Perception of Job Seekers Towards Monster.Com as an Online Job Seeking Avenue

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Abstract:
To broaden the research on online consumer behavior, w.r.t. online employment search sources viz. commercial job web sites (job portals), this paper investigates the influence (relation) of identified factors on job seekers, interacting / transacting with Monster.com, as an online job seeking avenue. Through univariate, bivariate and multivariate analysis carried out through factor analysis by using IBM SPSS AMOS the paper identifies the relationships (strength and direction) among the variables under study. Results of the study may be useful for Monster.com and for that matter for any job portal to successfully deliver offerings in the market place, to appreciate and correct perceptions of job seekers interacting / transacting with Monster.com, to discover job seekers’ attitudes by understanding how they engage psychologically with the portal, how they acquire, evaluate and use job search information as well as job search experiences and finally, how job seekers make decisions to spend their available resources (time, money, effort) while employing the Monster.com as a job seeking avenue.

Keywords: Job portal, Job seeker’s attitude, Job seeker’s usage behavior, Factors influencing job seekers’ attitude and usage behavior.

Introduction
Recruiting via internet primarily occurs through corporate websites and commercial websites. These commercial job websites are popularly known as job portals. Job portals, also known as placement portals, are primarily an online destination operated by a legal entity, where job opportunities are listed with the aim to connect jobseekers to those who seek them. These sites act as a clearing-house for potential job applicants to search across organizations for positions appropriate to their qualifications and that meet their needs. It facilitates just-in-time hiring by letting the recruiters track the individual candidate and by narrowing job search for job seekers.

Introduced in 1993, job portals gained ground in India in 1997. The industry expanded further with emergence of MonsterIndia.com in 2001. Since then job portals have revolutionized the concept of recruitment in India. Today, Monster.com is one of the largest employment websites in the world, owned and operated by Monster Worldwide, Inc. It is one of the 20 most visited websites out of 100 million worldwide (ComScore Media Metrics). Monster has over a million job postings at any time and has a database of about 200 million job seekers. The company has approximately 5,000 employees in 40 countries. Monster provides the widest and most sophisticated job seeking, career management, recruitment and talent management capabilities globally.
Monster India, India’s leading online career and recruitment resource with its cutting edge technology provides relevant profiles to employers and relevant jobs to jobseekers across industry verticals, experience levels and geographies. Headquartered in Hyderabad, the company has presence in 11 other cities of India viz., Mumbai, Delhi, Bangalore, Chennai, Pune, Kolkata, Ahmadabad, Baroda, Chandigarh, Jaipur and Cochin.

Monster India by partnering with DishTV has converged the internet and TV medium and has made job services accessible to TV viewers across all cities. The initiative known as ‘Monsterjobs Active’ aims to bridge the unmet need of the audience for whom access to the internet is limited. The Indian Air Force Placement Cell (IAFPC) selected Monster India for a collaboration to provide a robust platform to assist retired and shortly retiring air warriors, to seek suitable second career opportunities in the corporate world. Monster also initiated ‘Rozgarduniya.com’ - a job portal exclusively for jobseekers in rural India, in an alliance with ITC’s e-Choupal to enable employers in corporate India to connect with rural talent, thus removing the traditional barriers they face in the process. Monster.com is one of the most popular, established and explored recruitment platform that provides hiring-related services to corporate / recruiters, placement agencies and to job seekers in India and overseas. As job portal, it has been adopted by diverse demographic groups. Every conceivable niche (geographic, regional, professional etc.) today gets represented by Monster.com. It has been embraced by both job seekers and employers alike through multi-form interactions.

Over a period of time, Monster.com has transformed from a simple search-and-apply site to a full-fledged career hub. Acquisitions, alliances and marketing have formed parts of its strategy. Partners, technology and expertise are regularly updated at Monster.com.

At Monster.com technology, being the major influencer for job seeking is abundant, free and readily available. Monster.com offers filtering tools, screening tools and extensively uses number of software in the form of applicant tracking system, talent management system, e-recruitment system, candidate management systems and job posting system. These enterprise wide software solutions are addressing automation of recruitment process and are covering the entire end-to-end lifecycle of the talent pool. Each piece of new technology is finding its way into Monster.com. Specific tools for specific audience are emerging at Monster.com with journey of web tools from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0 to Web 3.0.

Monster.com is bringing in varied business strategies to define audience, to reach the audience and to build relationships with the audience. It helps jobseekers to develop networks through blogging, text messaging, internet videos and HR email marketing by getting into the social-networking game, by rolling out solutions on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter and by building "vertical communities" across different functions and professions.

Monster.com is adding enormous value to Indian audience by automating the job posting process, by reducing administrative drudgery, by eliminating subjective monitoring, by providing management tools equipped with clear performance metrics and by offering real time, customized services to its users by constantly reviewing technical and marketing capabilities.
Need for study

- Majority of the prior studies related to e-recruitment were found aiming mainly at corporate websites as mode of e-recruitment (Cober R.T., Brown D.J. & Levy P.E., 2004; Birgelen M.J.H. Van & Wetzels M.G.M., 2008; Lee I., Dehkordi-vakil F. & Kaul T., 2008 and Singh L. & Narang L., 2008). Very few studies attempted to study commercial job portals (Keim T., 2004; Aurélie G. & Fallery B., 2008), that too in Indian context (Kar A. & Bhattacharya S., 2009). Hence, the present study proposed to explore an Indian commercial job site, as an online job seeking avenue; where the empirical research was found considerably lagging behind practice.

- Minimal prior literature (Case Analysis of Naukri.com by Sahay A., 2005, Company Profile of Monster Worldwide, Inc. Middle East, by Datamonitor, survey reports by Tusing P., 2009; Page C. L., 2010; Hudson 20-20 Series; Taylor C., 201, blog writings by Saumya Bhattacharya - Business Today and couple of university / institute level student project reports) was found attempting to explore individual or specific commercial job site/s (e.g. Monster.com).

- Although, like other job portals, Monster.com might be dynamically tracking data generated at the site, and coming up with trends and patterns, the utility and the motivations perceived by job seekers to use the portal have not been addressed in a scientific manner.

Research Question: How do job seekers at Monster.com think, perceive, act and react and how do they (job seekers) identify effectiveness in Monster.com with emerging technology and trends?

Objectives of the Study: In order to know how Monster.com is perceived by job seekers as online job seeking avenue following research objectives were set for the study.

1. To study influence of identified factors, viz. job seeker’s product knowledge, job seeker’s technology orientation, job seeker’s internet specific innovativeness, job seeker’s electronic word of mouth, price, job seeker’s perceived risk and job seeker’s perceived value on job seekers interaction / transaction with Monster.com.
2. To study the influence of various demographic parameters (age, gender, income, profession, length of service and job location) on job seekers interaction / transaction with Monster.com.

Methodology

The present study adopted a mixed method research approach by identifying positivist, quantitative, descriptive, cross sectional, aspects and by giving thoughtful rationale for each choice. A mix of different research approaches offered the advantages of triangulation. The key concepts were operationalized, scope for the study was outlined along with identifying conceptual population.

The conceptual scope for the study was limited to the identified job portal i.e. Monster.com, being the most popular, established and explored job portal in India. Further regarding consumers, the scope was restricted to job seekers who seek job through job portal/s (job seekers of Monster.com) whereas recruiters were ignored. The geographic scope of the study was restricted to Pune, located in the state of Maharashtra, India.

A structured questionnaire as primary data collection instrument was deployed to study the respondents. The questionnaire was a set
of 42 close ended questions which was self-administered. The response options were exhaustive, mutually exclusive and were coded. Funneling approach was pursued to arrange the questions in logically sequential order. Numerical values were assigned to response categories of each question.

After designing and constructing the instrument by using suitable measurements, a pilot study was carried out in order to test the adequacy, validity and reliability of the research instrument. Multi-item scales were used to measure the constructs investigated in this study. The internal consistency reliability was carried out across items, by measuring Cronbach’s Alpha value. All the scales were found acceptable for the study.

385 respondents were studied by adopting simple random probability sampling design (Statistical formulae method - margin of error was set at 5% and the confidence level was set at 95%). Simple random sampling ensured the unbiased choice of subjects and offered freedom from classification error. By removing both systematic and sampling bias, simple random sampling method improved the chance of creating a representative sample.

The research instrument was administered by following certain process. Referring to geographic scope of the study, 11 constituencies of Pune metropolitan area along with proportionate constituency wise population as well as number of households were calculated by drawing inferences from census data (2011 census). As significant difference was not found in approximate population and / or number of households in each constituency, a fixed sampling quota of 35 households (sampling units) leading to 35 respondents from each constituency was decided to achieve, leading to targeted sample of 385.

For each assembly constituency 7 starting points were identified randomly to cover the entire geographic area of the constituency. 5 households from each starting point in each constituency were selected using the “Right hand Rule” selection methodology and sampling interval. For convenience of identifying and locating the households, Google maps territorial views, satellite views, google maps lookup (http://ctrlq.org/maps/address/), Google Earth Plus, in situations Google Earth Pro (an application) and www.distancesfrom.com were used extensively.

In case of more than one eligible respondent at a specific household, the selection was carried out by summing up the digits of birth date for each eligible respondent. The respondent with highest sum of birth date was selected as respondent to be interviewed. In order to address the issues of informed consent, consistency, trustworthiness, credibility and deviant case analysis the researcher himself worked as the only investigator for the study and carried out entire survey by following the procedure stated. The field work validation required was minimal.

SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) release 21.0 was used for statistical analysis and data management, being comprehensive and widely used solution in social sciences. After descriptive analysis the tools of inferential statistics were applied to draw inferences on population parameters based on sample.

Multivariate analysis was carried out through factor analysis. Factor analysis was carried out at two levels i.e. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). After obtaining construct validity through exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis was
carried out by using IBM SPSS AMOS to find out the relationships among the variables under study.

Findings

Findings related to objective 1 - Influence of identified factors on job seekers interaction / transaction with Monster.com.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Seeker’s Attitude towards Monster.com</td>
<td>Cramer</td>
<td>$V = .398$</td>
<td>Very Strong</td>
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</table>

Job Seeker’s Attitude towards Monster.com was conceptualized as a lasting general evaluation (favorable / unfavorable) of a job seeker towards Monster.com as an online job seeking avenue. It is the extent to which a job applicant likes the portal and considers using it to be a good idea.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Seeker’s Product Class Knowledge</td>
<td>Cramer</td>
<td>$V = .447$</td>
<td>Extremely Strong</td>
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Product class knowledge was conceptualized as job seeker’s perceived familiarity, level of expertise, experience and self-assessed level of understanding of job portals in general.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Seeker’s i’net specific Innovativeness</td>
<td>Cramer</td>
<td>$V = .453$</td>
<td>Extremely Strong</td>
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</table>

Product form knowledge was conceptualized as knowledge specifically related to job portal services and offerings which is current, more accurate, stored in individual’s long-term memory, based largely on cognitive learning, coupled with credible experience and is more relevant to task ability. Advice, consultation and counseling services and research services offered by Monster.com were found slightly more important to job seekers.

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<tr>
<td>Job Seeker’s Tech. Orientation</td>
<td>Cramer</td>
<td>$V = .401$</td>
<td>Very Strong</td>
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Technology orientation was operationalized as an application of scientific knowledge (methods, systems, tools, techniques and devices) by job seekers along with capabilities given by the application of knowledge such as core competencies, information fluency, communication and collaboration, leading to appropriate behaviors for continuous superior performance through creative and critical thinking, problem solving, decision making and technology operations.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Seeker’s Product Form Knowledge</td>
<td>Cramer</td>
<td>$V = .419$</td>
<td>Extremely Strong</td>
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</table>
Internet specific innovativeness was operationalized as the willingness, receptiveness or tendency of job seeker to try, experience and adopt new ideas, products, services, brands and practices rather than remain with previous choices, systems and usage patterns. It includes job seeker’s creativity (lateral or out-of-the-box thinking), responsiveness, flexibility, certain cognitive abilities, diverse experience, and open-mindedness (a willingness to suspend assumptions) to use job portals as an online job seeking avenue. It also includes job seeker’s ability to manage risk, self-reliance, active problem solving, material resources and personal characteristics while interacting / transacting with the portal.

Perceived value was operationalized as job seeker’s overall assessment of the utility and the quality of the services offered by job portals, and the trust and control over interaction / transactions related to job portals considering what is received (benefits) and what is given (price). It is observed as a job seeker’s subjective perception or the trade-off between multiple benefits and sacrifices related to task completion (specific online use situation) in form of opinion, perception or mental estimation.

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<tr>
<td>Job Seeker’s Electronic word of mouth - EWoM</td>
<td>Cramer</td>
<td>V = .378</td>
<td>Very Strong</td>
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</table>

EWoM was operationalized as an interpersonal communication (positive or negative conversations with friends and advice from independent experts) about an organization as an employer, or about specific jobs, made available to a multitude of people and institutions via internet (email, social networking sites, search engines) and / or through specific modes of online communication (blogs, forums, chat-rooms, virtual communities, newsgroups, online reviews and discussion boards).

Price was operationalized as the amount job seeker spends for the products or services offered by Monster.com to obtain desired benefits (outcomes).

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Seeker’s Price Sensitivity</td>
<td>Cramer</td>
<td>V = .335</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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</table>

Perceived risk was operationalized as job seeker’s individual level of uncertainty or subjective belief about potentially negative consequences or an expectation of loss regarding the outcome and / or the process of outcome while interacting / transacting with job portals through unauthorized collection, improper dissemination and misuse of information.

Job seekers representing Monster.Com were found perceiving more performance risks and technology risks. Social risks and source risks were comparatively less perceived by job seekers of Monster.Com.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Seeker’s Perceived Risk</td>
<td>Cramer</td>
<td>V = .474</td>
<td>Extremely Strong</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Seeker’s Perceived Value</td>
<td>Cramer</td>
<td>V = .421</td>
<td>Extremely Strong</td>
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</table>
Findings related to objective 2 - Influence of various demographic factors on job seekers interaction / transaction with Monster.com.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Factor</th>
<th>Relation Found</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job seeker’s primary profession</td>
<td>Moderate Relation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job seeker’s Age</td>
<td>Weak Relation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job seekers’ gender</td>
<td>No Relation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job seekers’ total work experience in full time employment</td>
<td>Weak Relation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job seekers’ highest formal education</td>
<td>Weak Relation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job seekers’ gross annual personal income</td>
<td>Weak Relation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other findings stating how job seekers at Monster.com think, perceive, act and react and how they (job seeker) identify effectiveness in Monster.com

- Job seekers were found to be well aware of Monster.com through all identified avenues like online advertisement, television advertisement, newspaper advertisement, referral by friend / family member and consultants.
- Very weak relation was found between job seekers interacting / transacting with Monster.com and they (job seekers) getting job through the portal. Out of studied respondents, 48.4% job seekers got job through Monster.com in the past.
- Very weak relation was found between job seekers interacting / transacting with Monster.com and their weekly usage of the portal. Job seekers representing Monster.com were found spending 5 to 30 minutes weekly with the portal.
- Very weak relation was found between job seekers interacting / transacting with Monster.com and their (job seekers’) expected benefits from the portal. Job seekers interacting / transacting with Monster.com were found expecting “change in existing job” the most, followed by “First time job seeking” and “Career seeking” from the portal. Benefits viz. “Change in location”, “Change in Industry” and “Social networking” were found less expected by the job seekers interacting / transacting with Monster.com.
- About 70% respondents found Monster.com moderately useful online job seeking avenue. About 39% respondents were found seeking new jobs actively with Monster.com. About 11% job seekers were found seeking job passively with Monster.com.
- Very weak relation was found between job seekers interacting / transacting with Monster.com and they (job seekers) seeking change in industry / sector / function. 17.6% job seekers were found interacting / transacting with Monster.com to seek change in industry / sector.
- Very weak relation was also found between job seekers interacting / transacting with Monster.com and they (job seekers) seeking different profession/s. About 1/7th (14.2%) job seekers were found interacting / transacting with Monster.com to seek different profession/s.
- Very weak relation was found between job seekers interacting / transacting with Monster.com and they (job seekers) looking to change job location. About 1/4th (26.8%) job seekers were found interacting / transacting with Monster.com to relocate in India itself whereas 1/7th job seekers (15%) were found transacting with Monster.com to relocate abroad.
- Regarding types of job seekers, 38.2% job seekers with Monster.com were found as “High Maintenance job seekers” (Looking for Senior, leadership position), 44.6% job seekers were found as “Habitual job seekers” (Work is...
important and not the employer brand or culture) whereas 17.2% job seekers were found as “Indifferent job seekers” (Looking for highest wages irrespective of employer brand.)

- No relation was found between job seekers interacting / transacting with Monster.com and job seekers subscribing for different types of services. With Monster.com 93.7% job seekers were found subscribing for free services, 23.4% job seekers were found subscribing for trial services, 11.8% job seekers were found subscribing for discounted services whereas mere 8.4% job seekers were found subscribing for chargeable services.

- Very weak relation was found between job seekers interacting / transacting with Monster.com and job seekers posting comments about Monster.com, through different modes of EWOM. No relation was found between job seekers interacting / transacting with Monster.com and job seekers seeking feedback about Monster.com through different modes of EWoM.

Contributions

- The study, by establishing relation among identified factors, attempted to study the utility and motivations perceived by job seekers to use job portals in a scientific manner. The study identifies individual differences among job seekers by demographics. The study provides finer insights into job seeker’s perceptions.

- The study can be useful to Monster.com to gain competitive advantage by deciding upon marketing strategy, carrying out marketing planning, deepening marketing reach, defining target market, making appropriate promotion appeals, setting up controls and by fine tuning their approach to resonate with a particular job seeker. It can help to understand how job seekers think, act and react, by seeing where their pain is and how emerging technology and trends can address the issues. The study can also help Monster.com to improve upon its communication with job seekers and can guide the portal to implement required risk reduction strategies by identifying different types of perceived risks.

Conclusion

The study broadened the research on online consumer behavior, by extending the research to online employment search sources specifically commercial job web sites (job portals). The research investigated the influence (relation) of identified factors on job seekers, interacting / transacting with Monster.com, as online job seeking avenue. The study revealed several important insights that have theoretical and practical implications for the researchers as well as for the practitioners.
References


