

PERCEIVED FAIRNESS OF THE USE OF FACEBOOK  
IN THE SELECTION PROCESS

by

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## ABSTRACT

### PERCEIVED FAIRNESS OF THE USE OF FACEBOOK IN THE SELECTION PROCESS

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Although research has examined applicant attitudes in the selection process regarding the use of a variety of assessments tools, no scholarly or empirical studies to date have examined attitudes towards the use of Facebook in the selection process. Nonetheless, organizations are using Facebook in the selection process and are asking applicants for Facebook usernames and passwords resulting in applicants withdrawing from the application process (Valdes & McFarland, 2012). This demonstrates why it is essential for research to examine applicant perceptions in regards to Facebook use in the selection process. The current study consisted of 422 participants of whom 92% indicated they had a Facebook profile. The major hypotheses examined how fair participants think it is for organizations to use Facebook in the selection process as well as what potential actions they may take as a result. Participants were presented with one of eight case studies illustrating the process that an applicant went through, whether the applicant gave permission for the organization to examine their Facebook profile, whether the organization examined the applicant's Facebook profile, and if the applicant received a job offer. The use of Facebook in the selection process was viewed negatively, especially when permission was not adhered to and no job offer was presented, resulting in

participants being more likely to take negative actions such as filing a lawsuit against the organization. Along with a description of some exploratory results, a discussion of the findings, limitations of the study, and implications for the future are presented.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION SECTION

#### 1.1 Introduction

Society has experienced a great deal of change in the past century, including changes in the workplace. One of the major contributors to change in the workplace is the accelerated use of the Internet (Cascio & Aguinis, 2005). The Internet is allowing organizations to broaden their networks, communicate more efficiently, and accomplish undertakings more proficiently. More specifically, the Internet has had an influential impact on selection processes that organizations implement. The Internet has allowed organizations to reach more applicants via popular job sites such as Monster and has made applicant information more accessible through the use of electronic mail, Google searches, and social networking Web sites (i.e., Facebook or MySpace). Advances in technology will likely continue to impact the workplace, perhaps for better or for worse.

The Internet is just one of many factors that can play a role in the selection process. The selection process can also be contingent on the tools utilized, costs, and organizational resources, all of which can have an impact on an organization's reputation and productivity. For example, Reeve and Schultz (2004) suggested the relationship between job applicants and an organization begins at the first point of contact (e.g., the job ad), and that perceptions formed about the organization during selection can have long-term effects on subsequent turnover, organizational commitment, and job performance. Moreover, Schmitt, Oswald, Kim, Gillespie, and Ramsay (2004) asserted that job applicant perceptions of the selection process could have an effect on not only the organization's reputation and the future revenue of the organization but also on potential legal challenges. Therefore, given the advances in technology and the impact

it could have on an organization, it is essential for research to examine how the use of the Internet in the selection process affects applicant perceptions.

It is the purpose of the current study to examine how fair individuals think it is for organizations to use social networking sites via the Internet, specifically Facebook, in the selection process as well as what potential actions individuals may take as a result. As Madigan (2000) stated, understanding job applicant reactions to a selection procedure is essential because these perceptions may affect their attitudes toward the organization, the decision to accept a job offer, and the decision to file a lawsuit. To begin, the literature on selection relevant to this study will be examined. Current methods and processes will be reviewed including the use of social networking sites. Next, Facebook will be introduced and described in terms of how it is utilized in the selection process. Relevant employment laws will also be discussed in terms of the current research. Finally, organizational justice will be discussed and used as a theoretical foundation in developing the hypotheses.

### *1.1.1 Selection*

An organization's employees can shape how productive an organization is, the reputation the organization holds, and if the organization succeeds or fails (Wilk & Cappelli, 2003). Therefore, the selection process is one of the most important steps an organization can invest in to advance or improve its company. Important to the selection process are measurement accuracy and predictive efficiency both of which will decrease erroneous acceptances (i.e., the applicant is accepted but is not successful) and erroneous rejections (i.e., the applicant is rejected, but would have been successful; Cascio & Aguinis, 2005). In addition, having an effective selection process increases person-job fit thereby reducing negative attitudes and behaviors such as turnover. Turnover can be extremely expensive and disruptive, costing an organization one-third of an employee's annual salary through expenses incurred from hiring and losses during training (Engleman & Kleiner, 1998). Therefore, having an

effective and efficient selection process in place is an important element of organizational success.

#### 1.1.1.1 Process

The selection process involves multiple steps. To begin, an organization may conduct a job analysis in order to determine the essential knowledge, skills, abilities (KSAs), and tasks that are required to be a superior performer. From the job analysis, an organization will determine what valid assessments and tools will appropriately measure the necessary KSAs. After the job analysis is completed and the selection tools and procedures are determined, an organization may begin recruiting qualified applicants. Recruitment is a dynamic process and multiple components which have been found to predict applicant attraction are considered such as job-organization characteristics, perceived fit, and hiring expectancies (Chapman, Uggersley, Carroll, Piasentin, & Jones, 2005).

Following the recruitment stage, an organization proceeds to screen out unqualified applicants using tools such as scorable application blanks, written or performance tests, interviews, personality assessments, or background and reference checks (Cascio & Aguinis, 2005). Some organizations spend thousands of dollars on extensive and thorough screening tools; whereas, others may not use much of a screening tool at all. Several factors, both at the job level and the organization level, determine how systematic an organization's screening process will be including skill level of the position and experience needed, as well as costs of the selection tools, industry type, organization size, and legal concerns (Wilk & Cappelli, 2003). Arguably one of the most critical factors in the selection process involves legal concerns considering that most all organizations regardless of industry type, hiring personnel, or level of prestige are bound by employment laws.

Weighing the pros and cons of certain selection tools can be complex at times, especially if a selection tool has the capability of disclosing important red flags, but at the same time also approaches invasion of privacy or breaches certain employment laws. Indeed, it is an

organization's responsibility to thoroughly check an applicant's background to avoid negligent hiring. An organization is at fault of negligent hiring when an unfit employee, who was hired without an adequate background check, harms someone on the job (Tiango & Kleiner, 1999). However, organizations must also ensure that the applicant's rights are being protected throughout the process (Engleman & Kleiner, 1998; Woska, 2007). A social networking site, such as Facebook, is one example of a selection tool that could provide essential information to an organization about an applicant, but may also violate an applicant's privacy rights.

Singer (1990) emphasized that in order to ensure procedures used in the selection process are fair, "technical or psychometric procedures that ensure test fairness and eliminate differential validity" are imperative (p. 475). Therefore, Kluemper and Rosen (2009) examined the reliability and validity of social networking sites in the selection process. Kluemper and Rosen had 63 trained students rate social networking profiles based on their overall impressions of personality, intelligence, and global performance. Based on interrater agreement and internal consistency reliability, results showed that raters could determine essential traits by examining an applicant's social networking profile.

### *1.1.2 Social Networking Sites*

Currently, organizations are beginning to utilize the Internet more frequently in the selection process and are beginning to explore the use of social networking sites such as Facebook. The National Association of Colleges and Employers ("National," 2010a) found that out of 275 recruiters, HR professionals, and hiring managers, 63% use social networking Web sites when considering applicants and 70% indicated they had removed an applicant from consideration based on information found online. Moreover, a variety of surveys have uncovered that between 75% and 87% of respondents report their organizations collect personal information on job applicants via the Internet and utilize the information to screen out job applicants ("ExecuNet," 2005; Reynolds, 2005).

Social networking sites can be used for a variety of personnel-related reasons such as recruiting, communicating, or monitoring potential applicants and future employees; thus, utilizing social networking sites in this manner may be viewed as either beneficial or intrusive depending on one's particular vantage point. For example, by using social networking sites an organization may be better able to determine or verify that an applicant fits within the organization's culture by examining the applicant's interests and experiences. In addition, by reading blogs, message boards, and newsfeeds, an organization can be informed of how well an applicant communicates with others. Moreover, social networking sites can provide an organization with an overall snap-shot of an applicant including if there are any red flags such as misstated qualifications ("ExecuNet," 2005).

On the other hand, social networking sites may cause more damage than good. For example, if the practice of using social networking sites in the selection process is viewed negatively by job applicants or even current employees it may cause a decline in morale within the company. Additionally, using social networking sites can be very subjective and judgmental and can result in either intentional or unintentional discrimination. For example, Cascio and Aguinis (2005) stated that hiring agents may form impressions of what a 'good' applicant would be and then hire applicants based on those preconceived notions and biases. This can be detrimental if the hiring agent holds negative stereotypes of a certain group which could result in adverse impact. Subsequently, it is essential for an organization to be systematic and meticulous in the way it implements selection procedures, otherwise grievances or lawsuits may result. Moreover, studies have continuously found that negative information has more of an impact on the final decision than positive information (Carlson & Mayfield, 1967). For example, if hiring agents view undesirable photos of job applicants on social networking profiles, the hiring agents could be more influenced by the negative pictures and erroneously reject qualified job applicants.



Additionally, if job applicants do not view an organization's selection procedure as fair they may be less likely to apply. According to Reeve and Schultz (2004), applicants hold preexisting perceptions of various selection tools. For example, applicants perceived in-person interviews, job knowledge tests, and work sample tests to be more valid in the selection process than cognitive ability tests, personality tests, and college transcripts. Therefore, organizations may be losing out on highly qualified applicants based on the selection tool used, which in turn may be detrimental to an organization's revenue. Furthermore, if job applicants view the selection process or tool as unfair, they may be less likely to accept a job offer and/or recommend openings to other potential applicants (Bell, Ryan, & Wiechmann, 2004; Madigan, 2000). An organization's reputation and image can be affected by how it treats job applicants (Gilliland, 1993). Therefore, it is vital for organizations to better understand how their procedures affect both their current and future employees.

A large body of research has examined applicants' fairness perceptions of various selection tools and procedures (e.g., Elkins & Phillips, 2000; Gilliland, 1993; Truxillo, Bauer, Campion, & Paronto, 2002; Wallace, Page, & Lippstreu, 2006). However, no scholarly or empirical studies to date have examined how fair applicants view the use of social networking profiles in the selection process. With the growing number of organizations utilizing this new method, it is important to understand job applicant perceptions of this method. Wallace et al. (2006) pointed out that if job applicants view the selection procedure as intrusive or lacking validity, applicants may be more likely to perceive the process as unfair and file a lawsuit.

Due to the lack of available scholarly research to date, evidence regarding the use of social networking sites in the employment process comes mainly from non-scholarly sources such as magazines, newspapers, and media sites. For example, Hruska (2008) from *Ars Technica*, a Web site that specializes in technology trends, stated that 22% of the 3,100 hiring agents surveyed by CareerBuilder utilize Facebook to research applicants, and 34% found information that led them to remove the applicant from consideration such as incidents of

drinking and drug use, provocative photos, poor communication skills, and lies about qualifications. Moreover, a survey conducted by Ponemon Institute also found that 23% of hiring managers examined an applicant's social networking profile, and again one third of the searches resulted in removing applicants from consideration (Du, 2007). Du (2007) mentioned that risqué pictures, poor writing or bad grammar, derogatory comments, and radical political positions can also deter hiring agents. According to Sherman (2011), around 45% of organizations examine applicants via the Internet and according to a survey conducted by Microsoft, 70% have turned down potential applicants based on information found through the Internet. Other studies have found a range of organizations (i.e., 11% to 43%) that use social networking sites in the selection process (Decker, 2006).

Some media sites are forewarning future applicants about the use of social networking sites by providing advice on how to clean up their Facebook profiles and how to protect themselves by setting the appropriate privacy settings (e.g., Barnes, 2006; Golt, 2009; Himeles, 2008; Schiffman, 2007; Tahmincioglu, 2008). In addition, some newspapers and national journals are providing various opinions and information from experts on the pros and cons of organizations utilizing a social networking site in the selection process (e.g., Gray, 2010; Kowske & Southwell, 2006; Meneghello, 2008). For example, Meneghello (2008), a partner at a law firm in Portland and writer for the Daily Journal of Commerce in Oregon, recommends that organizations utilize social networking sites such as Facebook to further reduce the likelihood of negligent hiring. Meneghello also voiced that any information found in a public domain should not raise concerns about invasion of privacy. However, Kowske and Southwell (2006) are in opposition of using social networking sites because of the possibilities of obtaining invalid information, violating equal opportunity or privacy laws, and the bad public relations that it may bring to the organization. Moreover, Gray (2010), a senior counsel in the Labor and Employment Law Department in New York, highlighted several anti-discrimination statutes, privacy laws, state statutes, and federal and state Fair Credit Reporting Acts that may be

violated by using social networking sites. Before exploring possible employment laws that may be in question, Facebook, the leading social networking site worldwide (Smith & Kidder, 2010) and the social networking site used in the current research, will first be discussed.

#### 1.1.2.1 Facebook

Facebook has over 500 million active users worldwide who share 30 billion pieces of content each month ("Facebook," 2010a). Anyone over the age of 13 can create a Facebook profile by simply providing their name, e-mail address, gender, and date of birth ("Facebook," 2010b). After signing up for a profile, the user then has the option to find 'friends' via a search instrument and upload a profile picture. There are three major categories of personal information which make up a large portion of the user 'profile' that a user can chose or not chose to fill out. The first category is education and work where a user can reveal their employer, college or university, and high school. The second category is arts and entertainment where the user can reveal preferences for music, books, movies, television, and games. The third category is basic information where the user can reveal their current city, hometown, gender, birth date, sexual orientation, languages spoken, and any other general information they would like to reveal about themselves. A Facebook profile includes what is called a "Wall" where users can share information such as status updates, photos, links, and videos. A Facebook user can also write notes, create groups, send messages, chat with other users, or join and validate their affiliation with up to five networks (e.g. schools, workplaces, or organizations) to which they belong.

Once a Facebook account has been created, individuals have the option to regulate their privacy settings. Regardless of how strict individuals set their privacy settings, their name and profile picture will be accessible to anyone on the Internet ("Facebook," 2010b). Users can customize and control specifically whether just their friends, the friends of their friends, or anyone can search for them, contact them, or view things such as their education and work, arts and entertainment, basic information, and activities. Facebook's privacy policy (2010b) explicitly

states that, "information set to "everyone" is publicly available information...such information may, for example, be accessed by everyone on the Internet (including people not logged into Facebook)...without privacy limitations" (p. 1). Facebook also has a default setting with pre-established privacy settings that will be implemented if the user does not implement their own control settings. Nonetheless, Facebook's privacy policy clearly states that information is not 100% private by stating, "...please be aware that no security measures are perfect or impenetrable....We cannot guarantee that only authorized persons will view your information" (p. 1). Despite the privacy settings made available to all Facebook users, some users choose not to implement them, may not know how to implement them, or are unaware that they can implement them. Those who do utilize privacy settings may not realize that organizations may still be able to view their profiles (Brandenburg, 2008). For example, if job applicants accept a 'friend request' from someone within the hiring company, this new friend may have access to their personal information.

According to Brandenburg (2008), it is still uncertain whether Facebook users have a reasonable expectation of privacy from a legal standpoint. Concerns regarding an expectation of privacy in general or in regards to communications posted on the Internet can be very complicated and several cases have addressed this issue including *Sanders v. American Broadcasting Co.*, *Konop v. Hawaiian Airlines, Inc.*, and *Nader v. General Motors Corp.* (see Brandenburg, 2008 for details on each case). Brandenburg lists a variety of factors that a court may need to consider if a lawsuit arises based on Facebook privacy issues, such as: (a) if privacy settings are available, (b) if privacy settings were employed and to what extent, (c) who had access to the information in the first place, and (d) whether the person who accessed the information did so with more or less ease (i.e., hacked into the individual's profile).

#### 1.1.2.2. Facebook and Selection

A large number of Facebook users may be unaware of the potential for an organization to look at their profile during the selection process. One survey found that only 50% of students

surveyed expected hiring agents to examine their social networking profiles (“National,” 2008). According to a survey conducted by Barnes (2006), some students are more aware than others that Facebook is a public space which does not guarantee privacy; some students indicated that Facebook is not private whereas others perceived it to be a private Web site.

The fact that many organizations can have unrestricted access to an applicant’s profile just by being a Facebook user is not a guarantee that organizations have a better idea of an applicant’s job-relevant qualifications. This is an important distinction because job relevance is the basis for legitimate and legal hiring procedures. Using Facebook as a resource to obtain information about job applicants may not be a legitimate procedure. For example, by viewing job applicant Facebook profiles, a hiring agent may have access to an applicant’s sexual orientation, political views, religious views, and attractiveness through pictures, all factors that may or may not be job relevant. A study conducted at Carnegie Mellon University, found that of 4,540 Facebook profiles, 90.8% had photographs, 87.8% indicated the users birth date, 39.9% revealed the users phone number, 50.8% listed the users address, and a majority of users disclosed their relationship status, political views, dating preference, and their interests (Dwyer & Hiltz, 2008). Many, if not most, of these characteristics are protected by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Therefore, organizations need to ensure the material they are retrieving from job applicant profiles is not only job relevant but is also perceived by the applicant to have face validity (i.e., in the eyes of the applicant, the material appears fair because it is measuring what it is supposed to be measuring). If job applicants know that part of the selection process involves the use of Facebook, but view it as an unfair procedure, applicants may feel entitled to take legal action against the organization regardless of whether they are hired.

When viewing job applicants’ social networking profiles, hiring agents’ judgments, evaluations, and decisions may be influenced by an assortment of variables. One study found that both positive and negative profile information can influence an organization’s decision. For

example, Bohnert and Ross (2010) found that unprofessional information such as alcohol use can hinder an applicant's chance of being hired as well as the salary that will be offered; whereas, a family-oriented profile could increase an applicant's attractiveness. In another study conducted by Decker (2006), around 40% of the organizations surveyed believed that photographs, personal information, educational information, and the Wall contained important information regarding the applicant's lifestyle. More importantly, some organizations indicated that political views, religious views, and date of birth were important when determining an applicant's lifestyle. Decker further asked organizations to indicate what types of information on a Facebook profile influences an organizations viewpoint in regards to the applicant. A small percentage indicated that political views and religious views influenced their perceptions. Although this response was more the exception than the norm, the fact that any organization is being influenced by federally protected information is cause for concern.

The first legal case associated with the use of Facebook has just recently taken place. It involved an employee who was fired because she posted a negative remark about her superiors on her Facebook profile. One of the major inquiries addressed was whether the law was broken, given that the defendant posted the comment from home on her own time. According to the National Labor Relations Board, the employee was exercising her legal rights under the National Labor Relations Act by discussing the terms and conditions of her employment. Although the organization denied the original allegations and stated that the employee was fired for other reasons, a private settlement was eventually reached between the parties involved. The organization in question also revised its rules regarding employees discussing work issues on their own time (Trottman, 2011).

Another incident involving Facebook, but that did not result in a lawsuit, entailed an organization that implemented a unique policy requiring applicants to sign a waiver giving the organization permission to use the applicant's Facebook login information and password to

conduct a background check (“National,” 2009). The organization eventually discarded the policy due to the large amount of upheaval that it caused throughout the community.

Clearly, the use of Facebook in the workplace is dynamic and ever-evolving, and policies and laws will likely need to be updated to address the emerging questions that will undoubtedly arise as a result. Although the first case associated with Facebook has emerged, no cases to date have developed specifically because of the use of Facebook in the selection process, although it is most likely only a matter of time. However, even assuming that organizations are using Facebook strictly to access job-related characteristics, it is still essential for organizations to understand if applicants perceive the use of Facebook in general as fair. It is the purpose of this study to address this question of fairness thus enabling organizations to better able weigh the pros and cons of using Facebook as a selection tool. Although the use of social networking sites in the selection process may be attractive, an organization needs to be aware of possible biases, especially if the information is inaccurate, if some applicants do not have a social networking profile, or if legally protected information is viewed and utilized (Smith & Kidder, 2010). The following section will discuss employment and cyber laws in connection to the use of Facebook.

### *1.1.3 Employment Laws*

It is reasonable to assume that using Facebook in the selection process is an efficient and cost-effective way to conduct a background check on a potential employee. As previously mentioned, a hiring agent should try to obtain as much information as possible about an applicant in order to avoid negligent hiring (Woska, 2007). Nonetheless, the Supreme Court has emphasized the need for selection tools to be job relevant, meaning that the tools utilized are relevant, reliable, unbiased, and have a history of demonstrating job performance equally among minorities and non-minorities (Cascio & Aguinis, 2005). Although more legal challenges are brought about in the U.S. by former or current employees than job applicants (Truxillo, Steiner, & Gilliland, 2004), with the increasing use of the Internet in the selection process it is

reasonable to assume that more discrimination cases will arise because of the way hiring decisions are made. The following section reviews the specific laws and rights that may be in question if Facebook is used in the selection process, beginning with the concern of privacy.

#### 1.1.3.1 Invasion of Privacy

Woska (2007) articulates that when an applicant goes through a selection process they are waiving certain rights such as information regarding telephone numbers, previous employment, addresses, and any other job relevant information. Depending on the type of job and the work characteristics, privacy may be further reduced through the use of background checks (Woska, 2007). Additionally, privacy is only an implied right through the U.S. Constitution (Ferrera, Lichtenstein, Reder, August, & Schiano, 2000) and is never explicitly defined or mentioned in the Constitution or the Bill of Rights (Stratford & Stratford, 1998). For example, privacy is implied in the Fourth Amendment, which states that citizens have the freedom from search and seizure without a warrant. This particular piece of legislature is generally utilized in cases involving the right to privacy. For example, in *Katz v. United States* (1967), the U.S. Supreme Court stated that, "the Fourth Amendment protects people, not places...and there is a twofold requirement, first that a person have exhibited an actual (subjective) expectation of privacy and, second, that the expectation be one that society is prepared to recognize as reasonable" (p. 389). Nonetheless, whether individuals can expect privacy when using social networking Web sites is questionable, especially when considering they are using a public Web site.

There are discrepancies in what people view as private or public when it comes to social networking sites. Organizations may view the use of Facebook in selection as a legitimate process because the information is public; whereas, applicants may view it as an invasion of privacy, especially if they apply privacy settings. For example, Decker (2006) found that 75% of the 40 organizations that responded to his survey reported that personal information on Facebook is public information, 42% agreed that using Facebook can be used as a tool to



check backgrounds, and 38% felt an individual's Facebook profile can influence the hiring decision. Whereas, a national survey conducted by Ponemon Institute found that 76% of younger respondents and 65% of older respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that their privacy would be violated if an organization examined their social networking profiles prior to making a hiring decision (Gordon & Ponemon, 2007). Another study found that 66% of Generation Y respondents (i.e., those born between 1980 and 2000) were unaware that hiring agents looked at social networking profiles and 56% felt it was unfair (Du, 2007). Another study found that of 13,000 senior undergraduate level respondents, two-thirds expected hiring agents to look at their profile, but only about 30% agreed with the process ("National," 2010b).

Although multiple federal privacy laws are in place, such as the Electronic Communications Privacy Act (ECPA) of 1986 and the Privacy Act of 1994, none specifically address the use of privacy issues in regards to social networking sites. The ECPA protects the "interception and disclosure of wire, oral, and electronic communications" as well as "stored wire, transactional, and electronic communications" (Ferrera et al., 2000, p. 206), but it is in reference to the government following appropriate procedures when intercepting information and not to hiring agents obtaining information about a potential job applicant. Furthermore, Barnes (2006) states although there is a large focus on protecting children on the Internet, there is not much focus on protecting the potential misuse of personal information. Although the current laws do not specifically pertain to privacy issues in regards to the selection process, some inferences can be drawn from them that may apply in the future. For example, the ECPA suggests that information that is publically available, such as information on a Facebook profile, implies that the owner of the profile did not have a reasonable expectation of privacy.

Privacy laws have been unable to keep up with the advances in technology. More and more individuals are beginning to use the Internet for a number of reasons including the access to unlimited resources and information, attractive social networking sites that allow individuals to keep in touch, and new advances in technology such as being able to access the Internet via

cell phones. In fact, according to a report by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU; 2011), 70% of teens and young adults and 35% of adults have a profile on a social networking site; however, the report emphasizes that Americans still expect and want their privacy protected. Furthermore, studies examining the awareness of privacy settings on Facebook have found that between 74% and 80% of respondents know about the networks' privacy settings, but only 40% to 62% actually use them. Additionally, 60% to 70% of users include pictures on their profiles, as well as reveal personal information about their age, gender, hometown, interests, and relationship status (Debatin, Lovejoy, Horn, & Hughes, 2009).

A majority of studies to date that address the issue of privacy in social networking sites have only focused on privacy issues regarding third parties collecting personal information for advertising purposes (e.g., Debatin et al., 2009). Although no privacy laws specifically address the use of social networking sites, the Department of Health and Human Services has created a list of privacy principles that both the Privacy Office of the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Commerce have adopted (see the ACLU report, 2011 for the complete list of privacy principles). For example, one privacy principle states that individuals should have participation in a process if their personally identifiable information is being used by allowing them to give consent for the collection, use, dissemination, and maintenance of their information. The policy also states that individuals should have the right to access, correct, and redress their personally identifiable information.

#### 1.1.3.2 Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Title VII states that it is unlawful, "to fail or to refuse to hire...or otherwise to discriminate against any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of such individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin..." (Cascio & Aguinis, 2005, p. 23; Goldman, 2001; "U.S. EEOC," 2011). Furthermore, Title VII states that background investigations must be justifiable and that they cannot discriminate against minorities or cause adverse impact (Ford, Notestine, & Hill, 2000; Woska, 2007). In

order to sue for discrimination under Title VII, an individual must have been treated differently based on their protected group status (Goldman, 2001). In *Gaskell vs. University of Kentucky*, for example, an applicant sued for discrimination because a search committee for a new faculty member position found information about the applicant's religious beliefs via the Internet and subsequently turned down the applicant despite him being qualified for the position (Sherman, 2011). Again, organizations need to ensure the material they are obtaining from an applicant's social networking profile is job relevant. Lawsuits can be extremely costly for organizations, whether the case is settled in or outside of court (Harris, Lievens, & Van Hoye, 2004). Court cases settled outside of court can still cost an organization millions of dollars. In addition to being job relevant, how applicants perceive the selection process can also affect the decision to sue.

#### 1.1.3.3 The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990

The ADA pertains to any private sector or state and local government agency with 15 or more employees and protects individuals with physical or mental disabilities from being discriminated against in employment practices (Cascio & Aguinis, 2005; "U.S. EEOC," 2011). If an individual is fully capable of fulfilling the job requirements of a specific position and any accommodations needed are within reason, then the individual must be considered for the job. By examining an applicant's Facebook profile, a hiring agent may view information that would have not otherwise been disclosed, such as a disability, which may intentionally or unintentionally influence the hiring agent's decision. Even if the hiring agent follows strict policies and guidelines when viewing a Facebook profile, once something is seen, it cannot be erased from memory; thus, making it very difficult to not let certain information influence hiring decisions. In fact, several studies examining if jurors can dismiss or forget inadmissible evidence in court have found that jurors find it difficult to erase the information from memory and are actually influenced by the inadmissible evidence (e.g., Carreta & Moreland, 1983; Kassin & Sommers, 1997; Sue, Smith, & Caldwell, 1973). Moreover, other studies have found that jurors

trying to erase the information from memory only further add attention to the inadmissible evidence which makes it more salient in memory (Broeder, 1959).

#### 1.1.3.4 The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLLA) of 1993

Another form of information that may be obtained by viewing an applicant's Facebook profile is family-related events, such as if the applicant is pregnant or is trying to become pregnant. The FMLA requires all private-sector employers with 50 or more employees to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave for each year for pregnancy, adoption, foster care, or care for a family member with a serious health condition (Cascio & Aguinis, 2005). Therefore, if a hiring agent discovers that an applicant is pregnant or may be caring for an ailing family member, the hiring agent may be deterred to hire the applicant based on the costs associated with family leave.

#### 1.1.3.5 The Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) of 1967

Similar to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the ADEA prevents organizations from discriminating against employees on the basis of their age for employees 40 years of age or older (Cascio & Aguinis, 2005; "U.S. EEOC," 2011). Thus, although a hiring agent may ask if an applicant is 18 years of age or older, a hiring agent may not ask the specific age of the applicant. Because Facebook users often times include their birthday on their profile, it can be very difficult to avoid examining the age of a potential applicant.

#### 1.1.3.6 Cyber Laws

According to Ferrera et al. (2006), cyber law is, "law governing the use of computers and the Internet and focuses on a combination of state and federal statutory, decisional, and administrative laws arising out of the use of the Internet" (p. 3). The U.S. currently has no cyber laws pertaining specifically to the use of social networking sites in the selection process. Europe, however, has implemented the European Union's Directive on Privacy Protection which protects individual's rights to privacy in regards to the processing (i.e., "any operation or set of operations performed upon personal data and includes its collection, storage, disclosure,

destruction, and so on”) and collection of any personal information (i.e., “information that relates to an identified or identifiable natural person;” Ferrera et al., 2000, p. 216). In short, it ensures that personal information is fair, accurate, relevant, is only kept as long as needed, and that the information is necessary (Ferrera et al., 2000) regardless of whether it was collected online or elsewhere. The U.S. could use the European Union’s privacy directive as foundation and guideline to initiate their own privacy directive to address current and future discrepancies on what is considered private and what is not when it comes to material publically posted online. If the U.S. did implement the European Union’s privacy directives or something similar to it, the current uses of social networking Web sites would most likely be considered unlawful unless organizations could prove that the information obtained was relevant, accurate, and necessary.

#### 1.1.3.7 Stored Communication Act (SCA) of 1986

The SCA may be the closest federal statute that the U.S. has to addressing the question of whether using social networking profiles in the selection process is legal. The SCA states, “whoever intentionally accesses without authorization a facility through which an electronic communication service is provided...and thereby obtains...access to a wire or electronic communications while it is in electronic storage in such systems shall be punished...” (Brandenburg, 2008, p. 626). However, if a hiring agent is a Facebook user and the appropriate privacy settings are not employed by an applicant, then the question still remains of whether the hiring agent would be considered unauthorized.

Various researchers assert that an applicant’s perceptions of justice or fairness can predict an applicant’s perception of discrimination (Harris et al., 2004), as well as behaviors associated with filing a lawsuit (Goldman, 2001). Harris and colleagues (2004) anticipate that applicants who do not receive a job offer are more likely to perceive that discrimination has occurred compared to an applicant that was offered a job. Therefore, regardless of whether employment laws and policies are being followed, it is still essential to examine an applicant’s perceptions of justice. This research will help determine if applicants view the use of Facebook

as procedurally unjust and will also assess the actions applicants are willing to take as a result. From these findings, human resource practitioners can make a more informed decision on if their use of Facebook is legitimate in the eyes of the applicant. The following section will examine the literature on organizational justice and how it relates to the selection process. In addition, the study's theoretical foundation and hypotheses are presented.

#### *1.1.4 Organizational Justice*

Greenberg (2010, p. 271) defined organizational justice as, "people's perceptions of fairness in organizations along with their associated behavioral, cognitive, and emotional reactions." Research has found that work attitudes and behaviors such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, trust, and withdrawal (Greenberg, 2010) are related to perceptions of justice during the selection process (Gilliland, 1993). Furthermore, Gilliland (1993) proposed that an applicant's initial impression of the organization is formed early on in the selection process and is likely to impact the applicant's performance, satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behavior on the job. Truxillo et al. (2004), also found that the "perceptions of process and outcome fairness...affect reactions and behaviors during and after hiring" (p. 40). For example, perceived fairness can have implications for job acceptance and litigation. Oliver (1997) also found that perceptions of the selection process (e.g., did they have the opportunity to perform) influenced perceptions of fairness which was found to be related to affect, organizational attractiveness, and intentions to recommend the organization and accept a job offer.

Various studies have already examined applicant attitudes in the selection process regarding the use of a variety of assessments including drug tests, personality tests, general ability tests (Viswesvaran & Ones, 2004), cognitive ability tests, internet-based tests, interviews, psychological assessments, references, criminal records, integrity tests, and physical ability tests (Carless, 2006). Moreover, Carless (2006) asserted that each selection tool utilized is viewed differently by applicants and may result in dissimilar actions or behaviors. For example,

Wallace et al. (2006) found that applicants filling out a legally problematic application had low ratings of justice and had higher intentions to sue the organization. Madigan (2000) also found that the process in which selection tools were administered had an effect on outcomes such as an applicant's willingness to recommend the organization or accept a job offer. Studies have also examined the relationship between organizational justice and lawsuits among employers and employees (Goldman, 2001), but according to Truxillo et al. (2004) studies have only examined a job applicant's intent to file a lawsuit as an outcome of an unfair selection process or outcome. Moreover, researchers have examined how differences in demographics, personality, and job related variables affect the importance placed on differing aspects of the selection process, but according to Harris et al. (2004) both researchers and practitioners have failed to examine the applicant's perception of a selection procedure and outcome and if it is perceived as discriminatory.

Now more than ever, it is important for organizations to ensure paramount ethical practices especially in the selection process in order to avoid unwanted and unnecessary lawsuits. According to Goldman (2001), ever since the Civil Rights Act of 1991 "federal employment discrimination lawsuits increased 268%" (p. 361). Various studies have examined perceptions of organizational justice in the selection process (Bernerth, 2005); however, no scholarly or empirical research, to date, has examined an applicant's attitude or resulting action or behavior in regards to the use of social networking sites, specifically Facebook, in the selection process. Therefore, it is important to examine how fair job applicants think it is for organizations to use social networking sites in the selection process and what actions or behaviors it may evoke, especially considering that perceived unfairness is a major determinant of litigation (Viswesvaran & Ones, 2004). As stated previously, lawsuits can be extremely costly to an organization. Moreover, if applicants are willing to file a lawsuit because they view the use of Facebook in a selection process as procedurally unjust, organizations may want to rethink

using Facebook altogether. The following sections will discuss two factors of organizational justice that will be examined in the current research: procedural and distributive justice.

#### 1.1.4.1 Procedural Justice

Procedural justice refers to how fair individuals think a process is, such as a selection process, when it comes to decisions being made or outcomes being determined (Bernerth, 2005; Colquitte & Shaw, 2005; Greenberg, 2010). There are multiple factors that influence the perceived fairness of a selection process. For example, research has found that applicants will view a selection process as more fair if they are familiar with the selection tool or if the selection tool is widely used (Truxillo et al., 2004). Although Facebook is used by over 500 million active users worldwide ("Facebook," 2010a), it is not commonly thought of as a selection tool. Du (2007) indicated that many applicants are unaware that hiring agents may check their Facebook profile and many view their information on their Facebook profile as private. Facebook is a way to keep in contact with friends, family, and in some instances co-workers, but few conceive Facebook as a tool for selecting applicants. Therefore, the following hypothesis was proposed:

H1a: The selection process will be rated as less procedurally fair when Facebook is used compared to when Facebook is not used.

Studies have found that perceptions of unfairness are related to negative reactions and behaviors such as litigation and withdrawal (Greenberg, 2010; Viswesvaran & Ones, 2004). Furthermore, because it is believed that the utilization of Facebook will lead to perceptions of unfairness the following hypothesis was proposed:

H1b: Negative actions are more likely to be taken when Facebook is used compared to when Facebook is not used in the selection process.

One of the major theories behind procedural justice, coined by Thibaut and Walker (1975), contends that control of the process influences an individual's perception of the procedure as just or unjust. Greenberg (2010, p. 280) explained process control theory as,



“having a voice in proceedings-that is, the capacity to influence outcomes, although not to determine them-was what people regarded to be fair.” In the current study voice is exemplified by providing or not providing the organization permission to use Facebook; therefore, voice and permission will be used interchangeable throughout. Although few if any studies to date have examined what happens when voice is disregarded, it is reasonable to assume that perceptions of procedural justice would be reduced considering voice would be meaningless. For example, Lind and Kulik (2009) stated that if an organization fails to act on an individual’s voice, for example by ignoring issues raised or by not showing visible action, individuals may become frustrated, discouraged, and angered. Therefore, if applicants have the opportunity to influence the selection process by deciding whether or not it is okay for the organization to use their Facebook profile, they should view the process as more procedurally fair when their permission is adhered to compared to when it is disregarded. Therefore, the following hypothesis was proposed:

H2: Procedural justice will be rated lower when permission is disregarded compared to when permission is adhered to.

#### 1.1.4.2 Distributive Justice

Distributive justice refers to the perceptions of fairness of a certain outcome or distribution of resources (e.g., results of a selection assessment; Bernerth, 2005; Colquitte & Shaw, 2005; Greenberg, 2010). Distributive justice can be explained through equity theory, which states that when the ratio of inputs (e.g., employee qualifications) and outputs (e.g., job offer) are balanced compared to similar others, outcomes will be perceived as more fair (Harris et al., 2004). Thompson (1996) found that perceived distributive fairness is also dependent on the favorableness of the outcome. In other words, favorable outcomes lead to higher levels of perceived fairness whereas unfavorable outcomes lead to lower levels of perceived fairness (Thompson, 1996). As a result, if applicants are not offered a job, they may view the outcome

as unjust, regardless of any influence they may have had on the process. Therefore the following hypothesis was proposed:

H3: Distributive justice will be rated lower when a job offer is not presented compared to when a job offer is presented.

#### 1.1.4.3 The Combined Effects of Distributive and Procedural Justice

On the other hand, research has also found that regardless of whether the outcome is favorable, as long as the procedure was fair, the applicant will view the outcome as fair (Goldman, 2001). In fact, studies have found that voice matters especially when the outcome is unfavorable or when individuals are feeling uncertain (Lind & Kulik, 2009). Therefore, the following was hypothesized:

H4: When no job offer is presented, the outcome will be rated as more distributively fair when permission is adhered to compared to when permission is violated.

Moreover, Brockner and Wiesenfeld (1996) demonstrated that procedural and distributive justice, together, influences perceptions of fairness. Brockner and Wiesenfeld examined 45 independent studies that assessed the interaction between procedural and distributive justice. They concluded that procedural justice and distributive justice are inversely related; in other words when procedural justice is low, distributive justice has more of an effect and when distributive justice is low, procedural justice has more of an effect. They also found that when both procedural justice and distributive justice are low, negative reactions emerged. Therefore, the following hypotheses were proposed:

Process and outcome (in)justice together will influence perceptions of fairness such that:

H5a: the selection process will be rated the least fair when permission is not adhered to, Facebook is used, and no job offer is presented.

H5b: the selection process will be rated the most fair when permission is adhered to, Facebook is not used, and a job offer is presented.

As stated previously, injustice has been found to be related to a variety of negative actions in the workplace. For example, both procedural and distributive injustices have been found to be negatively related to discrimination litigation (Harris et al., 2004). Individuals may take negative actions in order to restore a sense of equity (Goldman, 2001). Therefore, if job applicants do not receive a job offer they may be more apt to feel they have been discriminated against in the selection process and they may take action against the organization (e.g., file a lawsuit) in order to restore their sense of equity. Madigan (2000) noted that selection outcomes may have an impact on the job applicant's self-perceptions, morale, career commitment, job performance, and motivation. Consequently, applicants who do not receive a job offer may blame the selection tool in order to minimize their feelings of disappointment (Schmitt et al., 2004). Therefore, the following hypotheses were proposed:

Negative actions are:

H5c: most likely to be taken when permission is not adhered to, Facebook is used, and a job offer is not presented.

H5d: least likely to be taken when permission is adhered to, Facebook is not used, and a job offer is presented.

Again, research has found that if voice is violated subsequent feelings of frustration, discouragement, and anger may emerge (Lind & Kulik, 2009) which may lead to lower perceptions of fairness. Research has also found that applicants will view a selection process as more fair if they are familiar with the selection tool or if the selection tool is widely used (Truxillo et al., 2004). Although Facebook is used by millions, it is not commonly thought of as a selection tool. Therefore the use of Facebook may lead to lower perceptions of fairness if used in the selection process. Thompson (1996) found that perceived distributive fairness is also dependent on the favorableness of the outcome. Consequently, if applicants are not offered a job, they may view the outcome as unjust. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that permission, the use of Facebook, and a job offer may all be related to perceptions of justice.

Furthermore, studies have found that perceptions of unfairness are related to negative reactions and behaviors during and after hiring (Truxillo et al., 2004) such as litigation and withdrawal (Greenberg, 2010; Viswesvaran & Ones, 2004), job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and trust (Greenberg, 2010). Therefore, according to research, perceptions of injustice are associated with negative actions. Because it is believed that the use of Facebook is related to perceptions of justice and because justice has been found to be associated with negative actions, it is reasonable to assume that the use of Facebook is correlated with subsequent actions and behaviors. Therefore, the following hypothesis was proposed:

H6: The relationship between Facebook use and negative actions would be mediated by perceptions of fairness after controlling for a job offer and permission, such that the effect of the independent variable on negative actions will be zero after controlling for fairness perceptions.

## CHAPTER 2

### METHODS SECTION

#### 2.1 Methods

The purpose of the current study was to examine how fair individuals think it is for organizations to utilize social networking sites, specifically Facebook, in the selection process and the potential actions they may take as a result. This study was conducted in the laboratory via computers.

##### *2.1.1. Participants*

Participants were recruited from an undergraduate participant pool at a southern university through the University's Sona system. The Sona system is an online database used by researchers to track and collect data from participants. A majority of the materials and surveys were uploaded to the SurveyMonkey system for the in-lab study. Once the study was approved by the IRB and became active on Sona, participants were able to sign up for one study timeslot. Up to eight participants could sign up for any given timeslot. The study took approximately 30 minutes to complete. Prior to data collection, participants were able to view all details of the study. If participants decided to participate they were required to review and indicate that they understood their rights as a participant and that they consented to participate. In return for participation, participants were compensated with .75 research credits that went towards their course credit.

The current study consisted of 422 participants which ranged in age from 17 to 47 ( $M = 20.28$ ,  $SE = .18$ ) and 66% of the participants were female. Participants ranged in education level, ethnicity, and income level. Forty percent of participants were freshmen, 28% were sophomore, 20% were juniors, 9% were seniors, and less than 1% were graduate students. Thirty percent were Caucasian, 22% were Hispanic/Latino, 19% were Black/African American,

18% were Asian, 20% were Hawaiian Native/Pacific Islander, 7% were multi-racial, and 2% indicated Other. Participants, on average, indicated that they thought 50% to 60% of organizations look at Facebook profiles in the selection process ( $M = 5.72$ ,  $SE = .11$ ). Moreover, 92% indicated they had a Facebook profile. Of the 390 participants that indicated they had a Facebook profile, 42% specified that on average they actively spend seven days per week using Facebook and 46% stated that on average they spend 0 hours to 1 hour actively using Facebook. Individuals also indicated that on average they implemented fairly strict privacy settings ( $M = 5.27$ ,  $SE = .09$ ).

#### 2.1.1.1 Sample Size, Power, and Precision

Because no scholarly or empirical studies to date have examined the use of social networking Web sites in the selection process, no standard effect sizes have been established. Cohen (1992) has established small, medium, and large effect sizes for various statistical tests that have been in general use since 1977. Moreover, Cohen proposed using a power of .80 for general use in order to avoid a Type II error and to obtain a sample size that is reasonably attainable. Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) also stated that an alpha level of .05 and a power of .80 are typical. Therefore, based on a power analysis using G\*Power 3.1.2 (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007), a sample size of 240 participants was needed in order to run a series of one-way ANOVAs and a sample size of 128 participants was needed in order to run a series of factorial ANOVAs using Cohen's suggested conventional medium effect size of  $r = .25$ ,  $\alpha = .05$ , two-tailed, and a power of .80 using three independent variables and for eight conditions.

### 2.1.2 Stimuli

#### 2.1.2.1 Organization

A large number of individuals are familiar with Google's organization and culture. Consequently, this study used Google as the organization using Facebook in the selection process.

### 2.1.2.2 Job Description

Job descriptions are typically created from an extensive job analysis and are used as realistic job previews. A job description that is developed based on a job analysis has been shown to improve performance by attracting qualified applicants (Edward, 2010). For the purposes of this study, a fictitious job description was developed with key sentences pulled from Google's Web site in order to make the job description more realistic (see "Google," 2011). According to Feldman and Klass (2002), job descriptions should entail realistic skill requirements instead of vague specifications and should provide details on salary, benefits, travel requirements, and geographical locations of the job. Therefore, genuine benefits that Google offers were specified as well as an average salary which was determined based on the U.S. Census Bureau's (2001) mean average earnings of a Bachelor's level graduate. Travel requirements and geographical location were also stated (see Appendix B).

### 2.1.2.3 Video

One limitation that most laboratory studies face is that they are not always realistic. Therefore, in order to assist in putting participants in a more convincing and realistic mindset, a readily available video located online was used in this experiment. The video portrays the benefits and perks of working at Google and the relaxed and flexible atmosphere that Google offers. This video can be found in a public domain at:

<http://www.youtube.com/embed/rWIHtvZHbZ8?rel=0>. This video was strictly used for scholarly purposes only. YouTube videos are commonly used and shared in the classroom to enhance learning and are readily available via embedded links that allow viewers to share and use the video through multiple mediums.

## 2.1.3 Materials

### 2.1.2.1 Demographic Questionnaire

The demographics questionnaire collected information on participants' age, gender, ethnicity, and education level (see Appendix C).

#### 2.1.2.2 Colquitt's Organizational Justice Scale

Colquitt's scale is the first psychometrically sound instrument to measure organizational justice, and confirmatory factor analyses have proven that its four subscales are the most efficient in measuring the different facets of justice (Greenberg, 2010). The four subscales include procedural justice (7 items), distributive justice (4 items), interpersonal justice (4 items), and informational justice (5 items). The subscales are measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = to a small extent to 5 = to a large extent). To best fit the design of the research, the procedural and distributive justice subscales were used in the current study. Both subscales were modified to better suit the current study although the theoretical meaning of each item was retained and one item from the distributive justice scale was removed because it was incompatible with the research design. Moreover, the scales were changed to a 6-point Likert-type scale (1 = to a small extent to 6 = to a large extent; see Appendix D). The overall organizational justice scale has been found to have reliability coefficients ranging from .70 to .90, with the procedural and distributive justice subscales having reliability coefficients ranging from .78 to .93 and from .92 to .93, respectively. The procedural justice subscale had a reliability coefficient of .79 and the distributive justice subscale had a reliability coefficient of .93 for the current study.

#### 2.1.2.3 Behavioral Reaction Questionnaire

To assess what potential actions individuals may take as a result of an organization using Facebook in the selection process, participants were asked to indicate how likely they would be to take negative, positive, and neutral actions (1 = extremely unlikely to 6 = extremely likely; see Appendix E). These ratings were used to determine what potential consequences organizations may face if they choose to use social networking sites in their selection process. The behavioral reaction questionnaire had a reliability coefficient of .85 for the current study (please note that the neutral items were excluded).



#### 2.1.2.4 Facebook Disclosure Questionnaire

For exploratory purposes, participants were provided a list personal items that they may or may not disclose on their Facebook profile and asked to indicate which items they have revealed and who has access to each item (see Appendix F). This questionnaire helped us to understand if there was a difference in justice perceptions between participants who revealed items on Facebook and those who did not reveal items on Facebook.

#### 2.1.2.5 Protected Demographic Questionnaire

For exploratory purposes, participants were also provided a list of items and asked to indicate how certain they were that each is considered a protected class as defined by federal law (see Appendix G). This questionnaire helped understand if participants' knowledge of protected class information (i.e., age or religion) had an effect on justice perceptions or on their Facebook privacy settings. The protected demographic questionnaire had a reliability coefficient of .72 for the current study.

#### 2.1.2.6 Facebook Questionnaire

Participants were also asked six questions regarding their use of and views about Facebook (see Appendix H). These six questions helped further understand the reasoning behind why participants take certain actions and have certain fairness perceptions (i.e., those who implement strict privacy settings may perceive fairness differently compared to those who have more lenient settings).

#### 2.1.4 Procedure

Once participants arrived at the assigned location, they were randomly seated at an individual computer where they completed the assigned tasks. Participants were first provided a consent form explaining the purpose of the study and that their information would be kept confidential and would remain anonymous. After any questions were answered, participants were informed that they would be reading a case study concerning a recent incident that Google encountered and would be filling out a variety of questionnaires. Participants were also provided

a hard copy of one of the eight case studies depending on what seat they were randomly assigned to as well as a set of headphones for when the study directed them to watch the video.

The first computer screen presented a broad overview of the study's tasks (see Appendix I). The second screen presented the demographic questionnaire. The third screen provided participants with a job description and the fourth screen directed participants to the Google video clip (<http://www.youtube.com/embed/rWIHtvZHbZ8?rel=0>). Participants were asked to review the job description then watch the video to assist them in better understanding the case and the situation that the applicant in the case study encountered.

#### 2.1.4.1 Experimental Manipulations and Interventions

To introduce the conditions, the next screen directed participants to a hard copy of one of the eight case studies (see Appendices J-Q for all eight conditions). The case studies illustrated the process that the applicant went through, whether the applicant gave permission for Google to examine the Facebook profile, whether Google examined the applicant's Facebook profile, and if the applicant received a job offer.

All of the case studies took into account Leventhal's (1980) six procedural justice rules: consistency, bias, accuracy, correctability, representativeness, and ethicality. The consistency rule states that procedures should be consistent across all job applicants. Consistency was accounted for in the case study by the following sentence: "The application process and the information gathered was the same for every applicant." The bias-suppression rule and the accuracy rule were accounted for in the case study by the Facebook manipulation (i.e., if Facebook is used or if Facebook is not used). The bias-suppression rule states that narrow preconceptions should be avoided throughout the selection process. The accuracy rules states that any information should be gathered carefully and should be accurate, relevant, and reliable. Information is not always accurate on Facebook and may not always be relevant in the hiring process. Moreover, the irrelevant information gathered may bias hiring agents and influence

them to erroneously reject job applicants. The correctability rule states that job applicants should have the ability to challenge and modify decisions. Correctability was accounted for in the case study by the following sentence: "If at any point in time during the selection process applicants felt that the selection procedures were unfair (e.g., questionnaires were ambiguous or interview questions were inappropriate), they were provided contact information to dispute their issue with a Google representative." Part of the representativeness rule states that if job applicants are able to partake in the decision making process, they will view the process as more fair. Representativeness was accounted for by providing the applicant the opportunity to give Google permission to examine their Facebook profile. The ethicality rule states that selection procedures should be in alignment with standard moral and ethical values (e.g., a selection process that does not involve deception or an invasion of privacy). Ethicality was accounted for in the case studies by the permission adherence and Facebook manipulations. For example, one case study stated that Applicant X did not give Google permission to look at Facebook, but Google representatives examined the profile anyway.

Furthermore, all of the case studies took into account distributive justice through the ratio of inputs (e.g., employee qualifications) and outputs (e.g., job offer) and the favorability of the outcome. The inputs in the case studies were accounted for by the following sentence: "Applicant X was qualified for the position of interest and had all of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required." The outputs in the case studies were accounted for by the job offer manipulation (i.e., if the applicant received a job offer or not).

The eight conditions were:

		<b>Permission to use Facebook</b>			
		Yes		No	
		<b>Used Facebook</b>		<b>Used Facebook</b>	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
<b>Job Offer</b>	Yes	Condition 1	Condition 2	Condition 3	Condition 4
	No	Condition 5	Condition 6	Condition 7	Condition 8

Figure 2.1 The eight conditions.

Participants then were asked to complete all of the study's measures (i.e., the procedural and distributive justice scales, behavioral reaction questionnaire, the Facebook questionnaire and the Facebook disclosure questionnaire, and the protected demographic questionnaire). As a manipulation check, participants were asked three questions to assess their understanding of their particular case study (see Appendix R). The study concluded by debriefing the participants and thanking them for their participation (see Appendix S).

CHAPTER 3  
RESULTS SECTION

3.1 Results

*3.1.1 Data Analyses*

Six main hypotheses were examined throughout this study. The first four hypotheses were examined using a variety of factorial ANOVAs. Three, 2 (job offer) x 2 (permission adherence) x 2 (Facebook use) factorial ANOVAs were performed to examine if there was a significant relationship between Facebook use and procedural justice (H1a), Facebook use and negative actions (H1b), permission adherence and procedural justice (H2), job offer and distributive justice (H3), and to examine if there was a significant interaction between job offer and permission adherence when examining distributive justice (H4) after statistically accounting for the other independent variables.

Data were also examined using two, one-way ANOVAs to assess which of the eight conditions would be rated the least procedurally fair (H5a) and the most procedurally fair (H5b) and which of the eight conditions would result in negative actions being most likely to occur (H5c) and least likely to occur (H5d).

Hypothesis 6 proposed that the relationship between Facebook use and negative actions would be mediated by perceptions of fairness. Hypothesis 6 was tested using Baron and Kenny's (1986) four step mediation using Preacher and Hayes' (2004) macro.

*3.1.2 Data Screening*

A total of 499 individuals participated in this study. Participants who did not correctly answer all three questions on the manipulation check were deleted from the data set. Roughly 90% of the participants answered all three questions correctly. Duplicate data were also

deleted. A missing values analysis was conducted via SPSS to examine if any data points were missing at random. One participant was deleted for skipping 12% of the survey items. Another participant was deleted for skipping one of the three distributive justice items. Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) stated that when working with a large data set, almost every procedure will produce the same results if the data points are missing five percent or less and are missing at random. Therefore, missing data points were left as is, if there were less than five percent missing and they were found to be missing completely at random. Consequently, the remaining sample size consisted of 422 participants.

Prior to running the analyses, four items were reverse scored on the behavioral reaction questionnaire. All 20 items on the protected demographic questionnaire were also recoded to indicate whether or not participants answered the items correctly or incorrectly. Items were then collapsed into their respective constructs. Plausible means, standard deviations, and item values were examined for accuracy. Distributions were examined for outliers, normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity. No transformations were applied and the original variables were used. See Table A.1 for descriptive statistics and Table A.2 for a correlation matrix of all study variables.

### *3.1.3 Hypotheses 1a and 2*

A 2 x 2 x 2 factorial ANOVA was performed to examine if there was a significant relationship between Facebook use and procedural justice (H1a) after statistically accounting for job offer and permission adherence and to examine if there was a significant relationship between permission adherence and procedural justice (H2) after statistically accounting for job offer and Facebook use. A small, but significant main effect was detected for Facebook use,  $F(1, 414) = 6.28, p = .013, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .015$  and permission adherence,  $F(1, 414) = 12.95, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .030$ . As hypothesis 1a predicted, participants perceived the process to be significantly less procedurally fair when Facebook was used ( $M = 3.15, SE = .073, 95\% CI$

[3.01, 3.29]) compared to when Facebook was not used ( $M = 3.41$ ,  $SE = .072$ , 95% CI [3.26, 3.55]). As hypothesis 2 predicted, participants perceived the process to be significantly less procedurally fair when permission was not adhered to ( $M = 3.09$ ,  $SE = .073$ , 95% CI [2.95, 3.24]) compared to when permission was adhered to ( $M = 3.46$ ,  $SE = .072$ , 95% CI [3.32, 3.60]). Therefore, based on the main effect findings, hypotheses 1a and 2 were supported (see Table A.3 for descriptive statistics). A significant relationship was found between Facebook use and procedural justice independent of job offer and permission adherence as well as between permission adherence and procedural justice independent of Facebook use and job offer.

#### *3.1.4 Hypothesis 1b*

A  $2 \times 2 \times 2$  factorial ANOVA was performed to examine if there was a significant relationship between Facebook use and negative actions after statistically accounting for job offer and permission adherence. A significant, medium sized main effect was detected for Facebook use,  $F(1, 414) = 36.98$ ,  $p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .082$ . As hypothesis 1b predicted, participants indicated that they would be significantly more likely to take negative actions (e.g., litigation) when Facebook was used ( $M = 3.14$ ,  $SE = .061$ , 95% CI [3.02, 3.26]) compared to when Facebook was not used ( $M = 2.62$ ,  $SE = .060$ , 95% CI [2.51, 2.74]). Therefore, based on the main effect finding, hypothesis 1b was supported (see Table A.4 for descriptive statistics). A significant relationship was found between Facebook use and negative actions independent of job offer and permission adherence. It should be noted that the error variance of the dependent variable was unequal across groups. As a result Overall and Spiegel's (1969) method 1 (i.e., using sums of squares type 4) was used because all cells were considered equally important. Consequently, the findings for hypothesis 1b need to be interpreted with caution.

#### *3.1.5 Hypotheses 3 and 4*

A  $2 \times 2 \times 2$  factorial ANOVA analysis was performed to examine if there was a significant relationship between job offer and distributive justice (H3) after statistically

accounting for Facebook use and permission adherence, and to examine if the strength of the relationship between job offer and perceptions of distributive justice would be different depending on whether or not permission was adhered to (H4). A significant and fairly large main effect was detected for job offer,  $F(1, 414) = 758.38$ ,  $p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .647$ . As hypothesis 3 predicted, participants perceived the outcome to be significantly less distributively fair when no job offer was presented ( $M = 2.10$ ,  $SE = .074$ , 95% CI [1.95, 2.25]) compared to when a job offer was presented ( $M = 5.06$ ,  $SE = .078$ , 95% CI [4.90, 5.21]). Therefore, based on the main effect finding, hypothesis 3 was supported (see Table A.5 for descriptive statistics). A significant relationship was found between job offer and distributive justice independent of Facebook use and permission adherence. Contrary to hypothesis 4, no significant interaction was detected for permission adherence x job offer,  $F(1, 414) = .91$ ,  $p = .341$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .002$ . Therefore, hypothesis 4 was not supported (see Table A.6 for descriptive statistics). When no job offer was presented, the outcome was rated equally fair irrespective of whether permission was adhered to.

### *3.1.6 Hypotheses 5a and 5b*

A one-way ANOVA was used to examine the effects of the processes and outcome on perceptions of fairness across the eight conditions. As expected, a significant difference was found across the eight conditions (see Table A.7 for descriptive statistics and Figure 3.1 for the mean plots),  $F(7, 414) = 9.15$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .15$ . A Bonferroni test was used to compare all of the groups and to control for inflated Type I error. Results showed that the selection process overall was rated the least fair when permission was not adhered to, Facebook was used, and no job offer was presented (i.e., Condition 7) compared to Condition 1 ( $p < .001$ ), Condition 2 ( $p = .002$ ), and Condition 4 ( $p < .001$ ), partially supporting Hypothesis 5a.



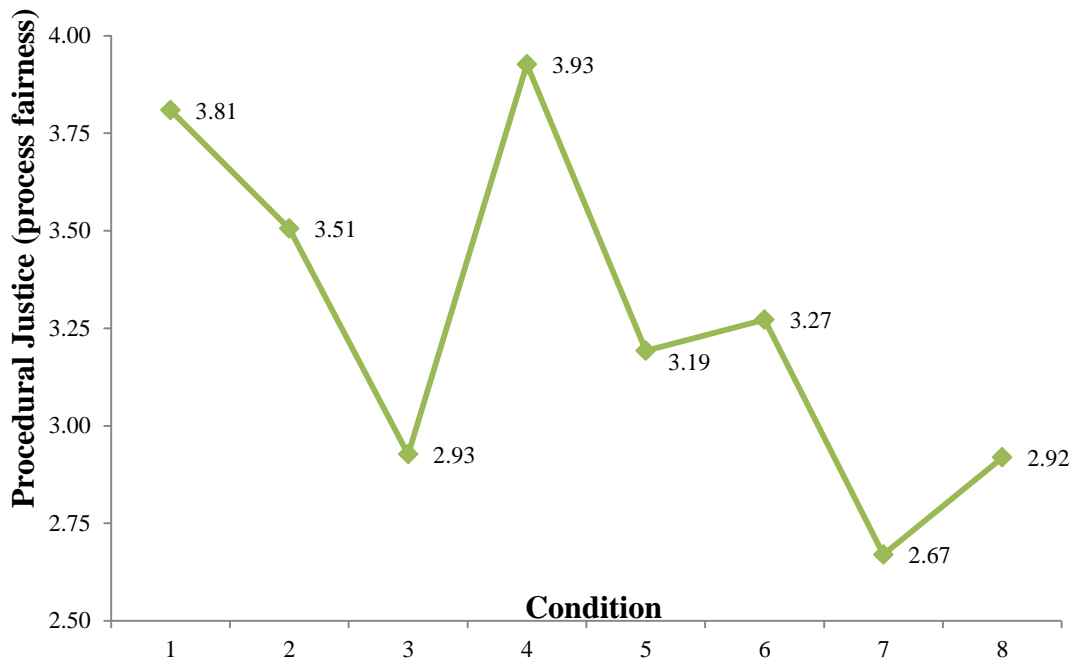


Figure 3.1 Effects of the processes and outcome on perceptions of procedural justice (1 = least fair 6 = most fair) across the eight conditions.

In addition, partial support was found for hypothesis 5b. The selection process overall was rated the most fair when permission was adhered to, Facebook was not used, and a job offer was presented (i.e., Condition 4) compared to Condition 3 ( $p < .001$ ), Condition 5 ( $p = .008$ ), Condition 6 ( $p = .038$ ), Condition 7 ( $p < .001$ ), and Condition 8 ( $p < .001$ ), but not compared to Condition 1 ( $p = 1.000$ ) or Condition 2 ( $p = 1.000$ ).

### 3.1.7 Hypotheses 5c and 5d

A one-way ANOVA was used to examine the effects of the processes and outcome on the participants' intent to take negative actions. As expected, a significant difference was found across the eight conditions using Welch's equality of means tests (see Table A.8 for descriptive statistics and Figure 3.2 for the mean plots),  $F(7, 176.07) = 21.49$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .36$ . A

Bonferroni test was used to compare all groups. Full support was found for hypothesis 5c; negative actions were most likely to be taken when permission was not adhered to, Facebook was used, and a job offer was not presented (i.e., Condition 7). Specifically, participants in Condition 7 were significantly more likely to take negative actions than participants in Condition 1 ( $p < .001$ ), Condition 2 ( $p < .001$ ), Condition 3 ( $p < .001$ ), Condition 4 ( $p < .001$ ), Condition 5 ( $p = .007$ ), Condition 6 ( $p < .001$ ), and Condition 8 ( $p < .001$ ).

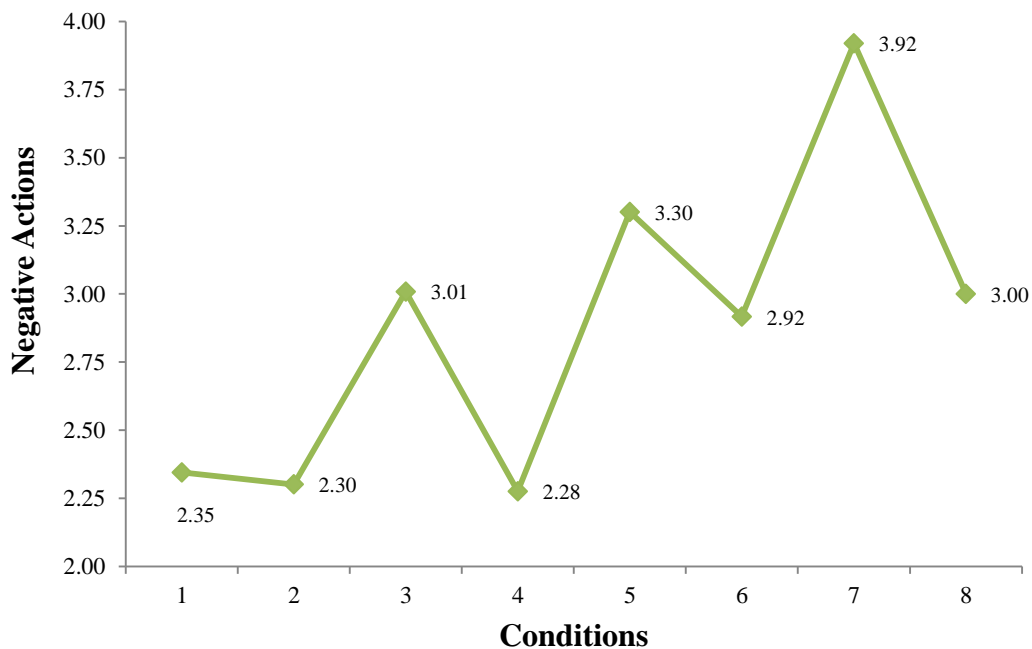


Figure 3.2 Effects of the processes and outcome on participants' intent to take negative actions (1 = extremely unlikely to 6 = extremely likely) across the eight conditions.

Partial support was found for hypothesis 5d. Negative actions overall were least likely to be taken when permission was adhered to, Facebook was not used, and a job offer was presented (i.e., Condition 4) compared to Condition 3 ( $p = .001$ ), Condition 5 ( $p < .001$ ), Condition 6 ( $p = .005$ ), Condition 7 ( $p < .001$ ), and Condition 8 ( $p = .001$ ), but not compared to Condition 1 ( $p = 1.000$ ) and Condition 2 ( $p = 1.000$ ).

### 3.1.8 Hypothesis 6

Hypothesis 6 was tested using Baron and Kenny's (1986) four step mediation process using Preacher and Hayes' (2004) macro. Step one (path c) examined if Facebook use (the independent variable) predicted negative actions (the dependent variable) after partialling out the effects of permission adherence and job offer. Facebook use significantly predicted negative actions,  $b = -.524$ ,  $SE = .087$ ,  $t(417) = -6.05$ ,  $p < .001$ . When Facebook was used, individuals were more likely to take part in negative actions. Step two (path a) examined if Facebook use predicted perceptions of procedural justice (the mediator) after partialling out the effects of permission adherence and job offer. Facebook use significantly predicted perceptions of procedural justice,  $b = .255$ ,  $SE = .104$ ,  $t(417) = 2.45$ ,  $p = .015$ . When Facebook was used, individuals were more likely to perceive the process as unfair. Step three (path b) examined if perceptions of procedural justice predicted negative actions after controlling for Facebook use. Perceptions of procedural justice significantly predicted negative actions,  $b = -.285$ ,  $SE = .038$ ,  $t(417) = -7.45$ ,  $p < .001$ . The more fair individuals thought the process was, the less likely they were to take negative actions. Step four (path c-prime) examined if Facebook use predicted negative actions while controlling for perceptions of procedural justice. Facebook use significantly predicted negative action while controlling for perceptions of procedural justice,  $b = -.452$ ,  $SE = .082$ ,  $t(422) = -5.50$ ,  $p < .001$  after partialling out the effects of job offer and permission adherence (see Table A.9). Bootstrapping using 1,000 bootstrap samples, indicated that there was a significant indirect effect,  $SE = .031$ , 95% CI =  $[-.144, -.018]$  given that zero was not included in the confidence intervals. A significant direct effect and a significant indirect effect implied that partial mediation had occurred (see Figure 3.3).

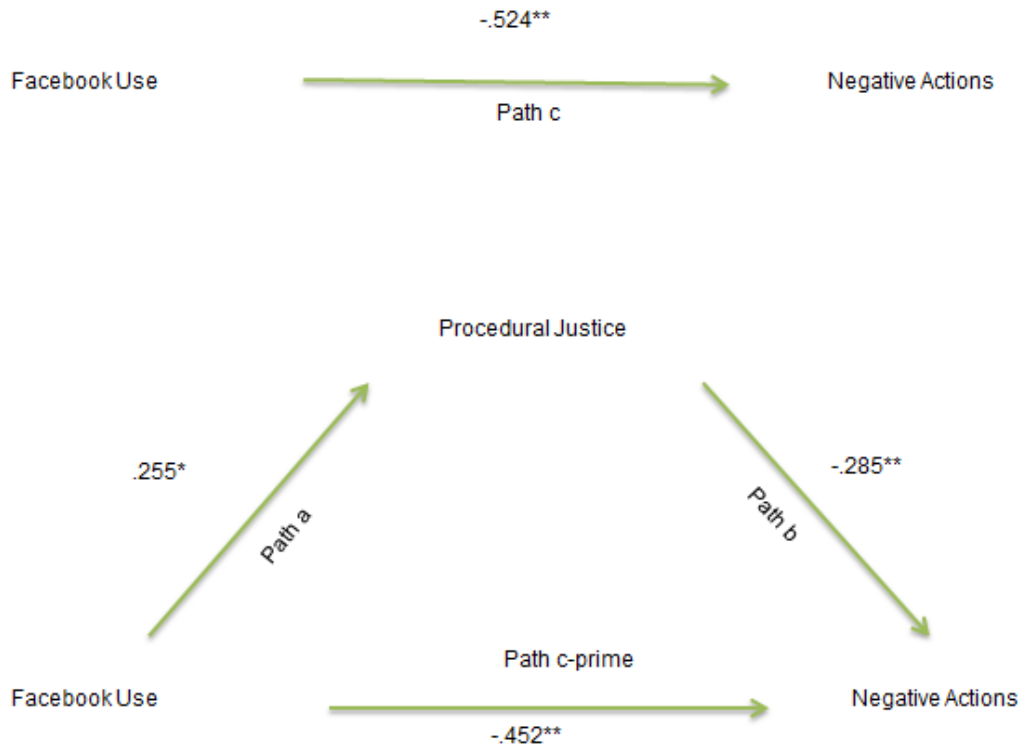


Figure 3.3 Four step mediation for hypothesis 6 (\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .001$ ).

### 3.1.9 Exploratory Analyses

A variety of exploratory analyses were conducted to further assess the relationships among the variables.

#### 3.1.9.1 Procedural Justice

A main effect was detected for job offer,  $F(1, 414) = 26.73$ ,  $p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .061$ . Participants perceived the process to be significantly less procedurally fair when no job offer was presented ( $M = 3.01$ ,  $SE = .070$ , 95% CI [2.88, 3.15]) compared to when a job offer was presented ( $M = 3.54$ ,  $SE = .074$ , 95% CI [3.40, 3.69]). There was also a significant interaction detected for job offer x permission adherence,  $F(1, 414) = 7.68$ ,  $p = .006$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .018$ . When permission was adhered to, participants perceived the process to be significantly more

fair when a job offer was presented ( $M = 3.87$ ,  $SE = .11$ , 95% CI [3.66, 4.08]) compared to when a job offer was not presented ( $M = 3.06$ ,  $SE = .098$ , 95% CI [2.86, 3.25]). Job offer was not dependent on permission adherence when permission was not adhered to implying that if the process was perceived as unfair (permission disregarded) then the outcome (no job offer) was irrelevant.

Additionally, a significant interaction was detected for permission adherence x Facebook use,  $F(1, 414) = 10.67$ ,  $p = .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .025$ . When permission was not adhered to, participants perceived the process to be significantly more fair when Facebook was not used ( $M = 3.39$ ,  $SE = .102$ , 95% CI [3.19, 3.59]) compared to when Facebook was used ( $M = 2.80$ ,  $SE = .103$ , 95% CI [2.60, 3.00]). Facebook use was not dependent on permission adherence when permission was adhered. In other words, individuals did not care if Facebook was used if the applicant gave the organization permission to use it and vice versa.

#### 3.1.9.2 Negative Actions

A main effect was detected for permission adherence,  $F(1, 414) = 12.79$ ,  $p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .030$  and job offer,  $F(1, 414) = 87.90$ ,  $p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .175$ . Participants indicated that they would be significantly more likely to take negative actions when permission was not adhered to ( $M = 3.04$ ,  $SE = .061$ , 95% CI [2.92, 3.16]) compared to when permission was adhered to ( $M = 2.73$ ,  $SE = .060$ , 95% CI [2.61, 2.85]). Moreover, participants indicated that they would be significantly more likely to take negative actions when no job offer was presented ( $M = 3.28$ ,  $SE = .059$ , 95% CI [3.17, 3.40]) compared to when a job offer was presented ( $M = 2.48$ ,  $SE = .062$ , 95% CI [2.36, 2.61]).

Similarly to procedural justice, there was also a significant interaction detected for Facebook use x permission adherence,  $F(1, 414) = 15.36$ ,  $p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .036$ . When permission was not adhered to, participants indicated that they would be more likely to take negative actions when Facebook was used ( $M = 3.46$ ,  $SE = .086$ , 95% CI [3.30, 3.63])

compared to when Facebook was not used ( $M = 2.61$ ,  $SE = .086$ , 95% CI [2.44, 2.78]).

Facebook use was not dependent on permission adherence when permission was adhered indicating that individuals did not care if Facebook was used if they gave the organization permission to use it and vice versa. No significant interaction was detected for Facebook use x job offer,  $F(1, 414) = 2.37$ ,  $p = .124$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .006$  or job offer x permission adherence,  $F(1, 414) = .20$ ,  $p = .654$ , partial  $\eta^2 < .001$ . Furthermore, no interaction was detected for Facebook use x job offer x permission adherence,  $F(1, 414) = .04$ ,  $p = .850$ , partial  $\eta^2 < .001$ .

#### 3.1.9.3 Distributive Justice

A main effect was detected for permission adherence,  $F(1, 414) = 4.50$ ,  $p = .035$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .011$ . Participants perceived the outcome to be significantly less distributively fair when permission was not adhered to ( $M = 3.46$ ,  $SE = .076$ , 95% CI [3.31, 3.61]) compared to when permission was adhered to ( $M = 3.69$ ,  $SE = .076$ , 95% CI [3.54, 3.84]). A main effect was not detected for Facebook use,  $F(1, 414) = 2.87$ ,  $p = .091$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .007$ . Furthermore, no significant interaction was detected for Facebook use x job offer,  $F(1, 414) = 1.29$ ,  $p = .258$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .003$ , Facebook use x permission adherence,  $F(1, 414) = 1.36$ ,  $p = .244$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .003$  or Facebook use x permission adherence x job offer,  $F(1, 414) = .10$ ,  $p = .758$ , partial  $\eta^2 < .001$ .

#### 3.1.9.4 Additional Analyses

An independent t-test was run to examine if there were any differences in fairness perceptions between individuals who on average revealed items (e.g., religion and relationship status) on their Facebook profile and individuals who did not reveal items on their Facebook profile. No significant differences were found for procedural justice,  $t(386) = .62$ ,  $p = .535$ ,  $d = .06$ ; or distributive justice,  $t(386) = 1.87$ ,  $p = .0625$ ,  $d = .19$ . Another independent t-test was run to examine if there were any difference in fairness perceptions between individuals who on average correctly answered the protected demographic questionnaire (demonstrating that they

knew which items were protected by federal law) and individuals who incorrectly answered the questionnaire. No significant differences were found for procedural justice,  $t(420) = .99$ ,  $p = .325$ ,  $d = .10$ ; or distributive justice,  $t(420) = -.82$ ,  $p = .4145$ ,  $d = .08$ .

Furthermore, a point-biserial correlation was run to examine if knowledge of protected groups (via the protected demographic questionnaire) was correlated with how strict individuals set their privacy settings. A significant relationship was found,  $r(381) = -.11$ ,  $p = .031$ . The more knowledgeable participants were about federally protected information, the stricter they set their Facebook privacy settings. Moreover, a point-biserial correlation was examined to determine if privacy settings were correlated with fairness perceptions. A significant relationship was found for procedural justice,  $r(381) = .12$ ,  $p = .021$ , but not for distributive justice,  $r(381) = .05$ ,  $p = .348$ . As privacy settings increased so did perceptions of procedural fairness. Based on the results of these correlations, it appears that the more knowledgeable someone is about federally protected information the more strict they set their Facebook privacy settings, and the more strict someone sets their privacy settings the more fair they will view the use of Facebook in the selection process. This may be likely because organizations will have limited access to information, if strict privacy settings are in place.

CHAPTER 4  
DISCUSSION SECTION

4.1 Discussion

Increasingly, more and more organizations are beginning to incorporate social networking sites into their selection processes due to the cost effectiveness, accessibility, and information that they can furnish. In fact, some organizations are going as far as asking applicants for their Facebook usernames and passwords. A recent article in the San Francisco Chronicle acknowledged that organizations are asking job applicants to “friend” human resource managers on Facebook, sign in to their accounts during interviews, or provide their Facebook usernames and passwords so that the organization can learn more about them (Valdes & McFarland, 2012). Valdes and McFarland (2012) further explained an incident where an applicant withdrew from the application process as a result of being asked to disclose his Facebook username and password information. This demonstrates why it is essential for organizations to be aware of applicant perceptions in regards to the use of Facebook in the selection process. Individuals may withdraw their application, not apply at all, or may take negative actions towards the organization due to the decision to use such selection processes.

*4.1.1 Hypothesis 1a (Use of Facebook)*

The current study provided empirical evidence that individuals do in fact view the use of Facebook in the selection process as unfair. Although this may be “common sense” thinking, there is also research and theory that supports this finding. For example, research has found that familiarity with a selection tool increases the perceptions of fairness in the selection process (Truxillo et al., 2004). Even though 92% of the participants in this study indicated they had a Facebook profile, only half felt that a majority of organizations (i.e., 50% or more) use Facebook



in the selection process. This indicates that Facebook, while popular and familiar to people, is not commonly thought of as a selection tool and may indicate why individuals do not view the use of Facebook in the selection process as fair.

Furthermore, fairness theory states that, “perceptions of injustice occur only after an individual determines that another situation would have been better, the present situation could have been avoided, and the decision should have been different” (Mayer, Greenbaum, Kuenzi, & Shteynberg, 2009, p. 159). Individuals may have felt that another selection tool should have been used given that Facebook is not commonly thought of as a selection tool and may not appear job relevant. Individuals may have also felt that the organization could have avoided using Facebook given the vast amount of selection tools available. Additionally, individuals may have felt that the decision would have been different had Facebook not been used. If Facebook is used in the selection process and individuals feel that the selection process would, could, and should be different, this naturally leads them to form perceptions of injustice towards the selection process, and likely the organization as well.

Moreover, the fairness heuristic theory proposes that people use limited information when determining if a process is fair and instead form mental shortcuts that they then use to make decisions (Harris et al., 2004). When forming a mental shortcut, if individuals focus on the fact that Facebook was used in the selection process and ignore other relevant information, their mental shortcuts may lead them to believe that the process was unfair. Harris et al. (2004) indicated that individuals’ fairness perceptions are related to discrimination complaints and behavior; therefore, individuals may be more likely to perceive that they have been discriminated against and as a result take negative actions against organizations.

Despite theory and the current research supporting the findings that individuals view the use of Facebook in the selection process as unfair, future research will need to examine why this is so. Individuals may reason that their Facebook profiles do not represent how they will

perform on the job and may feel that they should not be judged for personal choices made at home if they could and would satisfactorily perform at work. Others may view the use of Facebook as an invasion of privacy or as unjust because federally protected information such as age, race, gender, and religious affiliations could be viewed. Until further research can explain why individuals view the use of Facebook in the selection process as unfair, or until laws are put in place to protect either the individuals or the use of this selection method, organizations will need to be aware that individuals may feel that using Facebook in the selection process is unjust.

#### *4.1.2 Hypothesis 2 (Permission Adherence)*

If, however, organizations decide to use Facebook in the selection process they should at the minimum ask participants for permission; however, it is essential that the permission be adhered to. The current study found that if permission was not adhered to, individuals viewed the process as unfair. This is in alignment with the procedural justice literature that has found that having a voice in the process provides applicants with a sense of control in the decision making process and increases their perceptions that the outcome will be more favorable (Harris et al., 2004; Viswesvaran & Ones, 2002). Harris et al. (2004) indicated that, among other things, for a process to be perceived as fair it should offer voice. Having voice in a process is meaningful only if one feels heard and acknowledged. If an organization goes against what an applicant agrees to, that applicant may feel his or her input is meaningless and therefore be less likely to contribute and more likely to view the process as unfair. In fact, Lind and Kulik (2009) stated that individuals may become angered or frustrated when an organization ignores or disregards their voice. Consequently, if an organization is going to use Facebook in the selection process, it is essential to provide applicants the opportunity to give permission and then for the organization to adhere to the applicants' decision. If an applicant does not provide permission, the organization should respect that decision by not viewing the Facebook profile.

Likewise, applicants should not be dismissed or excluded from the selection process for not providing permission.

#### *4.1.3 Hypothesis 1b (Negative Actions)*

One of the most noteworthy findings of this research showed that people are willing to take negative actions as a result of organizations using Facebook in the selection process (see Table A.10). Previous research has found that if applicants view the selection process as unfair they are more likely to take negative actions (Greenberg, 2010; Viswesvaran & Ones, 2004). This study found that individuals view the use of Facebook in the selection process as unfair; therefore, these perceptions of unfairness may have led individuals to indicate that they would be more willing to take negative actions. Other variables such as impression management tendencies might also moderate the relationship between Facebook use and negative actions. For example, individuals who have a high need for approval or acceptance may be less likely to take legal action (Harris et al., 2004). Thus, as previously mentioned, future research needs to examine why individuals perceive the use of Facebook in the selection process as unfair and which factors are the key motivators for taking negative action.

#### *4.1.4 Hypothesis 3 (Job Offer)*

Strong support was found for H3, demonstrating that participants perceived the outcome to be less fair when no job offer was presented. Equity theory states that individuals will view the process as fair if their input (e.g., qualifications) to output (e.g., job offer) ratio is equal compared to others. If individuals feel qualified for a position, but do not receive a job offer, they may view the ratio of inputs to outputs as imbalanced and may view the outcome as unfair. Consequently, individuals may blame the tools used in the selection process (e.g., Facebook) in order to reduce their feelings of disappointment and to restore a sense of equity. Additionally, research has found that if the outcome is unfavorable, it will be viewed as unfair (Thompson, 1996). Therefore, individuals may have felt that the outcome was unfair when no

job offer was presented because all applicants in the study were qualified for the position and because the outcome was unfavorable.

#### *4.1.5 Hypothesis 4*

An interesting finding from this research is that contrary to what was hypothesized, fair procedures (e.g., permission was asked and adhered to) did not alleviate the negative outcome (i.e., no job offer). This conflicts with previous research which has found that regardless of whether an outcome was favorable, as long as the procedure was fair, the applicant would view the outcome as more fair (Goldman, 2001; Lind & Kulik, 2009). This suggests that providing individuals with the opportunity to grant an organization permission to use Facebook in the selection process is meaningless when no job offer is presented. With the current economy, available jobs are scarce; therefore, the importance of a job offer might have outweighed the importance of having a voice. In agreement with this, Mayer et al. (2009) found that even if an individual provides voice, if the outcome challenges their personal or social identity, the individual is more likely to think that voice was meaningless and perceive the process and outcome to be unfair. Individuals may associate a job with their personal or social identity; thus, organizations need to take extra precautions, beyond just providing voice in the selection process, in order to enhance perceptions of fairness. Because a job offer cannot be presented to all applicants and because individuals view the use of Facebook in the selection process is unfair, organizations may want to avoid using Facebook altogether in order to avoid augmenting perceptions of unfairness.

#### *4.1.6 Hypothesis 5*

In hypothesis 5, various selection conditions were examined to discover which out of the eight conditions would be perceived as the least fair and which would be perceived as the most fair, and also which conditions would be the most likely and least likely to result in negative actions. The following sections summarize the findings of hypothesis 5.

#### 4.1.6.1 Least Fair

As predicted, Condition 7 was rated the least fair (permission was not adhered to, Facebook was used, and no job offer was presented); however, contrary to what was hypothesized, Condition 7 was only significantly different from Conditions 1, 2, and 4 (see Figure 4.1).

		Permission to use Facebook			
		Yes		No	
		Used Facebook		Used Facebook	
Job Offer	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
		Condition 1	Condition 2	Condition 3	Condition 4
Job Offer	No	Condition 5	Condition 6	Condition 7	Condition 8

Figure 4.1 Findings for hypothesis 5a.

No clear patterns in the results were identified for hypothesis 5, which was confirmed by the exploratory analyses that demonstrated that no three-way interactions among permission adherence, Facebook use, and job offer were occurring. However when examining outcome fairness, conditions that did not offer a job were perceived to be significantly less fair than conditions that offered a job. This may explain why Condition 7 (no job offer) was rated less fair than Conditions 1, 2, and 4 (received job offer). It is interesting to note that Condition 3 (received job offer) was not perceived to be different than Condition 7. Not only was permission disregarded in Condition 3, but Facebook was also used which resulted in participants rating it less procedurally fair. This implies that individuals are considering both the process and outcome fairness of a selection system. As a result, organizations should moderate the negative effects when a job offer is not made, by ensuring that the process is perceived as fair.

#### 4.1.6.2 Most Likely to Take Negative Actions

Irrespective of the fairness perceptions described above, individuals in Condition 7 were more likely to take negative actions than individuals in any of the other conditions (see Figure

4.2). For example, individuals in Condition 7 indicated that they would be somewhat likely to likely to file an oral or written complaint to the company, think about pursuing legal action, form negative attitudes toward the company and Facebook, and talk negatively about the company to others (see Table A.10).

		Permission to use Facebook			
		Yes		No	
		Used Facebook		Used Facebook	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
Job Offer	Yes	Condition 1	Condition 2	Condition 3	Condition 4
	No	Condition 5	Condition 6	Condition 7	Condition 8

Figure 4.2 Findings for hypothesis 5c.

All of these behaviors could impact the branding of the organization. Consequently, organizations need to be aware that individuals could be contemplating taking negative actions against companies that implement Facebook in the selection process, especially when permission is disregarded and no job offer is presented.

#### 4.1.6.3 Most Fair

As predicted, Condition 4 (permission was adhered to, Facebook was not used, and a job offer was presented) overall was rated the most fair; however, contrary to what was hypothesized Condition 4 was only significantly different from Conditions 3, 5, 6, 7, and 8 (see Figure 4.3).

		Permission to use Facebook			
		Yes		No	
		Used Facebook		Used Facebook	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
Job Offer	Yes	Condition 1	Condition 2	Condition 3	Condition 4
	No	Condition 5	Condition 6	Condition 7	Condition 8

Figure 4.3 Findings for hypothesis 5b.

Again, when examining outcome fairness, conditions that did not offer a job were perceived to be significantly less fair than conditions that offered a job. This may explain why Condition 4 was rated more fair than Conditions 5, 6, 7, and 8. However, Condition 3 (received job offer) was perceived to be less fair than Condition 4 (received a job offer). Yet again, this most likely occurred because individuals were considering both the outcome and the process fairness of a selection process.

#### 4.1.6.4 Least Likely to Take Negative Actions

Overall, individuals in Condition 4 were least likely to take negative actions; however, similar to hypothesis 5b, Condition 4 was only significantly different from Conditions 3, 5, 6, 7, and 8 (see Figure 4.4).

		Permission to use Facebook			
		Yes		No	
		Used Facebook		Used Facebook	
Job Offer	Yes	Condition 1	Condition 2	Condition 3	Condition 4
	No	Condition 5	Condition 6	Condition 7	Condition 8

Figure 4.4 Findings for hypothesis 5d.

Therefore, organizations need to be aware of the impact that their selection tools are having on applicants. A job offer may not be able to be given to all applicants, but an organization can control how fair the process is.

#### 4.1.7 Hypothesis 6

Past research has found that perceptions of unfairness are related to negative actions both during and after hiring (Truxillo et al., 2004). Because it was believed that the use of Facebook was related to perceptions of justice and because justice has been found to be associated with negative actions, it was hypothesized that procedural justice would account for the relationship between Facebook use and negative actions. Indeed, the results from the

mediation analyses did find that partial mediation was occurring; however, this leads to a consideration of other factors that could also be mediating the relationship between Facebook use and negative actions. One factor might be the organization's industry; that is, a more technology-oriented organization may be perceived by individuals as justified in using social networking sites and other media in the selection process. Another factor that could be mediating the relationship could be an individual's personality type, which may dictate what information is found on a Facebook profile or how individuals view the use of Facebook in the selection process. A recent study by Kluemper, Rosen, and Mossholder (in press) found that Facebook profiles could accurately assess personality traits; therefore, if organizations are assessing personality traits related to the job using Facebook profiles, individuals may view the process as more fair. Another mediating factor could be the specific content obtained from a Facebook profile which might determine what actions, if any, an individual would take. For example, is the content job related, consistently obtained from each applicant, or an indicator of job performance? If not, then the likelihood that negative actions would be taken might be greatly increased, particularly if organizations do not explain the reasoning behind obtaining such content to applicants.

#### *4.1.8 Exploratory Analyses*

Given the sparse literature on the topic, this study represented an initial examination into the main relationships between the use of Facebook and the consequences of such use. Nevertheless, further exploration of the results revealed some interesting interactions. For example, the interaction between job offer and permission adherence existed for procedural justice, but not distributive justice (H4). When examining both procedural and distributive justice, individuals indicated that if no job offer was presented, both the process and the outcome were perceived as less fair irrespective of whether permission was adhered to; however, when examining procedural justice individuals perceived the process to be more fair if a job offer was



presented and permission was adhered to compared to when a job offer was presented and permission was not adhered to. Conversely, when examining distributive justice individuals perceived the outcome to be more fair when a job offer was presented irrespective of permission adherence. This finding is important because it indicates procedures and outcomes are interrelated and must be examined together in order to fully understand perceptions of fairness.

Furthermore, if the organization adhered to the applicant's permission, individuals indicated that the process was fair regardless of whether Facebook was used or not; however, if permission was not adhered to, individuals perceived the process to be less fair when Facebook was used compared to when Facebook was not used. An individual clearly has reason to perceive a process as unfair when an organization disregards their say in the process (i.e., permission to use Facebook) and goes against what they agree to.

There were no interactions between Facebook use and job offer or Facebook use, job offer, and permission adherence when examining procedural justice, distributive justice, and negative actions. Although the justice literature has found procedural justice (i.e., how fair the process is) and distributive justice (i.e., how fair the outcome is) to be highly correlated (e.g., .62) research has also distinguished differences between them (Mayer et al., 2009). Therefore, individuals may have perceived Facebook use (the process) independently of a job offer (the outcome) or vice versa. Future research should examine why these interactions are not occurring

#### *4.1.9 Implications for Research*

Although research has examined applicant attitudes in the selection process regarding the use of a variety of assessments tools, no scholarly or empirical studies to date have examined attitudes towards the use of Facebook in the selection process. There has been limited research examining the use of social media in organizational settings; therefore, this

research is essential because it aims to help inform organizations of applicant perceptions in regards to the use of social networking sites in the selection process and what reactions it may evoke. The information obtained from this study has broadened the current literature on social media and has introduced novel material by demonstrating that individuals do indeed view the use of Facebook in the selection process as unfair. This research has left the door open for follow-up studies to examine why these relationships are occurring and if they are generalizable. Future research should also expand on the current study by examining additional questions (e.g., Do individuals think using Facebook in the selection process is ethical?).

#### *4.1.10 Implications for Practice*

Schiffman (2007) proposed that as long as the use of Facebook continues, organizations will increase their use of Facebook in their hiring practices. Facebook is free and, therefore, can be a very cost effective selection tool if used properly (i.e., used only to obtain and review job relevant information). According to Du (2007), Ponemon Institute found that, “35 percent of hiring managers use Google to do online background checks on job candidates, and 23 percent look people up on social networking sites. About one-third of those Web searches lead to rejections” (p. 1). Organizations may believe that using Facebook is an acceptable means by which to examine multiple attributes of an applicant such as how they present themselves, if they use proper grammar, or if they appear to abuse drugs or alcohol. However, if individuals view this process as unfair as this study has shown, the costs may outweigh the benefits. For example, highly qualified individuals may opt out of the selection process on their own or applicants who are not selected may communicate their frustrations with the organization to others, thereby spreading bad publicity for an organization via word of mouth or even Facebook itself. In fact, individuals in this study indicated that they would be somewhat likely to likely to talk negatively about the company to others if Facebook was used as a means of selection. This current research study is particularly necessary because it informs human

resource practitioners and organizations of the potential consequences they will likely face should they choose to use Facebook as a selection tool.

Likewise, it further informs organizations who are currently using Facebook as a selection tool whether they should modify their use. For example, organizations may want to implement rules or guidelines for what information should be examined and what information should be disregarded. On average, participants in all of the conditions indicated that they would be unlikely to somewhat unlikely to consult an attorney in order to file a lawsuit against the company, report the company to the appropriate authorities, and write negative comments about the company on Facebook (see Table A.10). This is reassuring for companies currently using Facebook in the selection process. However, participants in all of the conditions did indicate that they would be unlikely to somewhat unlikely to doing nothing about the selection procedures indicating that if individuals do perceive the process as unfair, they will be more likely to take some form of negative action. In fact, individuals in conditions where no job offer was presented indicated that they would likely form negative attitudes toward the company. Although this is a reasonable reaction, organizations can take steps to demonstrate their commitment and dedication towards their applicants to lessen this impact by ensuring that their selection procedures are job relevant, consistent, and transparent. Furthermore, individuals in conditions where permission was disregarded and Facebook was used indicated that they would be somewhat unlikely to reapply at a later time, if they were removed from the applicant pool. It is necessary to keep in mind that this was an in-lab study and may not generalize to individuals who are unemployed or seeking new careers; nonetheless, it does reemphasize the need for organizations to make certain that their selection procedures are fair and perceived positively by applicants to ensure that the effects found in the lab-study are not replicated in an organizational setting.

A major area of concern that organizations, either using Facebook or contemplating using Facebook, should be aware of is its legality and the potential ramifications. Although laws

banning the use of Facebook in the selection process have not yet been put into place, the use of these types of sites may be approaching an invasion of privacy or a breach of certain employment laws. One way organizations could safeguard themselves from the pitfalls of having access to federally protected information would be to outsource to organizations that specialize in screening applicants using the World Wide Web. For example, some organizations have already begun outsourcing with other companies such as Social Intelligence Corporation (SIC). The use of SIC allows an organization to remain objective and consistent in the screening process. For example, Hill (2011) stated that a SIC staff member can sift through information on Facebook accounts and only provide information that is applicable to the job in question and filter out protected class information. SIC complies with the Federal Credit Reporting Act and informs applicants of any information that will affect the hiring decision, providing them a chance to explain or refute the information (Hill, 2011). Even if organizations outsource their selection process, they are still liable for any consequences that may arise; however, applicants may be more accepting of a selection process if they know that the organization is only obtaining job relevant information and are provided the opportunity to refute any negative information that is found. Therefore, future research should examine if the use of outsourcing to organizations such as SIC will reduce negative perceptions towards the use of Facebook in the selection process.

An organization that wishes to continue screening applicants using in-house resources can protect itself from litigation by following a set of guidelines which include establishing and maintaining a transparent and standardized method of collecting applicant information, especially if the information collected is obtained from a social networking Web site. Additionally, to ensure that procedures in the selection process are viewed as fair by applicants, organizations should consider following Leventhal's (1980) six rules:

- Consistency: Procedures should be consistent across all job applicants.

- Bias-suppression: Narrow preconceptions should be avoided throughout the selection process (e.g., avoid practices that benefit personal self-interest).
- Accuracy: Any information should be gathered carefully and should be accurate, relevant, and reliable.
- Correctability: Job applicants should have the ability to challenge and modify decisions.
- Representativeness: Information should be representative of the individual.
- Ethicality: Selection procedures should be in alignment with standard moral and ethical values (e.g., a selection process that does not involve deception or an invasion of privacy).

Although no privacy laws specifically address the use of social networking sites, the Department of Health and Human Services have created a list of privacy principles that both the Privacy Office of the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Commerce have adopted (“American Civil Liberties Union”, 2011). Therefore, organization may also want to consider adopting the following privacy principles:

- Transparency: Individuals should have clear notice about the data collection practices involving them.
- Individual participation: Individuals should have the right to consent to the use of their information.
- Purpose specification: Data collectors should describe why they need particular information.
- Data minimization: Information should only be collected if it is needed.
- Use limitation: Information collected for one purpose should not be used for another.
- Data quality and integrity: Information should be accurate.
- Security: Information should be kept secure.

- *Accountability and auditing:* Data collectors should know who has accessed information and how it is used.

Using Facebook in the selection process can be a risky endeavor. Therefore, if this practice is continued, the searches should be conducted by individuals who have no stake or say in the hiring decision in order to avoid discrimination by filtering out unnecessary information (Sherman, 2011). Moreover, organizations should follow the guidelines provided above to ensure fair and consistent processes that are legally defensible.

#### *4.1.11 Limitations*

As with most studies, this study has certain limitations that should be considered. One of the biggest restraints of the current study was its use of case study methodology. Reading a case study presented in a laboratory setting and imagining a job selection situation is not necessarily equivalent to going through an actual job selection process. Steps were taken to ameliorate this limitation and enhance participant buy-in and the study's credibility. For example, a video used by Google that demonstrated all of the perks and benefits of working for the organization was shown, and subsequent comments during debriefing indicated that participants were surprised and even disappointed that the job was not real. The findings that using Facebook in the selection process was not fair and that negative actions would be taken might be reasonably assumed to be amplified if the participants were actually going through the process themselves.

Similarly, the case study presented a scenario in which applicants were asked if the organization could examine their Facebook profiles. However, in actuality this may not happen. Organizations may be under the impression that there is no need to ask for permission if the content is obtained from a public domain. Examining a Facebook profile can be very subjective and judgmental; therefore, in order to avoid opposition organizations may feel that if they do not ask for permission, then they do not have to tell that Facebook is being used. Furthermore, organizations may not pre-warn applicants that Facebook will be used in the selection process

because applicants may subsequently “clean-up” their Facebook profiles or implement stricter privacy settings.

Additionally, all of the data collected were self-reported measures. Therefore, participants may have been responding in a socially desirable manner. Despite this, many participants felt it necessary to verbalize their opinions regarding the use of Facebook in the selection process during the debriefing session. Participants expressed strong reservations about the use of Facebook, suggesting that the findings were not influenced by socially desirable answers. The scenario presented to the participants is very relevant to their lives given that 92% indicated they had a Facebook profile. Therefore, it is believed that social desirability had a minimal effect.

Although the convenience sample of college students may be viewed as a further limitation, this sample was appropriate given the likelihood that all of the participants will be entering the workforce in the near future. In addition, this age group is known for their savvy use of technology (Tulgan & Martin, 2000) and heavy use of the Internet, which provides further evidence of the relevance of this sample. However, future studies should replicate this study using different samples to ensure the generalizability to other college students as well as different age groups currently in the workforce.

Another limitation is common method bias. As previously stated all of the measurements were self-reported and were scale type assessments. This bias may account for part of the variance which could impact the validity of the results (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). However, the purpose of the current study was to demonstrate that an effect existed. Therefore, in the future, a multi-method approach using various sources should be implemented to augment the current findings and to account for common method biases.

#### *4.1.12 Future Research*

Based on a thorough search of the literature, this is the first study to examine perceptions of fairness in regards to the use of Facebook in the selection process. This study

has laid the foundation for new and cutting edge research, which could easily go in multiple directions. For example, given that individuals perceive the use of Facebook in the selection process as unfair, future research should try to uncover why this is so. Is it due to people viewing the use of Facebook as an entity separate from their work lives, therefore it should be considered outside the purview of an organization's concern? Is it because federally protected information could be examined which questions the legality of the process? Is it because someone's Facebook profile should not be considered an accurate representation of a person? Or, is it a combination and variety of these factors and more? Future research should also extend the current findings by examining moderators and mediators such as gender, cultural differences, personality, and work experience to better understand the relationships between the study variables. Lastly, future research should examine if these effects are found across other social networking sites such as Twitter, LinkedIn, or Meetup.

#### *4.1.13 Conclusion*

The purpose of this study was to examine if potential applicants think it is fair for organizations to use Facebook in the selection process and what potential actions they might take as a result. Individuals indicated that using Facebook in the selection process was not fair; furthermore, individuals demonstrated that adhering to the applicant's permission was necessary for them to view the process as fair. And, in most cases, individuals perceived the outcome to be less fair when it was unfavorable (i.e., no job offer). Moreover, participants indicated that they would be more likely to take negative action when Facebook was used compared to when Facebook was not used, especially when permission was disregarded and a job offer was not presented.

Studies have shown that organizations are using Facebook in the selection process to various degrees. Although there is no current legislation on the use of Facebook in the selection process, applicant perceptions regarding the use of Facebook could impact organizations. For example, if applicants do not think the selection process is fair they may take negative actions



(e.g., lawsuits) in order to restore a sense of equity, which will subsequently impact the organization's image. If an organization decides to use Facebook in the selection process, they should establish strict guidelines to ensure that the processes are consistent and transparent. Future research needs to further examine the relationship between the study variables, but until then organizations should be aware that individuals perceived the use of Facebook in the selection process as unfair and indicated that they would be willing to take negative actions as a result.

APPENDIX A

STUDY RESULTS

Table A.1 Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Skewness</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	
						<i>Lower</i>	<i>Upper</i>
Facebook Condition	422	4.61	2.27	0.11	-0.05	4.40	4.83
Facebook Use	422	1.50	0.50	0.02	-0.02	1.46	1.55
Permission	422	1.50	0.50	0.02	0.02	1.45	1.54
Job Offer	422	1.53	0.50	0.02	-0.10	1.48	1.57
Procedural Justice	422	3.26	1.12	0.05	0.19	3.16	3.37
Distributive Justice	422	3.50	1.84	0.09	0.00	3.32	3.68
Negative Actions	422	2.90	1.01	0.05	0.14	2.80	3.00
Federally Protected Information	422	1.44	0.19	0.01	0.64	1.42	1.46
Perceived Organizational Use of Facebook	422	5.72	2.27	0.11	-0.12	5.50	5.93
Managing Privacy Settings	383	5.27	1.67	0.09	-0.97	5.10	5.44

Table A.2 Correlation Matrix for Study Variables Used

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Facebook Condition	422	4.61	2.27	1.00									
2. Facebook Use	422	1.50	0.50	0.23**	1.00								
3. Permission	422	1.50	0.50	-0.03	0.00	1.00							
4. Job Offer	422	1.53	0.50	0.87**	0.01	-0.03	1.00						
5. Procedural Justice	422	3.26	1.12	-0.24**	0.11*	-0.15**	-0.23**	1.00					
6. Distributive Justice	422	3.50	1.84	-0.70**	0.04	-0.04	-0.80**	0.36**	1.00				
7. Negative Actions	422	2.90	1.01	0.35**	-0.26**	0.14**	0.38**	-0.43**	-0.42**	1.00			
8. Federally Protected Information	422	1.44	0.19	-0.06	-0.02	0.05	-0.11*	-0.05	0.04	0.01	1.00		
9. Perceived Organizational Use of Facebook	422	5.72	2.27	0.03	-0.09	-0.10*	0.00	0.10*	0.04	-0.06	-0.06	1.00	
10. Managing Privacy Settings	383	5.27	1.67	-0.03	0.09	-0.06	-0.02	0.12*	0.05	-0.04	-0.07	0.00	1.00

Note. \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ .

Table A.3 Descriptive Statistics for Permission Adherence, Facebook Use, and Job Offer

	Yes Permission					
	Facebook Used			Facebook Not Used		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% CI	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% CI
Job Offer	3.81	0.15	[3.51, 4.11]	3.93	0.15	[3.64, 4.22]
No Job Offer	3.19	0.14	[2.92, 3.46]	2.92	0.14	[2.65, 3.19]
	No Permission					
	Facebook Used			Facebook Not Used		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% CI	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% CI
Job Offer	2.93	0.14	[2.64, 3.21]	3.51	0.15	[3.21, 3.80]
No Job Offer	2.67	0.15	[2.38, 2.96]	3.27	0.14	[3.00, 3.55]

*Note.* Used for hypotheses 1a and 2 for dependent variable procedural justice.

Table A.4 Descriptive Statistics for Permission, Facebook Use, and a Job Offer

	Permission					
	Facebook Used			Facebook Not Used		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% CI	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% CI
Job Offer	2.35	0.13	[2.09, 2.60]	2.28	0.12	[2.04, 2.52]
No Job Offer	3.30	0.12	[3.08, 3.53]	3.00	0.12	[2.77, 3.23]
	No Permission					
	Facebook Used			Facebook Not Used		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% CI	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% CI
Job Offer	3.01	0.12	[2.77, 3.25]	2.30	0.13	[2.06, 2.55]
No Job Offer	3.92	0.12	[3.68, 4.16]	2.92	0.12	[2.69, 3.15]

*Note.* Used for hypothesis 1b for dependent variable negative action

Table A.5 Descriptive Statistics for Permission Adherence, Facebook Use, and Job Offer

	Yes Permission					
	Facebook Used			Facebook Not Used		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% CI	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% CI
Job Offer	5.15	0.16	[4.83, 5.46]	5.29	0.15	[4.99, 5.60]
No Job Offer	2.18	0.14	[1.89, 2.46]	2.15	0.15	[1.86, 2.43]
	No Permission					
	Facebook Used			Facebook Not Used		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% CI	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% CI
Job Offer	4.66	0.15	[4.36, 4.96]	5.12	0.16	[4.81, 5.43]
No Job Offer	1.96	0.15	[1.66, 2.26]	2.11	0.15	[1.82, 2.40]

*Note.* Used for hypothesis 3 for dependent variable distributive justice.

Table A.6 Descriptive Statistics for Permission Adherence and Job Offer

	Permission			No Permission		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% CI	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% CI
Job Offer	5.22	0.11	[5.00, 5.44]	4.89	0.11	[4.68, 5.11]
No Job Offer	2.16	0.10	[1.96, 2.36]	2.04	0.11	[1.83, 2.25]

*Note.* Used for hypothesis 4 for dependent variable distributive justice.



Table A.7 Descriptive Statistics for the Eight Conditions

Condition	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	
					<i>Lower</i>	<i>Upper</i>
1	47	3.81	1.09	0.16	3.49	4.13
2	49	3.51	1.10	0.16	3.19	3.82
3	53	2.93	0.95	0.13	2.66	3.19
4	51	3.93	1.19	0.17	3.59	4.26
5	58	3.19	1.06	0.14	2.91	3.47
6	56	3.27	1.21	0.16	2.95	3.60
7	51	2.67	0.83	0.12	2.44	2.90
8	57	2.92	0.89	0.12	2.68	3.16

*Note.* Used for hypothesis 5a and 5b for dependent variable procedural justice.

Table A.8 Descriptive Statistics for the Eight Conditions

Condition	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% <i>CI</i>	
					<i>Lower</i>	<i>Upper</i>
1	47	2.35	0.88	0.13	2.09	2.60
2	49	2.30	0.82	0.12	2.07	2.54
3	53	3.01	1.12	0.15	2.70	3.32
4	51	2.28	0.90	0.13	2.02	2.53
5	58	3.30	0.79	0.10	3.09	3.51
6	56	2.92	0.83	0.11	2.69	3.14
7	51	3.92	0.71	0.10	3.72	4.12
8	57	3.00	0.90	0.12	2.76	3.24

*Note.* Used for hypothesis 5c and 5d for dependent variable negative actions.

Table A.9 Descriptive Statistics for Mediation Analysis

	<i>Coefficient</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>
IV to Mediators (a path)			
Procedural Justice	0.25	0.10	2.45*
Direct Effects of Mediators on DV (b path)			
PJF_Mean	-0.29	0.04	-7.45**
Total Effect of IV on DV (c path)			
Facebook	-0.52	0.09	-6.05**
Direct Effect of IV on DV (c-prime path)			
Facebook	-0.45	0.08	-5.50**
Partial Effect of Control Variables on DV			
JobOffer	0.64	0.08	7.62**
Permission	0.20	0.08	2.36*

*Note.* \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .001$ .

Table A.10 Descriptive Statistics for Negative Actions

1. File an oral or written complaint to the company

Condition	N	M	SD	SE	95% CI	
					Upper	Lower
1	44	1.82	1.13	0.17	1.48	2.16
2	47	1.79	1.20	0.17	1.44	2.14
3	51	3.24	1.69	0.24	2.76	3.71
4	47	1.94	1.34	0.20	1.54	2.33
5	58	3.36	1.70	0.22	2.91	3.81
6	56	2.71	1.74	0.23	2.25	3.18
7	51	4.27	1.73	0.24	3.79	4.76
8	55	2.65	1.64	0.22	2.21	3.10

2. Think about pursuing legal action

Condition	N	M	SD	SE	95% CI	
					Upper	Lower
1	44	1.64	0.97	0.15	1.34	1.93
2	47	1.49	0.80	0.12	1.25	1.73
3	51	2.45	1.49	0.21	2.03	2.87
4	47	1.72	0.16	1.12	1.40	2.05
5	58	2.31	1.38	0.18	1.95	2.67
6	56	1.82	1.22	0.16	1.49	2.15
7	51	3.55	1.75	0.24	3.06	4.04
8	55	2.07	1.50	0.20	1.67	2.48

3. Consult an attorney in order to file a lawsuit against the company

Condition	N	M	SD	SE	95% CI	
					Upper	Lower
1	44	1.50	0.82	0.12	1.25	1.75
2	47	1.45	0.72	0.10	1.24	1.66
3	51	2.31	1.57	0.22	1.87	2.75
4	47	1.57	0.99	0.15	1.28	1.87
5	58	2.03	1.35	0.18	1.68	2.39
6	56	1.73	1.14	0.15	1.43	2.04
7	51	3.27	1.72	0.24	2.79	3.76
8	55	1.95	1.46	0.20	1.55	2.34

Table A.10 – *Continued*

4. *Report the company to the appropriate authorities*

Condition	N	M	SD	SE	95% CI	
					Upper	Lower
1	44	1.59	0.87	0.13	1.33	1.86
2	47	1.60	1.01	0.15	1.30	1.89
3	51	2.41	1.56	0.22	1.97	2.85
4	47	1.77	1.15	0.17	1.43	2.10
5	58	2.12	1.38	0.18	1.76	2.48
6	56	2.05	1.44	0.19	1.67	2.44
7	51	3.29	1.74	0.24	2.81	3.78
8	55	2.34	1.59	0.21	1.81	2.67

5. *Write negative comments about the company on Facebook*

Condition	N	M	SD	SE	95% CI	
					Upper	Lower
1	44	1.52	0.93	0.14	1.24	1.80
2	47	1.57	1.02	0.15	1.28	1.87
3	51	1.90	1.25	0.18	1.55	2.25
4	47	1.57	1.04	0.15	1.27	1.88
5	58	1.93	1.31	0.17	1.59	2.28
6	56	1.98	1.17	0.16	1.67	2.29
7	51	2.14	1.47	0.21	1.72	2.55
8	55	1.51	0.90	0.12	1.27	1.75

6. *Form negative attitudes toward the company*

Condition	N	M	SD	SE	95% CI	
					Upper	Lower
1	44	3.25	1.56	0.23	2.78	3.72
2	47	3.19	1.33	0.19	2.80	3.58
3	51	3.78	1.60	0.22	3.33	4.24
4	47	2.94	1.65	0.24	2.45	3.42
5	58	5.07	1.01	0.13	4.80	5.33
6	56	4.50	1.32	0.18	4.15	4.85
7	51	5.08	1.04	0.15	4.79	5.37
8	55	4.60	1.44	0.19	4.21	4.99

Table A.10 – *Continued*

7. *Form negative attitudes toward Facebook*

Condition	N	M	SD	SE	95% CI	
					Upper	Lower
1	44	3.36	1.57	0.24	2.89	3.84
2	47	3.62	1.33	0.19	3.23	4.01
3	51	3.78	1.53	0.21	3.35	4.21
4	47	3.26	1.61	0.23	2.78	3.73
5	58	4.79	1.07	0.14	4.51	5.08
6	56	4.32	1.36	0.18	3.96	4.69
7	51	4.63	1.09	0.15	4.32	4.94
8	55	4.44	1.34	0.18	4.07	4.80

8. *Talk negatively about the company to others*

Condition	N	M	SD	SE	95% CI	
					Upper	Lower
1	44	2.89	1.54	0.23	2.42	3.36
2	47	2.94	1.33	0.19	2.55	3.33
3	51	3.59	1.65	0.23	3.12	4.05
4	47	2.91	1.61	0.24	2.44	3.39
5	58	4.83	1.09	0.14	4.54	5.12
6	56	4.32	1.29	0.17	3.97	4.67
7	51	5.22	0.94	0.13	4.95	5.48
8	55	4.29	1.38	0.19	3.92	4.66

9. *Do nothing because I could not care less*

Condition	N	M	SD	SE	95% CI	
					Upper	Lower
1	44	2.57	1.59	0.24	2.08	3.05
2	47	2.87	1.44	0.21	2.45	3.29
3	51	3.04	1.77	0.25	2.54	3.54
4	47	2.91	1.77	0.26	2.40	3.43
5	58	2.55	1.58	0.21	2.14	2.97
6	56	2.57	1.65	0.22	2.13	3.01
7	51	1.92	1.32	0.19	1.55	2.29
8	55	2.91	1.55	0.21	2.49	3.33

Table A.10 – Continued

10. Do nothing because I do not know my options

Condition	N	M	SD	SE	95% CI	
					Upper	Lower
1	44	2.07	1.19	0.18	1.71	2.43
2	47	2.02	1.11	0.16	1.69	2.35
3	51	2.29	1.49	0.21	1.88	2.71
4	47	2.11	1.30	0.19	1.75	2.51
5	58	2.12	1.40	0.18	1.75	2.49
6	56	2.86	1.78	0.24	2.38	3.33
7	51	1.86	1.08	0.15	1.56	2.17
8	55	2.45	1.40	0.19	2.08	2.83

11. Change my Facebook profile (e.g., privacy settings, information, etc.)

Condition	N	M	SD	SE	95% CI	
					Upper	Lower
1	44	3.93	1.77	0.27	3.39	4.47
2	47	3.45	1.90	0.28	2.89	4.00
3	51	4.11	1.94	0.27	3.57	4.66
4	47	3.13	2.00	0.29	2.54	3.71
5	58	4.52	1.75	0.23	4.06	4.98
6	56	2.91	2.03	0.27	2.37	3.45
7	51	4.49	1.77	0.25	3.99	4.99
8	55	3.36	1.88	0.25	2.86	3.87

12. Not reapply at a later time, if I was removed from the applicant pool

Condition	N	M	SD	SE	95% CI	
					Upper	Lower
1	44	3.34	1.82	0.27	2.79	3.89
2	47	3.21	1.63	0.24	2.73	3.69
3	51	3.67	1.65	0.23	3.20	4.13
4	47	2.85	1.69	0.25	2.35	3.35
5	58	3.26	1.66	0.22	2.82	3.70
6	56	2.80	1.72	0.23	2.34	3.26
7	51	3.82	1.76	0.25	3.33	4.32
8	55	3.38	1.74	0.23	2.91	3.85

Note. Scale is on a 6 point Likert scale where 1 = extremely unlikely to 6 = extremely likely. Red highlights indicate conditions where individuals are somewhat likely to likely to take part in the action.

APPENDIX B

JOB DESCRIPTION





## JOB DESCRIPTION

### TITLE

Google Associate

### NATURE OF WORK

Google will soon be opening up a brand new workplace in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Google is currently seeking 400 talented individuals who can share Google's commitment to creating search perfection and who want to have a great time doing it. Googlers thrive in small, focused teams and high-energy environments. They also believe in the ability of technology to change the world, and are as passionate about their lives as they are about their work. Google is searching for people with diverse skills and backgrounds to fill multiple positions including finance, marketing and communications, business operations and development, advertising, customer support, and more!

### MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- High school degree or equivalent; associate's or bachelor's degree is preferred
- Computer skills including Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint

### BENEFITS

At Google, we know that every employee has something important to say so we listen! Every employee is integral to our success, and our compensation packages reflect our appreciation toward our employees. We provide individually-tailored packages that are comprised of a competitive salary along with the opportunity to earn further financial bonuses and rewards. In addition, Google's unique work environment offers all Google employees free access to:

- Medical care
- First-class dining facilities
- Gyms
- Laundry rooms
- Massage rooms
- Haircuts
- Carwashes
- Dry cleaning
- Commuting buses
- Eco-friendly rental cars, sleeping pods, and more

### JOB OVERVIEW

Type: Full-time

Location: Dallas-Fort Worth area

Base Pay: \$48,445 annual

Required Travel: 20%

Relocation Covered: Yes

APPENDIX C

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Please mark the answer that you feel best represents you.

Name (researchers will not be able to assign research credit to those individuals who do not supply their name. This information will not be used for any analyses and will be deleted from datasets): \_\_\_\_\_

What is your age? \_\_\_\_

What is your gender?

1 = Male

2 = Female

What is your race/ethnicity (please mark ALL that apply)?

1 = American Indian/Alaska Native

2 = Asian

3 = Hawaiian Native/Pacific Islander

4 = Hispanic/Latino

5 = Black/African American

6 = White/Caucasian

7 = Other

What is your current educational status?

1 = Freshman

2 = Sophomore

3 = Junior

4 = Senior

5 = Graduate student

APPENDIX D

COLQUITT'S ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE SCALE

**Procedural Justice:**

The following items refer to the application process AND Facebook process used by Google to arrive at their hiring decision for Applicant X.

Based off of what you know from the case study, to what extent (each question was asked separately for the application process and the Facebook process):

1. Has Applicant X been able to express views and feelings during the application process (Facebook process)?
2. Has Applicant X been able to provide some influence over the hiring decision arrived at by the application process (Facebook process)?
3. Has the application process (Facebook process) been applied consistently across applicants?
4. Has the application process (Facebook process) been free of bias?
5. Has the application process (Facebook process) been based on accurate information?
6. Has Applicant X been able to challenge the hiring decision arrived at by the application process (Facebook process)?
7. Has the application process (Facebook process) upheld ethical and moral standards?

**Distributive Justice:**

The following items refer to applicant X's hiring outcome (i.e., job offer).

Based off of what you know from the case study, to what extent:

1. Does Applicant X's hiring outcome reflect the applicant's qualifications?
2. Is Applicant X's hiring outcome appropriate, given the applicant's qualifications?
3. Is Applicant X's hiring outcome justified, given the applicant's qualifications?

All items use a 6-point scale with anchors of 1 = to a small extent and 6 = to a large extent.

APPENDIX E

BEHAVIORAL REACTION QUESTIONNAIRE

Below are a number of actions that may or may not result from the given case study.

Using the rating scale below, how likely would YOU be to take the following actions as a result of the way the information was gathered from the APPLICATION PROCESS (FACEBOOK PROCESS) if YOU were the applicant in the case study?

1. \_\_\_ File an oral or written complaint to the company (N)
2. \_\_\_ Think about pursuing legal action (N)
3. \_\_\_ Consult an attorney in order to file a lawsuit against the company (N)
4. \_\_\_ Report the company to the appropriate authorities (N)
5. \_\_\_ Write negative comments about the company on Facebook (N)
6. \_\_\_ Form positive attitudes toward the company (P)
7. \_\_\_ Form positive attitudes toward Facebook (P)
8. \_\_\_ Talk positively about the company to others (P)
9. \_\_\_ Do nothing because I could not care less (NT)
10. \_\_\_ Do nothing because I do not know my options (NT)
11. \_\_\_ Change my Facebook profile (e.g., privacy settings, information, etc.) (NT)
12. \_\_\_ Reapply at a later time, if I was removed from the applicant pool (P)
13. \_\_\_ Contact the company and ask what information on my Facebook profile impacted the selection process (NT; only asked if Facebook was used)

Please select how likely YOU would be to behave in the following manner as a result of the way the information was gathered from the APPLICATION PROCESS (FACEBOOK PROCESS), if YOU were offered a position (only given if case study presents Applicant X with a job offer)

14. \_\_\_ Turn down the job (N)
15. \_\_\_ Steal from the company (N)
16. \_\_\_ Leave the company (N)
17. \_\_\_ Call in sick when I am not sick (N)
18. \_\_\_ Be late for work (N)
19. \_\_\_ Be committed to the organization (P)

All items use a 6-point scale with anchors of 1 = extremely unlikely and 6 = extremely likely.

APPENDIX F

FACEBOOK DISCLOSURE QUESTIONNAIRE



Please indicate below which of the following items you have revealed on your Facebook profile as well as who has access to the information.

- 1) Hometown
- 2) Race
- 3) Sexual orientation
- 4) Languages
- 5) Religion
- 6) Career goals
- 7) Pregnancy
- 8) College/University attended
- 9) Relationship status
- 10) Sex
- 11) National origin
- 12) Current City
- 13) Age
- 14) Body mass index (i.e., weight)
- 15) Disability
- 16) Contact information (e.g., e-mail or phone number)
- 17) Employment history
- 18) Political Views
- 19) Interests
- 20) Activities

Participants can choose among yes, no, or do not know. They may also choose among Everyone, Friends of Friends and Networks, Friends and Networks, Friends of Friends, Friends Only, Customized Contacts, Only Me, or Do not Know

APPENDIX G

PROTECTED DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

In order to ensure that individuals are protected from both intentional and unintentional discrimination in the selection process, hiring decisions must be made based on job related factors. By law, an organization cannot base hiring decisions on certain personal factors. These certain personal factors are protected by federal law and cannot be used by organizations as a basis for hiring decisions.

Please indicate below which of the following items are protected by federal law and cannot be used in the selection process as a basis for hiring decisions (underlined are protected).

- 1) Hometown
- 2) Race
- 3) Sexual orientation
- 4) Color
- 5) Religion
- 6) Career goals
- 7) Pregnancy
- 8) Highest degree
- 9) Relationship status
- 10) Sex
- 11) National origin
- 12) Emergency contact
- 13) Age
- 14) Body mass index (i.e., weight)
- 15) Disability
- 16) Contact information
- 17) Employment history
- 18) Equal Pay/Compensation
- 19) Previous job title
- 20) Sexual harassment

Participants can choose among 1 = Not Protected By Federal Law, 2 = I Do Not Know, or 3 = Protected By Federal Law

APPENDIX H

FACEBOOK QUESTIONNAIRE

Below are a number of questions regarding your use and views on Facebook. Please choose the number that best represents your use and views for each question.

1. What percentage of organizations do you think look at Facebook profiles in the selection process?

- 1 = 0-10%
- 2 = 10-20%
- 3 = 20-30%
- 4 = 30-40%
- 5 = 40-50%
- 6 = 50-60%
- 7 = 60-70%
- 8 = 70-80%
- 9 = 80-90%
- 10 = 90-100%

2. How fair do you think it is for organizations to base hiring decisions off of Facebook profiles when job applicants are qualified for the positions of interest?

1 = Extremely unfair to 6 = Extremely fair

3. Again, do you have a Facebook account?

- 1 = Yes
- 2 = No

If you answer 'yes' to question 3 then,

a. To what extent have you managed your Facebook privacy settings?

1 = I use the default settings to 6 = I implement strict privacy settings; 0 = I do not know

b. On average, how many days per week do you spend actively using Facebook?

0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

c. On average, how many hours per day do you spend actively using Facebook?

1 = 0 hour to 1/2 hour

2 = 1/2 hour to 1 hour

3 = 1 hour to 1 1/2 hours

4 = 1 1/2 hours to 2 hours

5 = 2 hours to 2 1/2 hours

6 = 2 1/2 hours to 3 hours

7 = 3 hours to 3 1/2 hours

8 = 3 1/2 hours to 4 hours

9 = 4 hours to 4 1/2 hours

10 = 4 1/2 hours to 5 hours

11 = If more than 5 hours, please specify how many hours per day you spend actively using Facebook

APPENDIX I

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the SOCIAL MEDIA AND SELECTION study.

During this study, you will be presented with a real case study that describes a situation involving a selection process implemented by Google that a job applicant underwent. In order to assist you in better understanding the case study and the situation that the applicant went through, you will first be shown the job description that initially attracted the applicant. Then, you will be shown an eight minute video that the applicant was required to watch. Throughout this study, you will be asked to complete a total of four (4) sections:

**SECTION ONE:** The first section will ask you to respond to a collection of demographic items.

**SECTION TWO:** The second section will expose you to the job description and the eight minute video.

**SECTION THREE:** The third section will ask you to read the actual case study which you may refer to at any time throughout the study.

**SECTION FOUR:** The fourth section will ask you to complete a series of questionnaires asking about your personal perceptions and beliefs as well as some items about Facebook.

The entire survey should take about 30 minutes to complete.

In order to begin the survey, simply click the “Next” button at the bottom of the screen.

APPENDIX J

CASE STUDY CONDITION 1



# Case Study: Utilizing Facebook in the Selection Process

8/14/2011



## Situation

Google recently opened up a brand new workplace in the Dallas-Fort Worth area and was looking to hire 400 employees.

## Application Process

The application process required interested individuals to:

- Submit a resume
- Participate in an interview
- Complete a series of questionnaires
- Watch a video clip of the organization

## Facebook Process

In addition applicants were asked, but not required, to:

- Provide written permission for a background check which involved examining the applicant's Facebook profile.

## Information Provided to Job Applicants

- All applicants had the choice to provide or not provide permission for Google to view their Facebook profile without risking their chances of getting the job.
- If at any point in time during the selection process applicants felt that the procedures were unfair (e.g., questionnaires were ambiguous or interview questions were inappropriate), they were provided contact information to dispute their issue with a Google representative.
- The application process and the information gathered was the same for every applicant.

## Applicant X's Situation

### Application Process

One particular individual, who will be referred to as Applicant X for reasons of privacy:

- Submitted a resume
- Completed the series of questionnaires
- Participated in an interview
- Watched the video

### Facebook Process

- Google was granted written permission to look at Applicant X's Facebook profile.
- Google representatives proceeded to examine Applicant X's Facebook profile.

### Qualifications

- Applicant X was qualified for the position.
- Applicant X had all of the knowledge skills, and abilities required.

### Result

- As a result of the information gathered from the application process and Applicant X's Facebook profile, Applicant X was offered a job.

APPENDIX K

CASE STUDY CONDITION 2

# Case Study: Utilizing Facebook in the Selection Process

8/14/2011



## Situation

Google recently opened up a brand new workplace in the Dallas-Fort Worth area and was looking to hire 400 employees.

## Application Process

The application process required interested individuals to:

- Submit a resume
- Participate in an interview
- Complete a series of questionnaires
- Watch a video clip of the organization

## Facebook Process

In addition applicants were asked, but not required, to:

- Provide written permission for a background check which involved examining the applicant's Facebook profile.

## Information Provided to Job Applicants

- All applicants had the choice to provide or not provide permission for Google to view their Facebook profile without risking their chances of getting the job.
- If at any point in time during the selection process applicants felt that the procedures were unfair (e.g., questionnaires were ambiguous or interview questions were inappropriate), they were provided contact information to dispute their issue with a Google representative.
- The application process and the information gathered was the same for every applicant.

## Applicant X's Situation

### Application Process

One particular individual, who will be referred to as Applicant X for reasons of privacy:

- Submitted a resume
- Completed the series of questionnaires
- Participated in an interview
- Watched the video

### Facebook Process

- Google was granted written permission to look at Applicant X's Facebook profile.
- Google representatives did not examine Applicant X's Facebook profile.

### Qualifications

- Applicant X was qualified for the position.
- Applicant X had all of the knowledge skills, and abilities required.

### Hiring Outcome

- As a result of the information gathered from the application process, Applicant X was offered a job.

APPENDIX L

CASE STUDY CONDITION 3

# Case Study: Utilizing Facebook in the Selection Process

8/14/2011



## Situation

Google recently opened up a brand new workplace in the Dallas-Fort Worth area and was looking to hire 400 employees.

## Application Process

The application process required interested individuals to:

- Submit a resume
- Participate in an interview
- Complete a series of questionnaires
- Watch a video clip of the organization

## Facebook Process

In addition applicants were asked, but not required, to:

- Provide written permission for a background check which involved examining the applicant's Facebook profile.

## Information Provided to Job Applicants

- All applicants had the choice to provide or not provide permission for Google to view their Facebook profile without risking their chances of getting the job.
- If at any point in time during the selection process applicants felt that the procedures were unfair (e.g., questionnaires were ambiguous or interview questions were inappropriate), they were provided contact information to dispute their issue with a Google representative.
- The application process and the information gathered was the same for every applicant.

## Applicant X's Situation

### Application Process

One particular individual, who will be referred to as Applicant X for reasons of privacy:

- Submitted a resume
- Completed the series of questionnaires
- Participated in an interview
- Watched the video

### Facebook Process

- Google was not granted written permission to look at Applicant X's Facebook profile.
- Google representatives proceeded to examine Applicant X's Facebook profile.

### Qualifications

- Applicant X was qualified for the position.
- Applicant X had all of the knowledge skills, and abilities required.

### Result

- As a result of the information gathered from the application process and Applicant X's Facebook profile, Applicant X was offered a job.



APPENDIX M

CASE STUDY CONDITION 4

# Case Study: Utilizing Facebook in the Selection Process

8/14/2011



## Situation

Google recently opened up a brand new workplace in the Dallas-Fort Worth area and was looking to hire 400 employees.

## Application Process

The application process required interested individuals to:

- Submit a resume
- Participate in an interview
- Complete a series of questionnaires
- Watch a video clip of the organization

## Facebook Process

In addition applicants were asked, but not required, to:

- Provide written permission for a background check which involved examining the applicant's Facebook profile.

## Information Provided to Job Applicants

- All applicants had the choice to provide or not provide permission for Google to view their Facebook profile without risking their chances of getting the job.
- If at any point in time during the selection process applicants felt that the procedures were unfair (e.g., questionnaires were ambiguous or interview questions were inappropriate), they were provided contact information to dispute their issue with a Google representative.
- The application process and the information gathered was the same for every applicant.

## Applicant X's Situation

### Application Process

One particular individual, who will be referred to as Applicant X for reasons of privacy:

- Submitted a resume
- Completed the series of questionnaires
- Participated in an interview
- Watched the video

### Facebook Process

- Google was not granted written permission to look at Applicant X's Facebook profile.
- Google representatives did not examine Applicant X's Facebook profile.

### Qualifications

- Applicant X was qualified for the position.
- Applicant X had all of the knowledge skills, and abilities required.

### Result

- As a result of the information gathered from the application process, Applicant X was offered a job.

APPENDIX N

CASE STUDY CONDITION 5

# Case Study: Utilizing Facebook in the Selection Process

8/14/2011



## Situation

Google recently opened up a brand new workplace in the Dallas-Fort Worth area and was looking to hire 400 employees.

## Application Process

The application process required interested individuals to:

- Submit a resume
- Participate in an interview
- Complete a series of questionnaires
- Watch a video clip of the organization

## Facebook Process

In addition applicants were asked, but not required, to:

- Provide written permission for a background check which involved examining the applicant's Facebook profile.

## Information Provided to Job Applicants

- All applicants had the choice to provide or not provide permission for Google to view their Facebook profile without risking their chances of getting the job.
- If at any point in time during the selection process applicants felt that the procedures were unfair (e.g., questionnaires were ambiguous or interview questions were inappropriate), they were provided contact information to dispute their issue with a Google representative.
- The application process and the information gathered was the same for every applicant.

## Applicant X's Situation

### Application Process

One particular individual, who will be referred to as Applicant X for reasons of privacy:

- Submitted a resume
- Completed the series of questionnaires
- Participated in an interview
- Watched the video

### Facebook Process

- Google was granted written permission to look at Applicant X's Facebook profile.
- Google representatives proceeded to examine Applicant X's Facebook profile.

### Qualifications

- Applicant X was qualified for the position.
- Applicant X had all of the knowledge skills, and abilities required.

### Hiring Outcome

- As a result of the information gathered from the application process and Applicant X's Facebook profile, Applicant X was not offered a job.

APPENDIX O

CASE STUDY CONDITION 6

# Case Study: Utilizing Facebook in the Selection Process

8/14/2011



## Situation

Google recently opened up a brand new workplace in the Dallas-Fort Worth area and was looking to hire 400 employees.

## Application Process

The application process required interested individuals to:

- Submit a resume
- Participate in an interview
- Complete a series of questionnaires
- Watch a video clip of the organization

## Facebook Process

In addition applicants were asked, but not required, to:

- Provide written permission for a background check which involved examining the applicant's Facebook profile.

## Information Provided to Job Applicants

- All applicants had the choice to provide or not provide permission for Google to view their Facebook profile without risking their chances of getting the job.
- If at any point in time during the selection process applicants felt that the procedures were unfair (e.g., questionnaires were ambiguous or interview questions were inappropriate), they were provided contact information to dispute their issue with a Google representative.
- The application process and the information gathered was the same for every applicant.



## Applicant X's Situation

### Application Process

One particular individual, who will be referred to as Applicant X for reasons of privacy:

- Submitted a resume
- Completed the series of questionnaires
- Participated in an interview
- Watched the video

### Facebook Process

- Google was granted written permission to look at Applicant X's Facebook profile.
- Google representatives did not examine Applicant X's Facebook profile.

### Qualifications

- Applicant X was qualified for the position.
- Applicant X had all of the knowledge skills, and abilities required.

### Hiring Outcome

- As a result of the information gathered from the application process, Applicant X was not offered a job.

APPENDIX P

CASE STUDY CONDITION 7

# Case Study: Utilizing Facebook in the Selection Process

8/14/2011



## Situation

Google recently opened up a brand new workplace in the Dallas-Fort Worth area and was looking to hire 400 employees.

## Application Process

The application process required interested individuals to:

- Submit a resume
- Participate in an interview
- Complete a series of questionnaires
- Watch a video clip of the organization

## Facebook Process

In addition applicants were asked, but not required, to:

- Provide written permission for a background check which involved examining the applicant's Facebook profile.

## Information Provided to Job Applicants

- All applicants had the choice to provide or not provide permission for Google to view their Facebook profile without risking their chances of getting the job.
- If at any point in time during the selection process applicants felt that the procedures were unfair (e.g., questionnaires were ambiguous or interview questions were inappropriate), they were provided contact information to dispute their issue with a Google representative.
- The application process and the information gathered was the same for every applicant.

## Applicant X's Situation

### Application Process

One particular individual, who will be referred to as Applicant X for reasons of privacy:

- Submitted a resume
- Completed the series of questionnaires
- Participated in an interview
- Watched the video

### Facebook Process

- Google was not granted written permission to look at Applicant X's Facebook profile.
- Google representatives proceeded to examine Applicant X's Facebook profile.

### Qualifications

- Applicant X was qualified for the position.
- Applicant X had all of the knowledge skills, and abilities required.

### Hiring Outcome

- As a result of the information gathered from the application process and Applicant X's Facebook profile, Applicant X was not offered a job.

APPENDIX Q

CASE STUDY CONDITION 8

# Case Study: Utilizing Facebook in the Selection Process

8/14/2011



## Situation

Google recently opened up a brand new workplace in the Dallas-Fort Worth area and was looking to hire 400 employees.

## Application Process

The application process required interested individuals to:

- Submit a resume
- Participate in an interview
- Complete a series of questionnaires
- Watch a video clip of the organization

## Facebook Process

In addition applicants were asked, but not required, to:

- Provide written permission for a background check which involved examining the applicant's Facebook profile.

## Information Provided to Job Applicants

- All applicants had the choice to provide or not provide permission for Google to view their Facebook profile without risking their chances of getting the job.
- If at any point in time during the selection process applicants felt that the procedures were unfair (e.g., questionnaires were ambiguous or interview questions were inappropriate), they were provided contact information to dispute their issue with a Google representative.
- The application process and the information gathered was the same for every applicant.

## Applicant X's Situation

### Application Process

One particular individual, who will be referred to as Applicant X for reasons of privacy:

- Submitted a resume
- Completed the series of questionnaires
- Participated in an interview
- Watched the video

### Facebook Process

- Google was not granted written permission to look at Applicant X's Facebook profile.
- Google representatives did not examine Applicant X's Facebook profile.

### Qualifications

- Applicant X was qualified for the position.
- Applicant X had all of the knowledge skills, and abilities required.

### Result

- As a result of the information gathered from the application process, Applicant X was not offered a job.

APPENDIX R

MANIPULATION CHECK



**Please answer the following questions regarding the case study.**

1. Did Applicant X provide Google written permission to look at Applicant X's Facebook profile?  
 Yes  
 No
  
2. Did Google examine Applicant X's Facebook profile?  
 Yes  
 No
  
3. Was Applicant X offered a job?  
 Yes  
 No

APPENDIX S  
DEBRIEFING FORM

This research was conducted as part of a study that aimed at examining how fair individuals feel it is for organizations to utilize social networking sites, specifically Facebook, in the selection process and the potential actions they may take as a result. Google did not open a new workplace in the Dallas-Fort Worth area and all of the materials in this study, excluding the video produced by the Travel Channel which was found in a public domain, were fabricated for the purposes of this study. Now that you are aware of the actual purposes for this research study, please let the researcher know if you have any questions or would like to change your consent to participate in this study. Thank you for your participation. Do you have any questions at this time?

If you have questions at a later time, you may contact:

Donielle Gustafson at [Donielle.Gustafson@mavs.uta.edu](mailto:Donielle.Gustafson@mavs.uta.edu)

Nicolette P. Lopez, Ph.D., at [nlopez@uta.edu](mailto:nlopez@uta.edu)

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Donielle A. Gustafson is originally from South Dakota and obtained a Bachelor's of Science degree in Psychology from the University of South Dakota (USD). After graduating from USD she did a year of service through the AmeriCorps' Volunteer In Service to America program. Ms. Gustafson then returned to school to obtain a Master's of Science degree in Industrial and Organizational (I/O) Psychology from the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA). Under the guidance of Dr. Nicolette Lopez, Ms. Gustafson completed her thesis at UTA which examined how fair individuals think it is for organizations to use Facebook in the selection process and what actions they may take as a result. Ms. Gustafson plans on pursuing a career in I/O Psychology and using her expertise to help organizations develop and implement workforce strategies that achieve client goals.