When two worlds meet

Hyves and recruitment

How recruiters' decision-making

is influenced by content on

adolescents' Hyves pages.

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Samenvatting

In deze studie is onderzocht hoe beslissingen binnen het werkterrein van recruiters worden beïnvloed door informatie die online op Hyves pagina's van jongeren wordt gevonden. Het web en sociale media worden steeds belangrijker in de huidige maatschappij. De rol van de profielenwebsite Hyves, als tool voor het screenen van kandidaten voor openstaande vacatures wordt steeds groter.

De eerste studie, een inhoudsanalyse van 200 Hyves profielen, resulteerde in een negental onderwerpen die een rol zouden kunnen spelen bij de beoordeling van de geschiktheid van een kandidaat door recruiters. Bovendien leverde de inhoudsanalyse een groot aantal kwalitatieve samples op, die als input dienden voor de tweede studie.

In studie 2, een schriftelijke enquête, kozen 78 recruiters uit deze negen onderwerpen de voor hen belangrijkste redenen voor de afwijzing van een kandidaat. Zij gaven in een zelfrapportage aan dat de aanwezigheid van racistische uitspraken en informatie over drugsgebruik van grote invloed zijn op een eventuele afwijzing. Uit de enquête bleek echter geen invloed van een der negen items op het oordeel over de geschiktheid van de kandidaat. Recruiters' visie op alcohol en hun oordeel over de intelligentie van de kandidaat, net als uitspraken van derden over de kandidaat leidden wel tot een aantoonbare invloed op de aanneembaarheid van de sollicitant.

Zowel intelligentie als uiterlijke schoonheid speelt daarnaast een rol bij de beslissing om een kandidaat aan te nemen. Recruiters gaven echter in een schriftelijke toelichting bij de enquête het tegenovergestelde aan, uiterlijk zou geen rol spelen.

Dit onderzoek is een van de eerste die de rol van Hyves bij recruitment blootlegt en verschaft, voor zover bekend, de eerste inhoudsanalyse naar schadelijke onderwerpen die recruiters tegenkomen op Hyves. Toekomstig onderzoek met behulp van sociale media zal ongetwijfeld meer inzicht geven in de verschillende, invloedrijke onderwerpen op wervingsbesluiten.

Abstract

This study investigated how decisions on recruiters' field of activity are influenced by information they find on adolescents' Hyves pages. The Internet and social media are gaining more and more importance in present society. The role of Hyves, a Dutch profile website, as a tool for screening job applicants, is growing.

The first study, a content analysis of 200 Hyves profiles, resulted in nine different topics probably playing a role when recruiters are judging on the appropriateness of an applying candidate. The analysis provided a large amount of qualitative samples, which were included in the second study.

In this second study, a written questionnaire, 78 recruiters chose out of these nine topics the main reasons for rejecting a candidate. They self-reported that the presence of racial comments and prove of drug use are of large influence on an eventual rejection. A questionnaire though proved no influence of either one of the nine items on the judgment of the suitability of the candidate in the company of the recruiter. Though, recruiters' vision on alcohol and their judgment on the intelligence of the candidate, just as statements by a third party were of provable influence on the judgment of the appropriateness of the candidate.

Both intelligence and the attractiveness of the candidate play a role when deciding to employ an applicant. Recruiters' written declaration differs from the data at this point, attractiveness should not be of influence.

This study formed one of the first 'kick-offs' discovering the role of Hyves when recruiting and resulted in the first content analysis discovering the diverse subjects a recruiter can find on Hyves. Future research on social media will give more insight in the different topics that influence recruitment decisions.

Introduction

Social media is gaining importance. In earlier days seen as a purely private activity for leisure, social network sites (SNS) nowadays integrate with the working environment. At Dutch news site Nu.nl headings such as 'Facebook forbidden for Belgian employees' and 'Swiss woman fired because of Facebook' are no exception (Visterin, 2009; Thomasson, 2009). Entrepreneurs can no longer neglect SNS, and recruiters, who are in charge of hiring the most appropriate, are discovering not only the disadvantages, but also the advantages of social media.

Where in the past written documents were the main medium for publishing job advertisements the characteristics of the internet make it an interesting medium for recruitment. Its broad reach and opportunities for fast reply caused a change in recruitment. Nowadays, applicants are only one click away of e-mailing their application letter and Curriculum Vitae to potential employers, who are in turn confronted with chockfull e-mailboxes. Hiring the right candidate becomes a time-consuming task and even a frustrating one when realizing at least three-quarter of the candidates is inappropriate for the job: recruiters receive letters from both the strong and the less qualified (Schramm, 2007).

The internet offers recruiters the opportunity to quickly filter out the inappropriate. Search engines can be consulted to construct an overview of an applicant's web presence. This new, internet-based approach is time-saving and recruiters say the information found online gives them a good overview of the person behind the employee. SNS offer them the opportunity to make a personality impression based on for instance a SNS member profile (Sullivan, 2007).

One out of five employers first searches online before inviting a potential employee for a job interview (Sullivan, 2007). It seems reasonable to expect the percentage of recruiters performing searches online is only rising, since business magazines dedicate complete sections to the topic and case studies on online screening of candidates are published (Coutu, 2007). A June 2009 CareerBuilder survey supported this: more and more employers (45 percent) started to screen job candidates online (Haefner, 2009).

Dutch recruiters who want to conduct an online screening can often find more information about a candidate in his personal profile on Hyves. A lot of adolescents own a profile on Hyves, since Hyves is the most common SNS in the Netherlands. The main content on these profile pages consists of personal pictures, the listing of friends, short communications with these friends and the listing of interests and activities.

Are recruitment decisions influenced by this Hyves content of teenagers? And if so, how is recruiters' decision-making influenced by what they find on adolescents' Hyves pages? This study will map out which SNS information influences recruiters' judgment on the appropriateness of an adolescent candidate for the job.

This study's aim is first of all scientific, since not much research has been conducted in the field of SNS and recruitment. Current academic studies are addressing only recently the use of SNS in employment selection (Kluemper & Rosen, 2009), whereby Van Wingerden (2010) seems to be the first one connecting the Dutch profile website Hyves to recruitment. From a SNS such as MySpace several content analyses have been conducted (f.e. Hinduja & Patchin, 2008; Thelwall, 2008), but not much is known about what recruiters do with the information found online, since academics have only described the changes in recruitment practices.

Hyves use is often attached to with privacy issues (f.e. Grant, 2007; Livingstone, 2008), and researchers often stretch the trouble individuals can get when exposing to much of themselves online. SNS users are therefore encouraged to start using their SNS as a personal marketing tool (Roberts and Roach, 2009). Not much is researched about how recruiters can use SNS as a tool for filling job vacancies. Therefore, academic literature on how recruiters use SNS will be of value for the human resource business.

The social aim of this study is to provide adolescents insight in how they should treat their Hyves pages when enrolling in the application process. Adolescents spend many hours surfing on SNS, and more and more attention has been paid to the risks of social networking. Nussbaum (2007) strikingly names the panic parents feel when their children are surfing online: 'Kids today. They have no sense of shame. They have no sense of privacy', referring to the devoted attention of young people to the presentation of self online. Adolescents post a lot of personal information online, ignoring their parents' fright for abuse by strangers.

Probably, parents should shift their focus to other groups using their kids' information. It seems that personal disclosure online is not only risky when there are people using the information for illegal activities, but also when recruiters judge about the habits of an adolescent applicant and deciding not to hire them.

With the outcomes of this study, adolescents will hopefully become more aware of this risk. Rodriguez (2007) literally suggests a training for the more highly educated social networkers. As Schramm (2007) pretends, the increased influence of SNS as being part of the recruitment process may prompt job seekers to manage their own online presence, but any guideline is not available. A recent article tries to warn adolescents about the risks of their online presence when getting involved in job recruitment, though is not yet supported by any empirical proof (Roberts and Roach, 2009).

The theoretical background will clarify the different concepts of this research project: SNS, online disclosure, recruitment, online impression formation and third party involvement. It will connect the different concepts to each other. Available scientific literature will be discussed, will form the background to answer the main question of this study and will be used to work towards a reasonable method.

Literature review

The introduction described a change in methods of recruitment caused by the popularity of the internet. SNS are supplying recruiters a lot of personal information on adolescent applicants. Therefore, this paragraph will start with zooming in on SNS, its power and specific features.

SNS

According to Boyd and Ellison (2007, p.2), a social networking website allows individuals to *'construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users to whom they share a connection and view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system.'* A SNS invites convergence among the separate activities of e-mail, messaging, website creation, blogs, photo albums and music or video uploading and downloading. The strength of an SNS lies not in its innovative functionality or utility, but in this convergence.

Where MySpace and Friendster are typical American SNS and Facebook is the place to meet up with international friends, Dutch adolescents choose Hyves for building up an online profile. Hyves exists since October 2004 and had in November 2008 already the broadest reach of all Dutch websites: with a reach of 55.5 percent it left number two Marktplaats.nl (a Dutch version of EBay) far behind (Boogert, 2009). In February 2011 Hyves counted more than eleven million members (Hyves, 2011). It is immensely popular and the most common social networking website in the Netherlands. A study of IVO (2008) proves Hyves is almost becoming daily routine for Dutch adolescents. More than seventy percent of Dutch youngsters declare to visit SNS at least once a week in 2008.

SNS and online disclosure

With such a lot of adolescents almost daily visiting SNS, it is interesting to discover what they actually post online, that makes their parents so hesitant about their kids joining SNS. Lots of individuals, both the immature and mature, say and do things online they would probably not do in real life (Sproull & Kiessler, 1991; Niemz, Griffiths, & Banyard, 2005). Participants in a study conducted by Christofides, Muise and Desmarais (2009) also reported being significantly more likely to disclose personal information on a SNS than to disclose personal information in general.
Nearly all of 343 consulted undergraduate students posted their birthday (96 percent). They were also very likely to share their e-mail address and hometown (both 85 percent), but their phone number or home address were not often provided with respectively 24 and four percent. Empirical literature provides more studies going deeper into the disclosure of personal information online (f.e. Huffaker & Calvert, 2005; Hinduja & Patchin, 2008; Boyle & Johnson, 2010).

In case of these adolescents, it seems that the 'grandma factor', posting online only what you would allow your mother or grandmother to see, (Lupsa, 2006) is not taken into account. Why would youngsters disclose so much personal information online?
First of all, researchers mention adolescents lacking sense of privacy (Livingstone, 2008). In a study of Christofides, Muise and Desmerais (2009), adolescents claim they do actually care about privacy and information control, though, this claim seems not in line with the personal information researchers found online.
Livingstone (2008) further counts adolescents' narcissistic fascination with self-display as a reason for their unusual expressions online. Lots of people create for themselves a different personality online. Their digital world offers them the opportunity to experiment with the different expects of their personality. According to Peluchette and Karl (2010) a more sexually appealing, wild or offensive image requires therefore the posting of inappropriate information.
Students that made a conscious attempt to post only content that would be acceptable to any other agreed on portraying their profile to potential employers or family. In contrast, students who did post such uninhibited communication also agreed on showing their profile to complete strangers. The anonymity of these strangers (and the lack of response to their portrayed image) make students feel comfortable, not caring about it.

SNS and recruitment

SNS profiles with low privacy settings are visible to anyone. Adolescents' irresponsible posting can therefore even be viewed by personnel managers fulfilling their recruitment task. Their screening of SNS can take place at different stages in the recruitment process: SNS are used to check whether the applicant really owns the qualities he claims in his application letter, they can be consulted to reduce the amount of applicants to invite for job interviews and can be used as a check-up tool before finally making the hiring decision. Baker (2008) hereby ventilates that recruiters base their decision on personal judgments. If an applicant seems to have the qualities necessary for his function, a lot of recruiters do not care about his online profile or hobbies. Though, employers are in the position of determining what is normal or socially acceptable.
Roberts and Clark (2008) tried to gain better understanding of the different ways in which recruiters are using SNS for HR duties on performance evaluation. They found a growing number of recruiters beginning to use SNS for gathering information and that they use SNS mainly to search for existing or verifying information.

Though sometimes lacking any sense of privacy, adolescents are not happy with recruiters screening their SNS profiles. Only nineteen percent of the students declares it is OK to use SNS when making hiring decisions. Another 32 percent of students claimed the use of Facebook being illegal. Besides the opinion of 2000 students, researchers at the University of Dayton, Ohio (Lupsa, 2006) also polled

300 employers. They concluded that 40 percent of employers belief that SNS use is plausible when making hiring decisions.

In Holland, the same trend is noticeable. Here, two third of employees are unwilling to be recruited through their Hyves page (P&O Actueel, 2008). Especially employees under the age of thirty do not appreciate it to be contacted through Hyves.

The first reason for this unwillingness could be their experiments with a different personality online (Livingstone, 2008; Veen & Jacobs, 2005). Recruiters could then be getting the wrong end of the stick. Secondly, 53 percent of the Hyves users claims that other people publish photos of them without giving them the permission to do so (P&O Actueel, 2008). That this is often information they would rather not place online themselves proves a study of Morgan, Snelson and Elison-Bowers (2010) on MySpace: 26 percent of pictures and video's involving alcohol use are posted by the profile owner himself, against respectively 30 and 75 percent by friends of self and friends of friends (on MySpace).

How recruiters form impressions

Since SNS profiles offer a third party the opportunity to comment on content and add information the profile owner himself would probably not add, these profiles are always a mishmash of self-generated and other-generated content. It is interesting to find out on which information recruiters base their judgments on applicants.

Photographs are important to form impressions online. Stecher and Counts (2008) found that when participants included a photo and their name, status, high school and gender in their profile they were able to form predictive impressions. Only a thin slice of information is needed to form consistent impressions.

Hyves profiles consist of texts and pictures. Judging pictures requires an extra inference of an observer, since manifest content is not available (Krippendorff, 2003). In addition to this, how do photographs influence the image of a person? Forgas and Bower (1987) found that the displayed mood on a picture has its influence on personal impression formation: happy subjects formed more favorable impressions and made more positive judgments than did sad subjects. Persons pictured from below show more potency than persons pictured from the front or above (Sevenants, 2006).

The influence of verbal information on personal impression formation is dependent on how the information is presented. It is imaginable that lots of spelling mistakes and a text full of swear words will negatively influence the impression formed by a recruiter. Furthermore, self-reports of adolescents are more manipulative than comments by a third party.

Third party involvement

Messages on someone's wall (Facebook) or scribblings on Hyves are always posted by other persons, often listed in user's profiles as a friend. This third party involvement influences the way the owner of the profile is perceived by others. Recruiters have to form their impression on an applicant on information posted by these friends. With often over 200 friends on his profile, there will always be at least one friend posting messages or pictures the profile owner himself would find inappropriate. Even on purpose, someone seeking revenge could post photos or a negative blog about another person. Employers cannot know from this information whether it is true or who posted the content. Baker (2008) advices employers to use this information at their own risk.

Research of Walther, Van Der Heide, Kim, Westerman and Tong (2008) explored how cues deposited by social partners onto someone's online networking profile affect observers' impressions of the profile owner. Results showed that complimentary, pro-social statements by friends about profile owners improved the profile owner's social and task attractiveness, just as his credibility.

In another research, Walther, Van Der Heide, Hamel and Shulman (2009) tried to extend these findings by testing the warranting principle. It predicts that users attach greater credence to information not manipulated by the target itself. They compared friends' wall postings on Facebook to the self-descriptions of the profile owner and found that, examining attributions of introversion and extraversion, the study provided tenuous support for the warranting effect. However, the master

thesis of van Wingerden (2010) questions these conclusions. From her two studies can be concluded that in their self-reports, recruiters do not point out that comments by a third party are more important and trustworthy. Nevertheless, the experiment shows that recruiters rely more on information provided by others than the profile owner himself.

Finally, Haefner (2009) found that good references posted by other people encouraged recruiters to hire a candidate within 19 percent of the cases.

Third party influence on characteristics

What can be concluded from these studies is that third party involvement in SNS is of influence on people's perceptions of the profile owner, simply because self-posted information can always be manipulated.

The study of Walther et al. (2009) compared third party statements to personal statements. It mainly focused on someone's physical attractiveness. Results showed that positive comments by others about someone's attractiveness made the profile owner perceived more attractive by respondents.

Attractiveness is probably not the only characteristic which is subject to the influence of a third party. Therefore, it could be hypothesized that when friends make positive statements about a characteristic of the profile owner, this quality is perceived more positive. When involving recruiters in this process of judging on profiles, they would probably perceive the adolescent to be more hirable. If it also works the other way around Walther et al. (2009) researched, it would mean in worst case scenario, that negative statements on an applicant online would cause him to be rejected from a job.

Subjects of communication on SNS

Friends' statements are influencing recruiters' perceptions when screening an applicant online, but a judgment on the appropriateness of a candidate is also dependent on the subjects discussed in his SNS profile. Several studies zoomed in on the different types of communication that can influence observers, which are recruiters in this setting. Researchers examined SNS and summed up the (unwanted) content they deducted of adolescents' online presence.

Alcohol

Peluchette and Karl (2007) investigated 200 Facebook profiles and discovered examples of uninhibited communications. They found that 53 percent of the member's profiles contained pictures of alcohol use and 42 percent of the profiles had comments regarding alcohol. Kolek en Saunders (2008) accomplished a quantitative content analysis of 339 V.S. undergraduates' Facebook profiles and found that almost 54 percent of the profiles contained photographs of someone drinking and 38 percent of textual references to drinking. Seven percent of the central photo's were portraying alcohol, from another eight percent of the photo's the researchers judged alcohol was involved, but could not clearly prove this. Watson, Smith, and Driver (2006) conducted a similar research, finding about one-tenth of 150 central photographs on (most undergraduate) students' Facebook profile depicting alcohol use. In an extensive content analysis on MySpace, Hinduja and Patchin (2008) found 18.1 percent of the profiles displaying evidence of alcohol use.

That alcohol-oriented SNS pages influence on applicant's job opportunities prove Bohnert and Ross (2010). They conducted a study evaluating the suitability of hypothetical candidates for a job. They found that when respondents got shown adolescents' family-oriented or professional-oriented SNS, they were more likely to invite these applicants for a job interview and offer them significantly higher starting salaries than adolescents with alcohol-oriented SNS pages.

Drugs

Hinduja and Patchin (2008) also proved 1.7 percent of the profiles portraying marijuana use. Nine percent of the textual content Kolek and Saunders (2008) investigated contained references to drugs.

Alcohol and drug use are mentioned by Haefner (2009) as the number two reason not to hire a candidate. When checking the top ten of reasons for terminating an employee's contract, we find alcohol or drug abuse in this list (Inglish, n.d.).

Nudity and/or sexual activities

In their investigation of Facebook profiles, Peluchette and Karl (2007) found references to sexual activities and nudity. Twenty percent of the profiles contained comments regarding sexual activities, another 25 percent contained semi-nude or sexually provocative photos. In the scribblings they found that another 18 percent of the profiles contained references to sexual events. In contrast to these high percentages, Watson, Smith, and Driver (2006) agreed on four suggestive or obscene poses and another one containing nudity or partial nudity; respectively 2.7 and 0.7 percent. Hinduja and Patchin (2008) found 5.4 percent of adolescents portraying photographs of them wearing a swimsuit or underwear.

Smoking and partying

Especially in Holland, which was one of the first countries prohibiting smoking in public buildings, smoking must been taken in to account as a habit recruiters can find very annoying, slightly irritating. 7.5 Percent of the profiles included in the research of Hinduja and Patchin (2008) contained evidence of tobacco use.

Just as smoking, partying, if influencing an employee's daily work routines can be bothering recruiters. Issues of partying were included in two researches and found in fifty percent of the cases (Peluchette and Karl, 2007) and at Kolek and Saunders' (2008) investigations of wall postings, 25 percent of the profiles contained party references.

Poor communication skills

Another form of verbal presentation has also been mentioned in the list of reasons not to hire by Haefner (2009) and includes poor communication skills. Using swear words forms a separate category. 32.8 Percent of the profiles displayed swear words in comments, with another 19.9 percent on the rest of the profile page (Hinduja and Patchin, 2008).

Gossiping, bad-mouthing work and racism

An important reason not to hire is the spread of gossip (Haefner, 2009). At least 50 percent of the profiles in the study of Peluchette and Karl (2007) included this profanity. Examples were filtered from the so-called Facebook 'wall', comparable to the Hyves feature 'krabbels' containing public messages from friends. The authors found messages involving negative comments on other people (40 percent of the profiles), employers (25 percent) and racial comments (10 percent). Bad-mouthing about previous employers, co-workers or clients is separated from profanity as reason number three not to hire an applicant with 35 percent, just as discriminatory comments (26 percent) and sharing confidential information from a previous employer (20 percent), which were respectively fifth and six in the ranking (Haefner, 2009).

Of course some attention must be drawn to the physical presentation of an applicant online. Besides nudity, lots of make-up and a bad taste in clothing can negatively influence a recruiters' decision-making.

The present study

Recruiters declared the information found is for almost sixty percent crucial to the decision to invite or not (Sullivan, 2007). This statement calls up some questions specifically addressed to the Dutch SNS Hyves. The following research question can be formulated:

How is recruiters' decision-making influenced by what they find on adolescents' Hyves pages?

First of all, content studies on different SNS have been performed, but one giving a clear indication on the subjects one can find on the Dutch SNS Hyves is not available. The first sub-question will therefore try to map which information can be found on Dutch adolescents' Hyves pages:

SQ1: Which subjects are found on Dutch adolescents' Hyves pages?

With the results on the first sub-question it can be questioned if there are subjects recruiters disapprove more than others:

SQ2: How do recruiters approve the different subjects discussed by adolescents on Hyves?

When ranking the different subjects found online, can recruiters indicate which topics will quicker lead to rejection of the adolescent, since some subjects play a larger role than others during the application process? And, since Hyves pages are filled with scribblings posted by a third party:

SQ3: How do the statements of a third party influence on recruiters' perception of the adolescent?

Two hypotheses can be deducted from the available literature:
H1:   When a third party expresses himself positively about a profile owner's character, the characteristic of this member will be perceived more positive by its observer and will less quickly lead to rejection from the application process, and
H2:   When a third party expresses himself negatively about a profile owner's character, the characteristic of this member will be perceived more negative by its observer and will quicker lead to rejection from the application process.

The answer on these questions and the assumption or rejection of the hypotheses will support the main conclusions on the research question.

Study 1: Content analysis

In order to provide an answer on the first sub-question, a quantitative content analysis on adolescents' Hyves profiles was conducted. This study also provided input for the second study. This content analysis gave insight in which types of communication could be found on adolescents' Hyves and to which extent. The study had an exploratory aim.

Method

Instrument
The theory section supplied a list of nine subjects[1], mentioned by at least one author. The subjects mentioned were split up in either visual proof of use (consumption), the display of or the textual reference to the subject, for example alcohol. According to this, a list of thirteen items could be noted. Nevertheless, since Hyves offers its users the opportunity to express themselves in a variety of ways with both pictures and scribblings, every topic mentioned was checked whether it could appear online in one of the three conditions. This resulted in a list of 21 subjects.
In order to use the list as a valuable tool in the first study, the from thirteen to 21 subjects extended scheme still needed to be checked for its completeness. It was pretested under ten eighteen year old Hyves users from Enschede[2].

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[1] Appendix 1: Subjects by author
[2] Appendix 2: List of participating profiles – preliminary content analysis

Based on the results of the pretest some changes were made in the coding scheme. Almost every screened profile contained proof of (one or more) spelling mistakes. This category was taken out for coding, since spelling mistakes are sometimes made on purpose, being part of slang. The researcher could not guarantee fair coding at this point. Furthermore, the category nudity and sexual activities was split up in the visual proof of sexual consumption and the display of nudity, whereas the textual reference to both remained a combined variable. This choice was made since in the case of nudity consumption people usually refer to sexual activities and consumption was included in the variable sex.

Finally, gossiping was not found in the preliminary analysis, though another type of commenting on others, namely commenting on the profile owners characteristics (f.e. 'hey you, busy student' or 'hi there you drunk') was found. The extra subject was added to the scheme, since these comments indicate third party involvement. A list of 21 subjects remained for further research[3] and were included in a questionnaire.

Since only a thin slice of profile information is needed in order to obtain impressions of others online (Stecher & Counts, 2008), the analysis only focused on the profile picture and the five scribblings displayed at the homepage of an Hyves profile. The picture was included since photographs are perceived as most useful part of this 'slice' (Stecher & Counts, 2008). Furthermore, scribblings were included since they were written by a third party contained valuable information which could be used as input for the questionnaire.

Participants

200 Adolescents' Hyves profiles were included in the content analysis. A partly randomized sample was drawn from the online Hyves database by selecting the first 100 profiles of eighteen years old members and 100 profiles of the twenty years old, both groups being inhabitants of Enschede. Only profiles configured for public view were included, containing at least a profile picture and five scribblings. 60 Percent of the selected profiles belonged to males, 40 percent to females.

Procedure

After selecting data and participants for the analysis, the coding process could start. Data was coded if scribblings contained negative references to alcohol, drugs, nudity/sexual activities, smoking, partying, swearing, gossiping, badmouthing colleagues or clients and racism. References that were contrary to the ideas underlying each category were not classified as belonging to the category. The amount of statements on a subject was written down and statements were saved. Comments on owners' personality were saved for its qualitative value for the second study.

Analysis

Because of the exploratory nature of this first study and its value as input for the second study, the data was used to discover the presence of several subjects: the amount of samples and the percentage of the profiles containing the subject were analyzed.

Results

The analysis shows the amount of samples containing one of the subjects, just as the overall percentage of Hyves profiles containing any negative reference to the subjects. The original nine subjects explored by the authors are summed up in the table.

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[3] Appendix 3: CodeMap

Table 1: Presence of different subjects in a 200 Hyves profiles' analysis

Topic	Amount of statements found	Percentage of the profiles containing subject
Alcohol	67	27,5%
Drugs	2	1%
Sex/Nudity	9	4,5%
Smoking	4	2%
Partying	89	37,5%
Swearing	30	13,5%
Gossiping	1	14,5%
Badmouthing work	1	0,5%
Racism	1	0,5%

According to this data, 16.5 percent of the profiles contained proof of one or more textual references to alcohol, 9.5 percent of the profiles contained pictures wherein alcohol was displayed and another 1.5 percent contained proof of alcohol consumption.

Only textual references could be found for the subjects, drugs, smoking, swearing, badmouthing work, gossiping and racism. Four out of nine references to sex and nudity were textually as well. The other five displayed complete or partial nudity.

Proof of party consumption was found in seven percent of the profiles, whereas textual reference to partying took place in 30.5 percent of the cases.

Personal statements

In 14.5 percent of the profiles an amount of 36 personal statements about the profile owner were counted. Personal comments on the Hyves member could be split up into two trends:

1) The 200 Hyves profiles provided samples containing judgments about the profile owners' intelligence, for example (translated from Dutch): 'I need your genius brain', 'hey, hard worker' and 'really smart of you, I am proud of my housemate', and
2) Samples were found commenting on attractiveness: 'you are such a pretty guy', 'Hey, handsome' or even 'Hey you with the pubic hair on your head'.

Conclusion

The content analysis of 200 Dutch adolescents' Hyves profiles provided a top three of most common subjects, namely partying, alcohol and swearing. For all the nine subjects mentioned in earlier studies at least one example was found. In the category personal statements, trends were found in statements about both looks and intelligence.
Therefore the two hypotheses could be made more specified:

H1:   When a third party expresses himself positively about the profile owner's attractiveness or intelligence, this Hyves member will be perceived more pretty or smarter by its observer. The observer will decide to reject this adolescent less quickly from the application process.

H2:   When a third party expresses himself negatively about the profile owner's attractiveness or intelligence, this Hyves member will be perceived less pretty or smart by its observer. The observer will decide to reject this adolescent quicker from the application process.

The second study was designed to prove these hypotheses, just as it tried to answer the second and third sub-question.

Study 2: Questionnaire

Method

The content analysis provided insight in the different types of information found on adolescents' Hyves pages. To continue, a partly qualitative, partly quantitative questionnaire[4] was designed to answer the question whether recruiters disapprove some subjects on Hyves more than others and how statements by a third party influence on recruiters' perception of the adolescent. The questionnaire was designed to examine the opinion of a large group of recruiters to these cases.

Instrument
A questionnaire was designed and started with a short introduction on the study and the questionnaire. The second page consisted of an explanation on the main features of Hyves, illustrated by pictures, for those unfamiliar with the medium.
The first part of the questionnaire measured whether third party expressions made observers perceive an Hyves member more or less intelligent or attractive. Both characteristics were measured with five five-points-scales, containing synonyms of the terms 'intelligence' and 'attractiveness'. The five items together showed an Alpha of respectively 0.85 and 0.81. This means both are reliable (George & Mallery, 2003), so no items needed to be deleted from the questionnaire after collecting the data.
The third party expressions were provided to respondents in the form of scribblings. These scribblings formed the background for answering the first part of the questionnaire.

Respondents were split up in three groups. Each group got shown a page with scribblings in a different style: either positive, neutral or negative:
> Version 1 contained a page with Hyves scribblings presenting only positive comments on the profile owner,
> Version 2 was neutral, without any judging comment, and
> Version 3 stated only negative comments on the profile owner.

After fulfilling the ten five-points-scales, respondents were asked to provide a qualitative answer on the question what their likeliness was to hire the candidate. They could illustrate their opinion by writing down the grounds they had based the decision on.

To continue, in the second part of the questionnaire respondents got shown sixteen examples of information found earlier in the content analysis. It contained samples, both pictures and texts of drug use, smoking, partying and other categories. It gave respondents an impression of what was meant by the different categories summed up later in the questionnaire, which they were supposed to rank. Ranking took place by attaching to the subjects with the largest influence on hiring decisions the lowest number, and the subjects of less influence the highest number. Nine categories were provided namely: alcohol, drugs, sex and nudity, smoking, partying, swearing, gossiping, badmouthing work and racism. Respondents had the opportunity to textually illustrate their ranking in a qualitative section.

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[4] Appendix 4: Questionnaire (positive, neutral, negative)

Finally, respondents were asked to fill out some demographic data. As a start, their gender, age category, level of education and number of employees of the company were asked. Furthermore, their experience with the medium Hyves was questioned. Respondents were asked whether they were familiar with Hyves before filling out the questionnaire, whether they used Hyves in the past for business purposes and whether they intended to do this in the future.

Participants

Respondents questioned (n=78) were either entrepreneur or working as a recruiter for their company. Table 2 shows their demographical data.

Table 2: Demographic data of respondents

Demographic characteristic		n	Percentage
Gender	Male	47	60,3%
	Female	31	39,7%
	< 30	15	19,2%
	31-40	24	30,8%
Age	41-50	25	32,1%
	51-60	13	16,7%
	> 60	1	1,3%
	Primary School	1	1,3%
	MAVO	2	2,6%
	HAVO/VWO	2	2,6%
Level of Education	MBO	13	16,7%
	HBO	39	50,0%
	University	21	26,9%

There was a balance in the amount of employees working for the in this study included companies: 29.5 percent of the companies had five or less employees, one third of the questioned worked for a company with in between six and fifty workers and another 37.2 percent worked for a company with at least 51 employees.

Furthermore, all respondents turned out to be familiar with Hyves before this study took place. Exact percentages on experience with Hyves are exposed in table 3.

Table 3: Employee's experience with Hyves

Employee characteristic		n	Percentage
Familiarity with Hyves	Yes	55	70,5%
	Somewhat	23	29,5%
Prior of Hyves for business purposes	Yes	28	35,9%
	No	50	64,1%
Future intended use of Hyves	Yes	30	38,5%
for business purposes	Maybe	35	44,9%
	No	13	16,7%

A statistical analysis showed that no significant differences could be found between the three groups of 26 respondents on the characteristics mentioned. All p-values were above the .05-level (table 4).

Table 4: Differences in between groups of respondents (in %), including Cramer's V

Characteristic		Version 1	Version 2	Version 3	Cramer's V
Gender	Male	20,5%	21,8%	17,9%	0.098
	Female	12,8%	11,5%	15,4%	
Age Category	< 30	7,7%	6,4%	5,1%	
	31-40	9,0%	7,7%	14,1%	
	41-50	11,5%	10,3%	10,3%	0.184
	51-60	5,1%	7,7%	3,8%	
	> 60	0,0%	1,3%	0,0%	
Level of Education	Primary School	0,0%	1,3%	0,0%	
	MAVO	0,0%	0,0%	2,6%	
	HAVO/VWO	2,6%	0,0%	0,0%	0.311
	MBO	2,6%	9,0%	5,1%	
	HBO	15,4%	16,7%	17,9%	
	University	12,8%	6,4%	7,7%	
Employed workforce	< 5	10,3%	10,3%	9,0%	
	6-10	5,1%	2,6%	3,8%	
	11-25	5,1%	2,6%	5,1%	0.203
	26-50	1,3%	6,4%	1,3%	
	> 51	11,5%	11,5%	14,1%	
Familiarity with Hyves	Yes	24,4%	21,8%	24,4%	
	Somewhat	9,0%	11,5%	9,0%	0.080
Prior use Hyves	Yes	16,7%	6,4%	12,8%	
	No	16,7%	26,9%	20,5%	0.265
Future use Hyves	Yes	16,7%	9,0%	12,8%	
	Maybe	12,8%	15,4%	16,7%	0.173
	No	3,8%	9,0%	3,8%	

Procedure

Respondents were approached by e-mail. In the first stadium the recruiters questioned were approached via the network of the researcher, in a later stadium, also unknown people were approached, by using their e-mail addresses found in job vacancies online.

Recruiters had been told to screen the Hyves profile of the adolescent, which was in fact an applicant for a vacant position in the company. They got shown one of the three versions of the Hyves scribblings, all addressed to a boy called Peter, who had, despite for the tone of his scribblings, for all of three profiles exactly the same member background.

After collecting data in between September 2010 and November 2010, 78 recruiters were found willing to fill out the questionnaire: the first part was conducted by 26 recruiters per version, the second part on ranking the different types of information was similar to all respondents and therefore completed by 78 respondents.

Analysis

Recruiters' ranking of the nine subjects resulted in a top nine list of most influencing subjects on hiring decisions. Written explanations about the grounds recruiters had based their rankings on were summarized.

After proving no significant differences between the three groups of respondents, an ANOVA-analysis could be performed, measuring recruiters' perceived intelligence and attractiveness of the applicant for each version, based on information provided by a third party.

Continuing on these perceived characteristics, recruiters' answers on the question whether the applicant seemed suitable for a job in their company were summarized. Additionally, with logistic regression analysis, the influence of perceived intelligence and attractiveness on the perceived suitability of the candidate or not was investigated. 36 Recruiters could provide a clear 'yes' or 'no' on the question to hire the candidate. The other 42 mentioned several reasons why they could not provide an answer.

With the help of crosstabs including both version number and the answer on the question whether the candidate seemed appropriate for the job, according to recruiters, percentages could be derived from the data, showing the effect of either positive or negative comments on appropriateness of the applying adolescent.

Regression analyses were also conducted to measure the influence of either one of the nine subjects on the decision to hire the adolescent candidate or not. Finally, regression analyses on a combination of both a characteristic and a subject were conducted.

Results

Ranking subjects

Recruiters were asked to rank nine different subjects by number: table 5 shows the results of this ranking. The lowest number stands for the subject which the recruiter would rather not find online and the information ranked by the highest number is of less concern for the recruiter.

Table 5: Subjects found on Hyves playing a large role in recruiters decision-making (1) and of less influence (9)

Type of communication	Mean rank	Rank number
Racism	2.36	1
Drugs	2.77	2
Badmouthing work	3.28	3
Swearing	4.10	4
Nudity/sexual activities	5.24	5
Gossiping	5.45	6
Alcohol	5.65	7
Smoking	6.94	8
Partying	7.65	9

As the results of the ranking already show, racism is the number one reason to reject somebody from the application process. In their clarification on their ranking, recruiters explicitly mention this. Often is mentioned that racism, badmouthing work, swearing and gossiping give clear insight on how people behave in private and at work. It tells something about their character. Drug use is also seen as a threat to work behavior and an indication of character, when drugs are used too often. Recruiters see problems concerning health and judge drugs therefore to be absolutely unacceptable. Partying, alcohol and smoking are in this order of rank seen by recruiters as part of life an adolescent, and therefore not seen as threathening for working life, unless consumed to an heavy extent. Nudity and sexual activities are part of normal behavior, though not appreciated by recruiters when found online. Expressing oneself on these subjects online says also something about the type of person the applicant is.

Recruiters comment that even though still a teenager, these applicants should know which information to keep to themselves and which information to express online. They should be aware that also employers have access to Hyves. Expressing yourself online is possible if expressions are belonging to the category 'acceptable'. For an eighteen years old student, more information is accepted than for a 30 years old person with more life experience. A couple of recruiters would use the job interview to return to the subject Hyves.

Hypothesis testing

Recruiters' perceived intelligence and the attractiveness of the adolescent were measured with an one-way ANOVA. Results are shown in table 6.

Table 6: One-way ANOVA on intelligence and attractiveness

Characteristic	F	df	p
Intelligence	26.441	2, 72	.000
Attractiveness	38.455	2, 72	.000

It can be concluded that there are significant differences for the three versions on a .01-level on both intelligence and attractiveness. Recruiters perceive applying adolescents with positive scribblings on their Hyves profile as more intelligent and attractive than adolescents without these scribblings or even with negative scribblings. Adolescents with only neutral scribblings, lacking cues on intelligence and attractive, are still perceived more smart and pretty than their colleagues with negative scribblings on their profile.

Qualitative answers

To continue, recruiters were asked whether statements in the scribblings they got shown would cause them to reject the applicant from the process. The results for the three versions were as follows:

Version 1: positive scribblings

> Based on Peters' Hyves profile, half of the respondents is willing to invite him to a job interview. Three recruiters would explicitly not send Peter an invitation. The other group of ten recruiters thinks third party expressions on Hyves are not a reference for the capabilities of an applicant. His CV and the requirements for the vacant position are of larger influence. Another trend in the comments on the question to hire or not to hire is that attractiveness is not a condition to hire somebody. Finally, recruiters declare to use Hyves as an indication of the social capacities of an applicant, whereby half of them thinks Peter's scribblings are childish, and the other half judges the scribblings are not representative for normal, face-to-face communication.

Version 2: neutral scribblings

> Based on the absence of any indication of intelligence or attractiveness, eighteen recruiters logically declare they are not able to answer the question whether to hire Peter or not. When no judgments on Peter are provided, a CV or the requirements for the job become more important. Four recruiters declare the information provided is not sufficient to decide the applicant is incapable for the job, so they give Peter the benefit of the doubt. Finally, another four recruiters were able to extract some information from the scribblings that made them decide Peter would not suit the job.

Version 3: negative scribblings

> Since recruiters declare Hyves is a private medium and not representative for judging whether to hire or not, fifteen recruiters cannot answer the question on the appropriateness of Peter. Recruiters declare the information on Peter's Hyves page is not flattering, and they would certainly ask him for an explanation of his behavior online when inviting him for a job interview. Again, the requirements for the vacant position and his CV are more important to recruiters. Though, still ten recruiters clarify the blunt and shallow communication together with Peter seeming to lack the ability to be serious are reasons to reject Peter from the application process. One recruiter is still willing to invite Peter, since he or she does not consider Hyves as a tool for recruitment, but judges Hyves to be private business.

Effect of version on appropriateness of candidate

To find out whether the types of scribblings shown, either positive, neutral or negative, influenced on recruiters perception of the appropriateness of the candidate, a crosstab was conducted and shown in table 7.

*Table 7: Version number * Appropriateness candidate*

Appropriate?	Version 1		Version 2		Version 3	
	n	Percentage	n	Percentage	n	Percentage
Yes	13	81,2%	4	50,0%	2	16,7%
No	3	18,8%	4	50,0%	10	83,3%

Results show that when a version of the questionnaire with only positive statements is shown, 81.2 percent of the recruiters is willing to invite the applicant to a job interview. An almost similar percentage is visible when analyzing recruiters' perception on a negative profile. In this case they are judging the candidate to be not appropriate for the job. The results were significant, with a X^2 of 11.51 (df = 2, p < .01).

Regression analysis: influence of characteristics and recruiters judgments on hiring decisions

When both characteristics and recruiters judgment on the nine subjects are included in a regression analysis, no item is significantly influencing the hiring decisions of recruiters.

Table 8: Logistics regression analysis of both characteristics and recruiters' judgments on hiring decisions

Predictor	β	SE β	Wald	df	p	Exp (β)
Constant	27.83	13.67	4.14	1	0.042	
Intelligence	7.93	1.53	3.55	1	0.059	0.00
Attractiveness	3.67	3.20	1.31	1	0.252	0.03
Alcohol	1.21	0.65	3.53	1	0.060	3.36
Test			X^2	df	p	
Chi-square			32.22	3	0.000	
Goodness-of-fit test						
Hosmer&Lemeshow			1.90	8	0.984	

For intelligence and alcohol, though, a trend is visible: their p-values are slightly above the .05-level. When separately included in an analysis, they can be of influence on hiring decisions. Therefore it is necessary to measure the influence of the three items of table 8, by separately measuring the two characteristics and the judgment on alcohol.

To investigate which characteristics influence hiring decisions of recruiters, the two characteristics taken into account in this study, intelligence and attractiveness, were included in a logistic linear

regression analysis. It appeared that both variables were significant and explained a part of the hiring decisions of recruiters. Results on the influence of intelligence are reported in table 9.

Table 9: Logistic regression analysis of intelligence on hiring decisions

Predictor	β	SE β	Wald	df	p	Exp (β)
Constant	13.92	4.80	8.42	1	0.004	1111144.79
Intelligence	-4.49	1.53	8.63	1	0.003	0.01
Test			X²	df	p	
Chi-square			22.90	1	0.000	
Goodness-of-fit test						
Hosmer&Lemeshow			3.47	7	0.839	

Note: Cox and Snell R^2 = 0.502 and Nagelkerke R^2 = 0.671

Results show that intelligence influences hiring decisions of recruiters. The model was significant $X^2(1, 33)$ = 22.898 p = .000. The Hosmer and Lemeshow goodness-of-fit test showed no significant differences between observed and predicted frequencies in the model. This indicates that the model fits the data well (Peng, Lee & Ingersoll, 2002). The Nagelkerke R^2 shows that the variable intelligence explains 67,1 percent of the hiring decisions made by recruiters.

According to this model, the log of the odds of a job applicant being hired was negatively related to his intelligence score. This indicates that job applicants judged on being not intelligent had a smaller chance of being hired. Though, the odds of hiring a job applicant with a higher intelligence score were only 0.011 smaller than the odds for adolescents with lower scores.

The variable intelligence did not explain all the variance in the dependent variable. Table 10 shows that the variable attractiveness is also influencing on recruiters' hiring decisions.

Table 10: Logistic regression analysis of attractiveness on hiring decisions

Predictor	β	SE β	Wald	df	p	Exp (β)
Constant	12.29	4.27	8.30	1	0.004	218299.39
Attractiveness	-4.41	1.55	8.06	1	0.005	0.01
Test			X²	df	p	
Chi-square			23.00	1	0.000	
Goodness-of-fit test						
Hosmer&Lemeshow			6.42	8	0.601	

Note: Cox and Snell R^2 = 0.492 and Nagelkerke R^2 = 0.658

The model above was significant $X^2(1, 34)$ = 23.00 p = .000. No significant differences were found between observed and predicted frequencies following the Hosmer and Lemeshow test. A Nagelkerke R^2 of .658 shows that 65,8 percent of recruiters' hiring decisions are explained by the variable attractiveness.
Just as with intelligence, for attractiveness the log of the odds (.01) of an adolescent being hired was negatively related. Job applicants judged by recruiters being not attractive had a smaller chance of being hired.

To continue, the presence of one of the nine topics on Dutch adolescents' Hyves pages could be of influence on recruiters hiring decisions. Recruiters ranked the topics by reporting the lowest number to the topics which would play a role in their decision-making and the highest number to the topics which would have less influence.

Individual variables did not have significant influence on the hiring decisions, though combining the characteristic intelligence with the topic alcohol proved a significant influence, shown in table 11.

Table 11: Logistic regression analysis of recruiters' judgment on behavior on hiring decisions

Predictor	β	SE β	Wald	df	p	Exp (β)
Constant	20.34	9.09	5.01	1	0.025	6830E8
Intelligence	-8.39	3.52	5.66	1	0.034	0.00
Alcohol	1.03	0.48	4.51	1	0.025	2.79
Test			X²	df	p	
Chi-square			32.02	2	0.000	
Goodness-of-fit test						
Hosmer&Lemeshow			4.18	8	0.841	

Note: Cox and Snell R^2 = 0.621 and Nagelkerke R^2 = 0.830

Results show that alcohol also influences the hiring decision of recruiters, if combined in a model with intelligence. This model was significant X^2(2, 33) = 32.02 p = .000. Hosmer & Lemeshows' probability was .841, which indicates the model fits the data well. Nagelkerke's R^2 showed that these two variables explain for 83 percent the decision whether applicants were hired or not.
The log of the odds of a job applicant being hired were positively related to the ranking of alcohol. This means that the less alcohol was seen as a factor of influence for recruiters, the more chance the applicant had on being hired.

Conclusion

The questionnaire provided an answer on the question how recruiters approve the different subjects discussed by adolescents on Hyves. When ranking nine subjects found in the first study, recruiters disapprove most the categories racism, drugs and bad-mouthing work. They less disapprove alcohol, smoking and partying, since they see them as being part of daily routines of teenagers. Alcohol could have been even lower in recruiters' ranking, since the lower the subject stands on recruiters' list of unappropriate behavior, the more willing recruiters were to hire the applicant.

36 of 78 recruiters (46 percent) were able to provide a clear answer on the question whether they would invite the applicant for a job interview. This answer was only based on third party statements. Statements of a third party on either intelligence or the looks of an applicant will have a positive effect on the assessment of these two characteristics by the recruiter: applicant adolescents with positive scribblings were perceived more intelligent and attractive than adolescents without these statements. Vice versa, applicants with negative statements on looks or intelligence were assessed less intelligent or attractive. If there were no cues on looks or intelligence available in the scribblings, adolescents scored in between positive and negative on the characteristics.

The first hypothesis tested if recruiters found applicants with positive statements on looks and intelligence on their Hyves more suitable for their organization. Strikingly, the recruiters judging positive Hyves scribblings were willing to invite adolescents perceived more intelligent and pretty for a job interview.
According to the second hypothesis, in case of the negative statements, recruiters judged Hyves not to be a suitable tool for making the decision to reject applicants.

According to the written statements of the 78 recruiters in the questionnaire, they would definitely not hire adolescents who display discriminatory comments or statements related to drugs on their Hyves pages. This study showed no prove for these written statements: both racism and drugs did not have a significant effect on the judgment of recruiters on the appropriateness of the candidate for a vacant job position.

This study proved the influence of both perceived intelligence and attractiveness on the suitability of the candidate. Remarkably, recruiters declare in their written explanations that adolescents' appearance will not have influence on their decisions, whereas the data-analysis of the questionnaire shows that comments on looks by others than the profile owner himself, either positive or negative were certainly decisive.

General conclusion

How is recruiters' decision-making influenced by what they find on adolescents' Hyves pages?

What generally can be concluded from this study is that recruiters, when screening applicants online are influenced by content on the Hyves pages of adolescents. Even if their decision-making only depends on third party statements, still 46 percent of recruiters is able to judge whether the applicant fits within their organization and therefore is suitable for the job. Eighty percent of this group of recruiters would judge an applicant with only positive statements by a third party on his Hyves profile to be appropriate for the job. Eighty percent of recruiters would not find this applicant appropriate if there were only negative statements on his Hyves profile.

The tone of the statements (either positive, neutral or negative) by a third party is also of influence on recruiters' perception of the intelligence and the attractiveness of the candidate. Candidates with only positive statements on intelligence and looks are perceived more intelligent and attractive by recruiters than candidates with neutral or negative statements in their scribblings. This perceived intelligence and attractiveness partly influences the judgment on the appropriateness of the candidate.

Furthermore, this study showed that recruiters judgment on the appropriateness of the candidate is influenced by a combination of perceived intelligence and recruiters' ranking of alcohol being of influence on hiring decisions. When recruiters declare not to set much value on statements on alcohol, they were more quickly willing to invite the job candidate for an interview.

Finally, in their self-reports recruiters declare the presence of racial comments or the proof of drug use on an applicants' Hyves page to be decisive not to hire this candidate.

Discussion

This study was one of the first relating Hyves to recruitment and met the wish of Boyd and Ellison (2007) to find out for what purposes and by whom SNS are used outside the U.S. The study zoomed in on the use of this SNS by recruiters, when screening applying job candidates. Some theoretical and practical implications can be made based on the conclusions of this study.

Theoretical and practical implications

This study confronted recruiters with the social medium Hyves. Almost two third declared to not having used Hyves for business purposes in the past. Especially this non-users reaction to Hyves would give insight in the long-term implication of the medium (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). For future business purposes, 38.5 percent of the recruiters declare they are definitely going to use Hyves, whereas another 44.9 percent is taking this into consideration. It seems that the group who judged SNS use to be plausible for hiring decisions in 2006 (Lupsa, 2006) has risen to 83 percent in 2010.

Baker (2008) claims recruiters base their decisions on personal judgments. This study proved even content added by a third party is influencing on these personal opinions.

Furthermore, Walther et al. (2008) mention that complimentary, pro-social statements by friends improved some of the profile owner's perceived characteristics. For the two characteristics intelligence and physical attractiveness, this study proved the same, just as it proved that negative, uncomplimentary statements make recruiters perceive the profile owner more negative on the characteristics. The warranting principle suggests that recruiters would attach greater credence to information not manipulated by the target itself. This study proved that, when confronted with only third party statements, almost half of recruiters is willing to base the decision to invite a candidate or not on these statements.

That only a thin slice of information on a person is needed in order to form consistent impressions (Stecher and Counts, 2008) can also be concluded for the setting of this study. By providing recruiters a name, gender and five scribblings, they judged the candidate with the positive profile to be more appropriate for the job than the candidate with the neutral or negative profile.
Besides this, Haefner (2009) found out that 19 percent of the employers is willing to recruit an applicant with positive references. This study even resulted in more than 80 percent of the recruiters intending to invite the job applicant for an interview.

Haefner's (2009) top three reasons for the disregard of candidates after screening online consists of the posting of provocative or inappropriate photographs or information, candidates drinking or using drugs and candidates badmouthing work. Racism is not included in this list, but was the main reason not to hire in the current study. Perhaps that recruiters in the study of Haefner (2009) judged racial differentiation during the application process to be a bigger issue than racial behavior by an applicant. Support of this explanation can be found in the amount of scientific literature available on racial differentiation in recruitment (f.e. Forstenlechner & Al-Waqfi, 2010; King & Afra, 2010).

According to recruiters' judgments on statements on alcohol, they could be of the opinion that consuming alcohol is part of adolescent and student behavior. They could see a moderate consumption as a 'healthy' (normal) way of living, not influencing on work performance. Mareno (2009) can confirm this attitude. She examined students with an overall high level of wellness, who declared to moderately consume alcohol. What could also be an explanation for this remarkable results is that recruiters recognize a part of their own behavior in the more innocent comments on drinking alcohol.

Recruiters judgment on the appropriateness of the candidate, which was based on the tone of their profile (either positive, neutral or negative), drags up an important practical implication of this study: applicants with an online profile full of positive statements written by a third party have a bigger chance to be invited for a job interview. Adolescent applicants should check their Hyves profile on the presence of these positive statements, which can be of influence on their chance of getting hired.

Adolescents can also conclude that their friends' comments on attractiveness or intelligence are perceived by others as valuable and true. Enrolled in application processes this information can be decisive for recruiters. While 83.4 percent of Dutch recruiters is considering using Hyves for business purposes in the future, adolescents should be very careful which information to publish on their profile and check their online appearance.
Adolescents should be well aware of the fact that recruiters use third party statements for judging on them personally. They should be more aware who to accept on Hyves as their friends and who to reject.

Recruiters involved in this study where sometimes surprised to be confronted with the amount of information available on this medium. They might think of Hyves now as a potentially useful tool for job applicant screening. Smith and Kidder (2010) mention several reasons for caution which must be taken into account by recruiters. SNS may contain inaccurate information, recruiters can break the

law when including legally protected demographic information in the selection process and some applicants do not have their own SNS. Recruiters should take all this into account when making hiring decisions.

Limitations and future research

A limitation of the content analysis is that samples were found and analyzed by only one rater. Therefore, measuring inter-rater reliability was not possible. Some doubtful samples could, if categorized by a larger group of raters, be assigned to a different subject, which would cause differences in the reported percentages.

Secondly, a part of the questionnaire results is based on self-reports of recruiters. Recruiters report what they think they would do in the devised situation, but their actual behavior is not measured. Results could be based on recruiters' (unintentional) dishonesty. A remarkable trend can be discovered when comparing the method of this study to that of van Wingerden (2010). From both studies can be concluded that self-reports by recruiters provide different outcomes than a data-analysis of respectively an experiment or questionnaire. This study proved a difference between the self-reports of recruiters and the data analysis on the variable attractiveness. Recruiters self-report that attractiveness is not of influence on their decision-making could be a socially desirable answer. By confronting recruiters with the differences found in separate studies, perhaps an explanation on these differences can be found. Van Wingerden (2010) mentions several explanations for the differences between self-reports and an experiment, for example recruiters' unconsciousness of their information preference or recruiters being confronted with information during the study they would not look at in real life.

Recruiters mention racial comments by applicants being the number one reason to reject an applicant. During the study was not discovered whether this answer could also be socially desirable, but perhaps more ranking studies on the topics mentioned could validate recruiters answer at this point. Further research could attach to both these and Haefner's findings (2009) and focus on the question which factors are decisive when judging the appropriateness of candidates and making hiring decisions. Perhaps a more elaborated study could prove a statistical connection between the behavioral topics mentioned (drugs, racism etc.) and the question whether to hire somebody or not.

Finally, one of the limitations of this study is that 42 recruiters lacked a clear answer on the question whether they could hire the applicant or not, based on scribblings provided by a third party. Making assumptions based on answers by a group of only 36 respondents is very risky, especially because this group is even further split up in three groups of twelve judgments by recruiters. Conclusions based on such a small amount of data are hard to generalize.

Therefore, a more elaborated study with a larger pool of respondents could zoom in more deeply on the influence of positive and negative statements by a third party on recruiters' judgment on the applicant's appropriateness for the job.

When analyzing the methods of the few studies conducted in the field of SNS and recruitment, a trend becomes visible: all researchers use manipulated profiles they show their respondents (Van Wingerden, 2010; Bohnert & Ross, 2010). Though, what has not yet been discovered is at which elements of an Hyves or a Facebook page focus recruiters when screening applicants online and which elements of a SNS can be decisive for the question whether to hire or not.

Finally, future studies can focus more on the demographical background of recruiters using Hyves for hiring decisions. This study showed no significant differences in the background of the questioned recruiters. Maybe when a more elaborated questionnaire on experience with SNS is tested under recruiters, containing items of the survey of Lampe, Ellison and Steinfield (2006), more insight in recruiters' behavior can be gained.

Results on future studies in these direction will enrich the scientific literature and be of great practical value for both recruiters and applicants.

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Appendix 1:   Subjects by author

Nr:	Subject:	Subcategory:	Author:
1	Alcohol	a) Visual proof of alcohol use	Peluchette & Karl (2007), Kolek & Saunders, (2008), Watson, Smith & Driver (2006), Hinduja and Patchin (2008)
		b) Displays of alcohol	Kolek & Saunders (2008)
		c) Textual references to alcohol	Peluchette & Karl (2007), Kolek en Saunders (2008)
2	Drugs	a) Visual proof of drug use	Hinduja & Patchin (2008)
		b) Displays of drugs	
		c) Textual references to drugs	Kolek & Saunders (2008),
3	Nudity/sexual activities	a) Visual proof of (semi) nudity/sexual activities	Peluchette & Karl (2007), Watson, Smith & Driver (2006), Hinduja & Patchin (2008)
		b) Textual references to nudity/sexual activities	Peluchette & Karl (2007)
4	Smoking	a) Visual proof of smoking	Hinduja & Patchin (2008)
		b) Displays of cigarettes	
		c) Textual references to smoking	
5	Partying	a) Visual proof of partying	
		b) Textual references to partying	Peluchette & Karl (2007), Kolek & Saunders (2008)
6	Poor communication skills	a) Visual symbolic reference to swearing	
		b) Textual references to swearing	Hinduja & Patchin (2008)
		c) Spelling mistakes	
7	Gossiping	Negative comments on other people	Peluchette & Karl (2007)
8	Bad-mouthing work	a) Negative comments on employers/colleagues/clients	Peluchette & Karl (2007)
		b) Sharing work-related, confidential information	
9	Racism	Racial comments	Peluchette & Karl (2007)

Appendix 2:   List of participating profiles – preliminary content analysis

1. Male, 18 years old, 95 friends, Enschede
2. Male, 18 years old, 202 friends, Enschede
3. Female, 18 years old, 329 friends, Enschede
4. Male, 18 years old, 401 friends, Enschede
5. Male, 18 years old, 336 friends, Enschede
6. Female, 18 years old, 59 friends, Enschede
7. Male, 18 years old, 544 friends, Enschede
8. Female, 18 years old, 208 friends, Enschede
9. Female, 18 years old, 496 friends, Enschede
10. Female, 18 years old, 39 friends, Enschede

Variable:	Subcategory:	
Alcohol	Visual proof of alcohol use	2
	Displays of alcohol	2, 5, 9
	Textual references to alcohol	8
Drugs	Visual proof of drug use	
	Displays of drugs	
	Textual references to drugs	8
Nudity/sexual activities	Visual proof of (semi-)nudity/sexual activities	7
	Textual references to nudity/sexual activities	8
Smoking	Visual proof of smoking	
	Displays of cigarettes	
	Textual references to smoking	8
Partying	Visual proof of partying	8
	Textual references to partying	
Poor communication skills	Visual symbolic reference to swearing	
	Textual references to swearing	2, 7, 8
	Spelling mistakes	3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9 10
Gossiping	Negative comments on other people	
Bad-mouthing work	Negative comments on employers/colleagues/clients	
	Sharing work-related, confidential information	
Racism	Racial comments	

Appendix 3:   CodeMap

Variable:	Name variable:
Gender	Gender
Age	Age
Friends	Amount of friends
Scribblings	Scribblings public
Alcohol_cons	Alcohol consumption
Alcohol_display	Alcohol display
Alcohol_text	Alcohol textual reference
Drug_cons	Drug consumption
Drug_display	Drug display
Drugs_text	Drug textual reference
Sex_cons	Sex consumption
Nudity_display	Nudity display
Nudity_sex_text	Nudity/sex textual reference
Cigarette_use	Cigarette consumption
Cigarette_display	Cigarette display
Cigarette_text	Cigarette textual reference
Party_cons	Party consumption
Party_text	Party textual reference
Swearwords_display	Swearwords display
Swearwords_text	Swearwords textual reference
Gossip_text	Gossip textual reference
Personalcomment_text	Personal comment on characteristic of profile owner, textual reference
BMW_ECC_text	Bad-mouthing work, negative textual reference to employers, colleagues or clients
BMW_SCI_text	Bad-mouthing work, textual reference to work-related, confidential information
Racism_text	Racism textual reference

Appendix 4: Questionnaire (positive, neutral, negative)

Hengelo, september 2010

Geachte heer, mevrouw,

Voor u ligt een vragenlijst, behorende bij mijn afstudeerscriptie. Momenteel schrijf ik mijn masterscriptie aan de Universiteit Twente voor de studie Communicatie. Voor deze scriptie doe ik een onderzoek naar de toepassing van sociale netwerksites in het bedrijfsleven. Ik zou graag een beroep doen op u, in de rol van werkgever, om mij te helpen het laatste deel van mijn scriptie af te ronden.

In mijn onderzoek kijk ik specifiek naar de website Hyves, waarop jongeren hun eigen profiel kunnen aanmaken en onder andere foto's en berichten aan anderen kunnen plaatsen. Uit onderzoek is gebleken dat Hyves steeds vaker door werkgevers wordt geraadpleegd om tijdens een sollicitatieprocedure informatie in te winnen over een sollicitant. Jongeren zijn zich vaak niet bewust van dit 'marktonderzoek' van werkgevers en hebben vaak informatie op hun profiel staan, die door werkgevers in mindere mate wordt gewaardeerd. De vragenlijst behandelt dan ook de waardering van diverse soorten informatie op Hyves door werkgevers.

De vragenlijst gaat uit van de volgende situatie: u als werkgever heeft een vacante positie in uw bedrijf en de persoon waarvan aan u het profiel wordt getoond heeft gesolliciteerd voor deze functie. Zijn naam is Peter. U heeft zijn Curriculum Vitae en voert naar aanleiding hiervan een eerste persoonlijkheidscheck uit naar Peter op de profielensite Hyves.

De vragenlijst zal uit twee delen bestaan, waarbij per onderdeel wordt toegelicht wat van u verwacht wordt. De totale vragenlijst zal naar verwachting tien minuten van uw tijd in beslag nemen.

Alvast hartelijk dank voor uw deelname,

Met vriendelijke groet,

Marlon ten Broeke

Een voorbeeld van een Hyves profiel
Een Hyves profiel bestaat standaard uit een profielfoto (1), profielinformatie (2), een vriendenlijst (3),
'tikken' (4), foto's en video's (5), Hyves waar de gebruiker lid van is (6) en krabbels (7): berichten van
vrienden aan de gebruiker. Dit onderzoek richt zicht op de profielfoto (1), foto's en video's (5) en
krabbels (7).

Uitleg bij deel 1

Op de volgende pagina wordt u een vijftal 'krabbels' getoond: dit zijn berichten van vrienden gericht aan Peter. Aan u de vraag om na het lezen van deze krabbels Peter te beoordelen op een aantal competenties. U vult dit in op zogeheten vijfpuntsschalen, waarbij de uiteinden de extremen vormen:

Voorbeeld:

Mooi   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   Lelijk

Heel erg mooi   *Mooi*   *Neutraal*   *Lelijk*   *Heel erg lelijk*

Hierna verzoek ik u aan te geven of u op basis van deze informatie Peter geschikt vindt voor een vacante functie binnen uw bedrijf.

✎ Krabbels   🗑 Alle krabbels verwijderen

Romy ' (523)
gisteren, 21:52

Heeeee lekkerding!

Je bent zo veranderd, sinds de laatste keer dat ik je zag. Jij zag er ook niet slecht uit hoor!!

Joep (407)
donderdag, 12:49

Ha Peter!

Zie ik je dit weekend nog ff??? 🍌 Veel te lang gelede... We belle...
Zou naaaiis zijn!!

Michiel (309)
dinsdag, 23:22

Heey harde werker,

Hoe gingen je toetsen? Anyway, je bent nu al een held!! Ik heb je geniale hersenbrein nodig 😎

Laterzz!

Maud (570)
dinsdag, 10:53

Hey knapperd!

Wat ben je toch een mooie vent 😊 . Zie ik je gauw weer??

😎

Kirsten (309)
3 jul, 19:27

Woehoewww! Echt knap van je! Ben trots op me housemate!! 🏅

🖊 **Krabbels**   🗑 Alle krabbels verwijderen

Joep (407)
donderdag, 12:49

Ja we gaan naar Italië, wordt vet chill daar! Spreek je later!!

Marjolein (105)
woensdag, 22:03

Ha Peter!

Lang niet meer gezien! 😎 Hoessie? Wat doe je zoal...??

😁

Michiel (309)
dinsdag, 23:22

Hé man!

Alles flex? 🙂 Ik had je helemaal niet gezien joh zondag. Had ff gezegd dat je er ook was!

Sean (165)
12 jul, 14:41

Hej, kan ik je later belle...?? Moet ff wat regele voor men werk.......Laterz!

Kirsten (309)
3 jul, 19:27

Haihaii!

Filmpje kijken dit weekend?? 📺 🛋 xxx

Krabbels   Alle krabbels verwijderen

Joep (407)
donderdag, 12:49

Moet jij zeggen, stinkerd!! Je was zo slaap verwekkend!

Marjolein (105)
woensdag, 22:03

Ha Peter!

Zie ik je dit weekend nog ff???   Veeeeel te lang gelede... We belle... zou naaaiis zijn!!

xx

Michiel (309)
dinsdag, 23:22

Heey dikkop!

Was fijn om je te zien, ik mis je domme idote zelf die niet fatsoenlijk kan nadenken zonder zichzelf pijn te doen nu al!

Sean (165)
12 jul, 14:41

Hej jij met je schaamhaar op je hoofd!

Je bent zo veranderd, sinds de laatste keer dat ik je zag...

Kirsten (309)
3 jul, 19:27

Zeg, die Peter he... Die is eeecht niet goed wijs!

Vragenlijst deel 1

Deze persoon komt op mij over als:

Intelligent	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Niet intelligent
Niet aantrekkelijk	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Aantrekkelijk
Verstandig	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Onverstandig
Oncharmant	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Charmant
Incapabel	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Capabel
Ooglijk	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Onooglijk
Talentvol	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Zonder talent
Onflatteus	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Flatteus

Deze persoon heeft een:

Knap uiterlijk	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Niet knap uiterlijk
Laag IQ	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Hoog IQ

Op basis van de indruk die dit profiel bij u heeft achtergelaten, acht u deze persoon geschikt voor een functie binnen uw bedrijf? Zo ja, waarom? Zo nee, waarom niet?

Uitleg bij deel 2

Op de twee volgende pagina's ziet u in totaal zestien voorbeelden van teksten en foto's, door mij gevonden bij inhoudsonderzoek op de profielensite Hyves. Deze voorbeelden zijn te categoriseren in verschillende onderwerpen (bijv. alcohol, roken, feesten).

Aan u het verzoek, na het bekijken van deze voorbeelden, de verschillende onderwerpen te rangschikken: welke onderwerpen vindt u het meest belastend wanneer u een afweging maakt een sollicitant aan te nemen. Hierna wordt u verzocht een toelichting te geven op de door u gemaakte keuzes.

1.   Alcohol

2.   Seks en naaktheid

3.   Alcohol

4.   Schelden

5.   Feesten

Krabbels   🗑 Alle krabbels verwijderen

Joep (407)
donderdag, 12:49

Heee Peter, wanneer gaan we de stad onveilig maken? Dan gaan we   6.   Feesten
zelf aan het bakken met die space muffins

Lekker spacen met die muffinsssssssss.....   7.   Drugs

Marjolein (105)
woensdag, 22:03

Hej, you horny lil' thing. Imma slap yo ass. Onie dah (sexy)   8.   Seks en naaktheid

Michiel (309)
dinsdag, 23:22

Haaaa mede indrinker,

Zaterdag emmertje?   9.   Alcohol

Ohja, hou je de 17e even vrij voor mij verjaardagsparty?   10.   Feesten

Kheb Cubaanse !!   11.   Roken

                                                                          12.   Feesten

Maud (570)
dinsdag, 10:53

Yeah, stappen in A'dammmmmm.. Nijmegen, suffe mensen... Je moet   13.   Roddelen
vanavond wel naar het Paradoksfeest komen, alleen vind je de
audience wsl wel pauper...   14.   Feesten

Sean (165)
12 jul, 14:41

Hey Peter!

Dit weekend nog voetbal kijken? Wat denk je dat komend seizoen
wordt? Ik ga voor PSV, die Joden worden het niet!   15.   Racisme

En ja, moet donderdag werken, alleen echt geen zin in   16.   Slecht spreken
                                                                                  over werk(gevers),
Laterz!   collega's of
                                                                                  klanten

39

Vragenlijst deel 2

Zou u met behulp van de voorbeelden uit het Hyves profiel kunnen aangeven of u bepaalde onderwerpen meer veroordeelt dan andere, d.w.z. kunt u een rangschikking maken in de genoemde onderwerpen, waarbij u begint met een 1 voor het onderwerp dat u het minst graag tegenkomt op de Hyves pagina van de sollicitant. U eindigt met een 9 voor het onderwerp waar u de minste moeite mee heeft.

a)   **Alcohol**

b)   **Drugs**

c)   **Seks en naaktheid**

d)   **Roken**

e)   **Feesten**

f)   **Schelden**

g)   **Roddelen**

h)   **Slecht spreken over werk(gevers), collega's of klanten**

i)   **Racisme**

Toelichting:

Algemene informatie

Ik ben een   **Man**   ☐   **Vrouw**   ☐

Mijn leeftijdscategorie is
☐   < 30 jaar
☐   31-40 jaar
☐   41-50 jaar
☐   51-60 jaar
☐   > 61 jaar

Mijn hoogst genoten opleiding is
☐   Geen opleiding gevolgd/afgemaakt
☐   Basisonderwijs
☐   MAVO
☐   Voorbereidend Beroepsonderwijs
☐   HAVO/VWO
☐   Middelbaar Beroepsonderwijs
☐   Hoger Beroepsonderwijs
☐   Wetenschappelijk Onderwijs

Mijn bedrijf heeft … werknemers in dienst
☐   < 5
☐   6-10
☐   11-25
☐   26-50
☐   > 51

Was u, voorafgaand aan dit onderzoek, bekend met Hyves?
☐   Ja
☐   Enigszins
☐   Nee

Heeft u in het verleden wel eens voor zakelijke doeleinden gebruik gemaakt van Hyves?
☐   Ja
☐   Nee

Bent u van plan om in te toekomst voor zakelijke doeleinden gebruik te gaan maken van Hyves?
☐   Ja
☐   Misschien
☐   Nee

Hartelijk dank voor het invullen van deze vragenlijst.