The lists were complemented with others collected from groups of students finishing their masters' degree at a UK university during the period of between July and August 2009. This also contributed to ensure that results to be obtained did not have any bias and that that they could be reliable.

QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire aimed at gathering information about activities of a sample of graduates which could then be interpreted. We wanted to find out 1) if students were using social network sites for socializing and other purposes; 2) how aware were they about their data being seen by potential recruiters; and 3) if they had considered some strategies to reduce potential negative impacts of the data availability. Questionnaire responses were being received between the 16th of July 2009 and the 20th of August 2009 when the online questionnaire stopped being available. During this period, 150 questionnaires were received.

The questionnaire was carefully developed and constructed with 14 multiple-choice closed and standardized questions that allow the researcher to obtain and the reach the facts directly and effectively. Questions started from straight-forward ones (yes, no) and moved to more complex ones, given that 'if the questionnaire starts with straight-forward questions and then gradually moves toward such questions at a later stage, there is a

greater likelihood that the respondent will persevere' (Denscombe, 2007:164).

To support, confirm or challenge the findings of the questionnaires, a review of documents (secondary data) was conducted, and a number of interpretations were produced. The documents were selected and evaluated on the basis of information reliability and academic authority. Several high standard academic journals, magazines were selected as the sources of documentary data in the research: "Document-based studies can contribute to exploring issues as well as building or testing theoretical concepts and models; they are often a foundation for case studies or an adjunct to other qualitative methods" (Miler and Merrilees, 2000 in Polonsky and Waller, 2005: 132). Secondary data was thus used to further interpret the quantitative data collected from the questionnaire and to raise a number of issues to be further considered in future recruitment and social networking activities by both graduates and recruiters.

FINDINGS
Overview
Out of the 150 questionnaires received, 113 of them were fully completed with answers to each individual question. 39 were partially completed with omitted answers in one or several questions. The completion rate is 75 percent and indicates the majority of the population answered the questionnaire completely. The high response rate ensures an adequate degree of representativeness and generalisability of findings.

Overall, the data shows that a great proportion of university students and graduates are using **at least one** virtual social networking sites for virtual socializing; the two most popular-used social networking sites are Facebook® and LinkedIn®. Although valuable and critical personal information are updated frequently by students, substantive crucial and critical personal information still lacks protection because of the unawareness of the cyber personal data impacts on employment opportunities. This is an issue that needs attention by both recruiters and social networking site managers.

Additionally, the students and graduates' degree of knowledge about adequately managing their social networking sites profiles and information is very low, which can result in potentially serious negative impacts on their job applications and / or employment opportunities. Therefore, suggestions to manage cyber personal data and social networking space are needed. In the final sections of the paper we will provide some suggestions about what individual graduates and university students can do in order to avoid the negative influences of job applications that are brought by their own cyber personal data.

Findings in detail
[Insert Figure 3]

The data on social networking sites of university students and graduates are varied. The most-popular posted data is the personal profiles; of the 150 respondents 88.6% are posting personal profiles. The second popular-posted data are photos; three-fourths of

respondents have photo posted on social networking sites. 124 out of 150 respondents post personal thoughts; in addition, personal stories and personal privacies also account for a big percentage of posted data of students. The statistic data above shows that the social networking sites contain substantive critical and up-to-date personal data and information of students or graduates; this finding can be further proved by the Stuzman's research that 'Over 90% reported their birthday and hometown, over 80% reported their sexual orientation and relationship status, over 70% reported their major and political orientation, and 16.4% reported their mobile telephone numbers' (Stuzman, 2006 in Kolek and Saunders, 2008: 7).

Purpose(s) of social networking site use

[Insert Figure 4 here]

According to this chart, the most popular user purposes of social networking sites are socializing and sharing personal experiences.   136 (90%) out of 151 respondents use the social networking sites for personal experience sharing; of the total of interviewees (151), 83.4% are socializing virtually through social networking sites. Other two popular purposes are personal dairy writing and memory keeping, which accounts for 72.8% and 72.1% of the respondents respectively.   These findings confirm previous research carried out by the Oxford Internet Institute which suggests that '42% of British students have created a profile on the likes of YouTube®, MySpace® or Facebook®, and 4.5 millions active accounts in the UK' (Mathieson, 2007:33). The data also confirms that a considerable percentage of UK university students and graduates are using social networking sites as part of their social life.   It illustrates the diversity of purposes of use of social networking sites. It also suggests that a wealth of information is being posted online.

[Insert Figure 5 here]

As can be observed, the potential influence of virtual social networking sites profiles and data on employment opportunities and job applications is *not noticed* or concerns most students. 123 (82.55%) out of 149 respondents have no consideration that their cyber data can be viewed by the potential employers; of the 150 respondents 86% have not realized the influences of cyber personal data of employment opportunities and job applications. Of the 150 respondents, only 15.33 respondents have noticed the influence of cyber personal data of employment opportunities. This finding confirms the research done by Recruiter.co.uk which suggests that 'less than a third of candidates (32%) think what they put on social networking sites may affect their chances of winning a job-and in the UK under a quarter think this' (Recruiter.co.uk, 2009).   Given the lack of awareness by graduates on how their information could affect their prospects, they might be then posting what can be considered 'inappropriate or negative information on an individuals' social networking profile [which] may include personal views or values contradictory to the hiring organization; negative or slanderous discussions of current or former employers, friends, or co-workers; and revelation of excessive alcohol use' (SHRM

Survey in Point for Credit Union Research & Advice: 2008:23). The negative information could be affecting hiring decisions [more] than positive information' (SHRM Survey in Point for Credit Union Research & Advice: 2008:23).

[Insert Figure 6 here]

As it can be observed from the statistics above, of the 87 respondents, only 6.9% have ideas and knowledge of managing their virtual social networking sites information for the purpose of obtaining employment; however, a great proportion (93.10%) of respondents have no or insufficient knowledge of managing cyber data and virtual social networking space. The lack of management confirms that for the purposes of employment, what seems to be transpiring to employers is negative information from potential job candidates.

What is more, individual's cyber data or information on the social networking sites and internet will be fixed so that it can be used by anyone at anytime for any purpose in any circumstance, including potential employers for recruitment. Additionally, students and graduates have no tight control on exposing their cyber personal data on the social networking due to some features and functions of social networking sites. 'A feature allowed users to post a photograph and name each person that appeared in the picture, users could have pictures of them visible on their profile that they themselves did not post' (Kolek and Saunders, 2008: 4).

DISCUSSION

The findings above indicate that a great population of university students and graduates are using social networking sites as part of their social life. Most individual student and graduates use social networking sites for all purposes listed above. In terms of activity theory, the findings provide a foundation to confirm that social networking sites have been used as tool and mediation artifacts by university students in what can be termed a virtual socializing activity system. The findings also confirm the assumption that there is a mismatch between this activity system and that of recruiters. The recruitment activity is potentially putting more demands on participants (job applicants), reducing their chances of success within this activity system. The object of this system (hiring) conflicts with that of socializing. The findings provide evidence to support the existence of this conflict.

Despite this conflict though, there is nothing in the findings to indicate that social networking activity of student or graduates could not consider activities from the recruiters perspective, so that sites could become common objects to be shared between these two groups. The lack of awareness by graduates of possible use of their data does not mean necessarily that they are not willing to partially join an activity system of recruitment that uses sites as 'tools'. If this is the case (and more employers adhere to the benefits of using sites), it is then important to emphasize to students that their data is very likely to be accessed by recruitment officers, and that can have an effect on their careers. Based on

this possibility, we proceed to give some specific suggestions to students and graduates that can help us address the issue of avoiding negative influences of personal information on social networking sites on employment opportunities and job application already identified.

First of all, thanks to the great data and information accessibility of social networking sites, students or graduates should always be careful with the information and data you intent to post and publish on the social networking; double checking the quality and content of the information they want to post on the social networking site before the actual posting (Berry, 2007). Avoiding posting inappropriate and critical even it seems cool; students or graduates should always bearing in mind that "everything you put up on the internet is in the public domain" (Phillips, 2007: 1)

Secondly, people should continuously check the privacy settings of social networking space. Graduates should work on setting the privacy of their data so that only specific people (e.g. certain friends and family) can access certain categories of data (such as pictures or videos). Graduates could also allow others to see this data if they consider that this shows more the positive sides of their personality, and even think of producing data to complement what they write in their job applications or CVs. In line with this, the posting and publishing of what can be considered critical and inappropriate data of an individual's social networking space needs to have editing facilities to change inappropriate stories, photos, and personal thoughts (Ronn 2007).

And finally, graduates could think of maintaining two types of social networking spaces: one about their career and aspirations, another with their more intimate (family, friends) activity, and continuously check on how one of them relates to the other. This can increase their opportunities to be positively known and thus of their future employability.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, a perspective of how social networking sites could be related to recruitment has been proposed. This perspective has been developed with the help of activity theory, a framework that has been mostly used in studying problems of human-computer interaction but whose use can be extended to account for working activities. Using activity theory, the paper firstly identified and analyzed the behaviours of students, graduates and recruiters or HR practitioners on virtual social networking sites with the application of activity theory. This helped us to look at how graduates use these sites and how such use can be improved to increase opportunities for them to get jobs.

Improvement would mean looking at these sites as joint objects or tools of work between two different groups: recruiters and students (graduates or potential job applicants). We have confirmed a potential mismatch between activity systems of recruiters and graduates. The contradictory and different objectives and behaviour patterns between graduates and recruiters in using of social networking sites are the sources of the issues of social networking sites and cyber personal data impacts on employability of students and

graduates. We have explored the nature of mismatch from the point of view of graduates. Further research is needed to deepen into this mismatch from the perspective of recruiters.

Our findings confirm that nowadays the use of cyber personal data through social networking sites can be positively modified whilst carefully protected by graduates. We did not explore a more detailed use of sites by recruiters but we think that the suggestions given can be exploited and explored further by them.

FIGURES

Figure 1: Activity system of social networking use by graduates
(Adpted from EngestrÖm, 2001: 135)
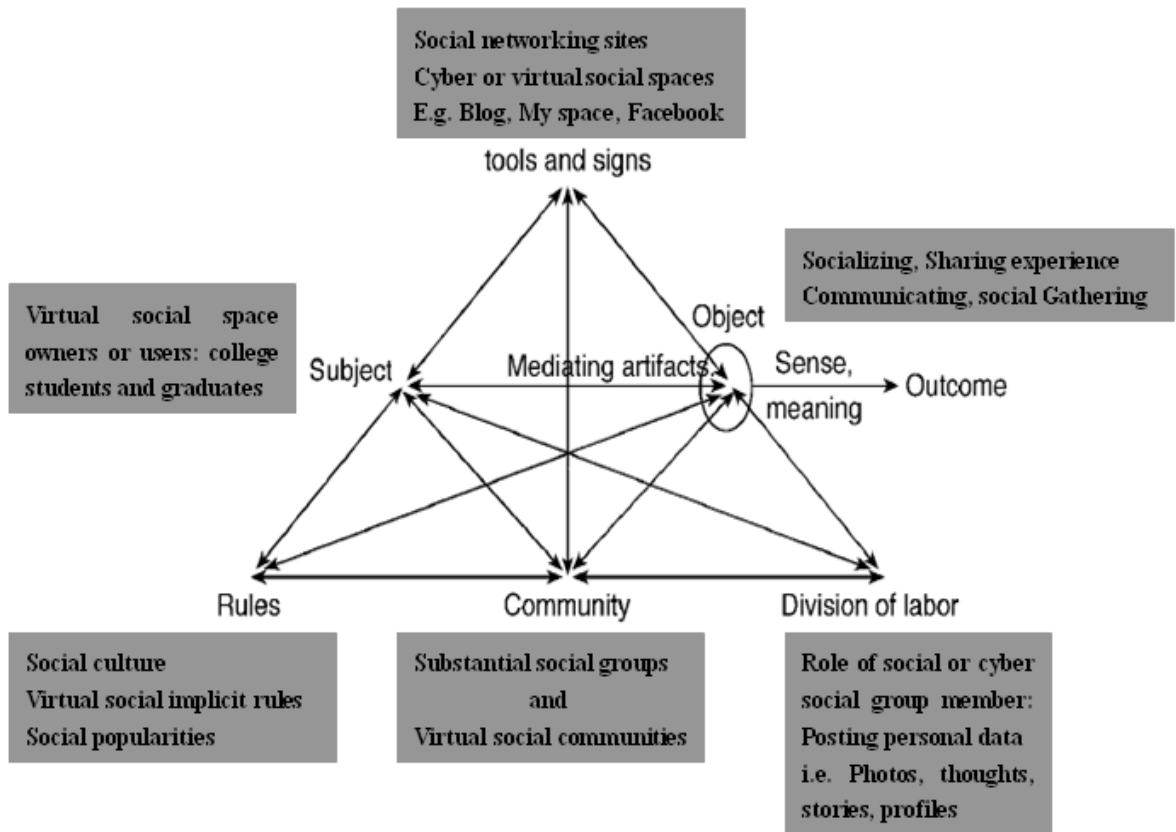
Figure 2: Potential mismatch (or sharing) of activity systems of both recruiters and graduates

Tool
Social networking site

Subjects:
-Graduates
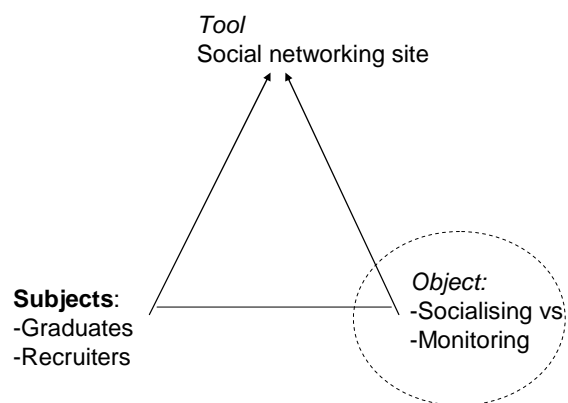-Recruiters

Object:
-Socialising vs
-Monitoring

Figure 3: Information Update and Categories

What kind of data or information you normally put on your social networking space? (more than one answer is acceptable)	% of Respondents	Number of Respondents
a) Photos and pictures.	86,6 %	130
b) Personal profiles	88,6 %	133
c) Personal stories	76,6 %	115
d) Personal thoughts about social issues and society	82,6 %	124
e) Personal privacies	71,3 %	107
Details Other (Specify)	1,3 %	2
Number of respondents		*150*
Number or respondents who skipped this question		*1*

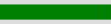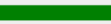**Figure 4**: Purpose(s) of social networking site use

What do you do normally with your social networking space? (more than one answer is acceptable)	% of Respondents	Number of Respondents
a) Making friends and socializing	83,4 %	126
b) Sharing personal experiences with others	90 %	136
c) Write personal diary	72,8 %	110
d) Keep good memories	72,1 %	109
Details Other (Specify)	1,3 %	2
Number of respondents		*151*
Number or respondents who skipped this question		*1*

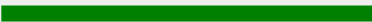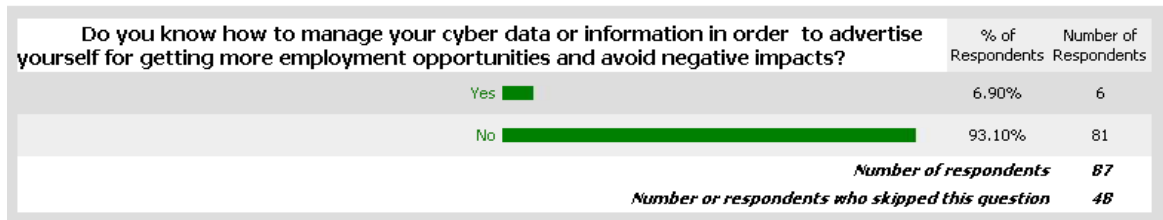**Figure 5:** Awareness on impact of cyber personal data in future employment opportunities

Do you think your personal cyber data influences your future career and employment opportunities?	% of Respondents	Number of Respondents
Yes	15.33%	23
No	86.00%	129
Number of respondents		150
Number or respondents who skipped this question		2

Figure 6: Knowledge of Cyber Personal Data Management

Do you know how to manage your cyber data or information in order to advertise yourself for getting more employment opportunities and avoid negative impacts?	% of Respondents	Number of Respondents
Yes	6.90%	6
No	93.10%	81
Number of respondents		87
Number or respondents who skipped this question		48

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