

# A STUDY ON ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF LINKEDIN AS A JOB SEARCH AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT PLATFORM FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO BUSINESS SCHOOLS OF COIMBATORE SOUTH – ZONE

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## ABSTRACT:

This study evaluates the effectiveness of LinkedIn as a job search and career development platform for students, with a focus on business schools in the Coimbatore South Zone. As traditional job search methods are increasingly replaced by digital tools, LinkedIn has emerged as a leading professional networking platform, offering students opportunities to connect with industry professionals, explore career paths, and enhance their skills. The research examines LinkedIn's features, such as job postings, networking tools, and skill endorsements, to assess their impact on students' career readiness and job search outcomes. It also explores the challenges students face in utilizing LinkedIn effectively. By analyzing LinkedIn's role in professional development, this study aims to provide insights for students, educators, and career advisors on optimizing the platform for career success. The findings highlight LinkedIn's potential as a transformative tool for students transitioning from academic settings to the workforce, while also addressing its limitations and areas for improvement.

**Keywords:** LinkedIn Effectiveness, Job Search Platform, Career Development for Students, Professional Networking, Skill Enhancement, Student Career Growth, Networking Opportunities, Job Market Competitiveness, Skill Endorsements, Career Exploration Tools.

## INTRODUCTION:

The digital revolution has transformed the way individuals search for jobs and develop their careers, with online platforms like LinkedIn playing a pivotal role in this shift. LinkedIn, a leading professional networking platform, has become an essential tool for students, offering opportunities to connect with industry professionals, explore career paths, and enhance their skills. This study focuses on assessing the effectiveness of LinkedIn as a job search and career development platform, particularly for students from business schools in the Coimbatore South Zone. By examining LinkedIn's features—such as job postings, networking tools, and skill endorsements—the research highlights its potential to bridge the gap between academic settings and professional life. Additionally, the study explores the challenges students face in leveraging LinkedIn effectively, providing valuable insights for students, educators, and career advisors. As the job market grows increasingly competitive, understanding how to optimize LinkedIn's capabilities is crucial for students aiming to build a strong professional presence and achieve career success.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To determine the effectiveness of LinkedIn's features (e.g., job postings, networking tools, and skill endorsements) in facilitating job opportunities for students.
2. To assess the role of LinkedIn in enhancing students' career readiness, including skills acquisition and career exploration.
3. To evaluate how frequently students utilize LinkedIn for job search and professional development activities.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This research examines LinkedIn's effectiveness in supporting students' job searches, career skill development, and professional networking. Despite its popularity, there is limited understanding of how LinkedIn's features, such as job postings, networking tools, and skill endorsements, impact students' career outcomes. The study also explores the challenges students face when using LinkedIn for career advancement. By evaluating LinkedIn's strengths and limitations, the research aims to provide actionable insights for students, educators, and career advisors. The findings will help optimize LinkedIn's use for career success, bridging the gap between its potential and actual effectiveness in supporting students' professional growth.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURES

**Lestari et al. (2024)** provide a timely and relevant exploration of LinkedIn's role in career planning for Generation Z in Indonesia. By situating their study within the broader literature on digital career planning, generational differences, and regional contexts, the authors offer valuable insights into how global platforms are adapted to local needs. Their work underscores the importance of understanding cultural and economic dynamics in the study of career development, particularly in the digital age. **Daniels et al. (2023)** builds on existing research by examining the specific blunders students make on LinkedIn and their consequences, using a mixed-method approach to provide a comprehensive analysis. This study not only advances our understanding of LinkedIn use among college students but also offers practical recommendations for improving students' online professional presence. **Ganapathy and Deepak (2023)** titled "A study on reskilling and networking on LinkedIn on employee recruitment success and career advancement" explores the intersection of professional networking, reskilling, and their impact on recruitment success and career progression. The research was presented at the International Conference on Economics, Business, and Sustainability, indicating its relevance to contemporary discussions on workforce development and digital platforms in the professional sphere. **Pena, Curado, and Oliveira (2022)** titled "The contribution of LinkedIn use to career outcome expectations" published in the Journal of Business Research explores the role of LinkedIn, a professional social networking platform, in shaping individuals' career outcome expectations. Below is an elaborate review of the literature that contextualizes this study within the broader field of research on social networking, career development, and technology-mediated professional interactions.

**Badoer, Hollings, and Chester (2021)** titled "Professional networking for undergraduate students: A scaffolded approach" published in the Journal of Further and Higher Education explores the importance of professional networking for undergraduate students and proposes a scaffolded approach to help students develop these skills. **Alim and AlShourbaji (2020)** explores the role of Facebook in the professional lives of university students, particularly focusing on how students use the platform for job searching. It investigates the activities and behaviors of university students on Facebook in relation to seeking employment opportunities. The study draws upon the growing integration of social media platforms, particularly Facebook, in academic and professional spheres. **N., Dhir, A., Tandon, A., Kaur, P., & Islam, J. U. (2020)** conducted a systematic literature review titled "The influence of online professional social media in human resource management: A systematic literature review", published in Technology in Society. The study explores the role and impact of online professional social media (OPSM) platforms, such as LinkedIn, in the domain of human resource management (HRM).

## RESEARCH DESIGN

The study adopts a **descriptive research design** to provide a detailed understanding of how students use LinkedIn for job searches and career development. It also incorporates an **analytical approach** to assess the effectiveness of LinkedIn's features and identify challenges faced by students.

## DATA COLLECTION

The information relevant for the study was drawn from secondary data, which alone was not sufficient. Primary data was collected through survey method using questionnaire to conduct the study successfully. A questionnaire was designed for this purpose.

- **Primary Data Collection:** Surveys, interviews, and focus groups with students.
- **Secondary Data Collection:** Review existing literature on LinkedIn's role in job searching and career development.

**TOOLS USED FOR STUDY:** Percentage Analysis, Chi-Square Test Analysis, Correlation Analysis  
**DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

**TABLE SHOWS THE COLLEGE NAMES**

| College Name                        | Frequency  | Percent      |
|-------------------------------------|------------|--------------|
| GRD School of Management Studies    | 60         | 13.3         |
| Jansons School of Business          | 90         | 20.0         |
| PSG Institute of Management         | 180        | 40.0         |
| RVS Institute of Management Studies | 120        | 26.7         |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>450</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

**INTERPRETATION:**

The data shows the distribution of 450 students across four management colleges. PSG Institute of Management has the highest representation with 180 students (40.0%), followed by RVS Institute of Management Studies with 120 students (26.7%), Jansons School of Business with 90 students (20.0%), and GRD School of Management Studies with the lowest representation at 60 students (13.3%). This indicates PSG has the largest share, while GRD has the smallest, possibly due to differences in enrollment capacity, popularity, or accessibility.

**TABLE SHOWS THE MOST HELPFUL FEATURE FOR JOB SEARCH**

| Feature  | Frequency  | Percent      |
|--|------------|--------------|
| Job postings                                   | 102        | 22.7         |
| LinkedIn Learning courses                      | 67         | 14.9         |
| Networking tools (connections, groups, InMail) | 168        | 37.3         |
| Skill endorsements                             | 113        | 25.1         |
| <b>Total</b>                                   | <b>450</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

**INTERPRETATION:**

The data shows how 450 individuals use LinkedIn features. Networking tools (connections, groups, InMail) are the most used, with 168 individuals (37.3%), followed by Skill endorsements (113 individuals, 25.1%) and Job postings (102 individuals, 22.7%). LinkedIn Learning courses are the least used, with 67 individuals (14.9%). This indicates networking is the most valued feature, while skill development through LinkedIn Learning is less prioritized compared to networking, job searching, and peer validation.

**TABLE SHOWS USAGE OF LINKEDIN TO EXPLORE THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT**

| Usage of LinkedIn | Frequency  | Percent      |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|
| Frequently        | 135        | 30.0         |
| Never             | 29         | 6.4          |
| Occasionally      | 180        | 40.0         |
| Rarely            | 106        | 23.6         |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>450</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

**INTERPRETATION:**

The data shows that among 450 individuals, 40% engage occasionally and 30% frequently, indicating most are somewhat active in the activity. However, 23.6% participate rarely, and 6.4% never engage, suggesting infrequent involvement for a significant portion. The low percentage of non-participants reflects general awareness and some level of engagement among the majority.

**TABLE SHOWS THE COMPARISON BETWEEN THE COLLEGE NAME AND ACQUIRE RELEVANT SKILLS TO THE CAREER GOALS THROUGH LINKEDIN**

**Null Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>):** There is no significant association between the variables.

**Alternative Hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>):** There is a significant association between the variables.

| College Name                        | LinkedIn helps you discover and acquire skills relevant to the career goals |             |                  |                  |              | Total      |
|-------------------------------------|---|-------------|------------------|------------------|--------------|------------|
|                                     | Neutral   | Not Helpful | Not Very Helpful | Somewhat Helpful | Very Helpful |            |
| GRD School of Management Studies    | 16  | 3           | 13               | 16               | 12           | 60         |
| Jansons School of Business          | 23  | 6           | 12               | 30               | 19           | 90         |
| PSG Institute of Management         | 51  | 9           | 22               | 66               | 32           | 180        |
| RVS Institute of Management Studies | 24  | 7           | 8                | 55               | 26           | 120        |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>114</b>  | <b>25</b>   | <b>55</b>        | <b>167</b>       | <b>89</b>    | <b>450</b> |

| Chi-Square Tests   |                     |    |                                   |
|--------------------|---------------------|----|-----------------------------------|
|                    | Value               | df | Asymptotic Significance (2-sided) |
| Pearson Chi-Square | 15.123 <sup>a</sup> | 12 | .235                              |
| Likelihood Ratio   | 15.010              | 12 | .241                              |
| N of Valid Cases   | 450                 |    |                                   |

a. 1 cells (5.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.33

### INTERPRETATION

The Pearson Chi-Square value is 15.123, with 12 degrees of freedom and an asymptotic significance (p-value) of 0.235. Since the p-value (0.235) is greater than the typical alpha level of 0.05, you fail to reject the null hypothesis. This indicates that there is no statistically significant association between the variables at the 5% significance level. Fail to reject the null hypothesis: There is no significant association between the variables.

### TABLE SHOWS THE COMPARISON BETWEEN GENDER AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT THROUGH LINKEDIN

**Null hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>):** It states that there is no significant correlation between gender and the frequency of using LinkedIn to explore career development, meaning gender does not influence how often individuals use LinkedIn for this purpose.

**Alternative hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>):** It suggests that there is a significant correlation between gender and the frequency of using LinkedIn to explore career development, implying that gender plays a role in determining how frequently individuals engage with this feature for career-related activities.

| Descriptive Statistics  |      |                |     |
|---|------|----------------|-----|
|   | Mean | Std. Deviation | N   |
| Gender  | 1.45 | .498           | 450 |
| How often do you use LinkedIn to explore your career development? | 2.06 | .889           | 450 |

| Correlations  |                     |        |   |
|---|---------------------|--------|---|
|   |                     | Gender | How often do you use LinkedIn to explore your career development? |
| Gender  | Pearson Correlation | 1      | .090  |
|   | Sig. (2-tailed)     |        | .055  |
|   | N                   | 450    | 450   |
| How often do you use LinkedIn to explore your career development? | Pearson Correlation | .090   | 1   |
|   | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .055   |   |
|   | N                   | 450    | 450   |

### INTERPRETATION

The correlation analysis shows a weak positive correlation (0.090) between gender and the frequency of using LinkedIn to explore career development. However, the p-value (0.055) is greater than the typical significance level of 0.05, indicating that the correlation is not statistically significant. This means that gender does not have a meaningful influence on how often individuals use LinkedIn for career development purposes. Therefore, we fail to reject the null hypothesis, confirming that gender is not a significant factor in the usage of LinkedIn for career exploration.

### FINDINGS

1. PSG Institute of Management has the highest representation (40%), while GRD School of Management Studies has the lowest (13.3%).
2. Networking tools are the most used (37.3%), while LinkedIn Learning is the least used (14.9%).
3. The majority of individuals (70%) engage occasionally or frequently in the activity, while 23.6% participate rarely and 6.4% never engage, indicating widespread awareness but varying levels of involvement.

4. There is no statistically significant association between the variables at the 5% significance level. Fail to reject the null hypothesis. The data does not provide sufficient evidence to conclude that the variables are associated.

5. A weak positive correlation (0.090) suggests gender does not significantly influence the frequency of using LinkedIn for career development. The null hypothesis is retained, confirming gender is not a significant factor.

## SUGGESTIONS

LinkedIn can enhance user experience by improving job application success with resume tools, interview guides, and better job matching algorithms. Boosting LinkedIn Learning through free trials, discounts, and success stories can increase engagement. Networking tools should leverage AI matchmaking, virtual events, and industry-specific groups, while expanding niche job listings and hosting virtual career fairs can address opportunity gaps. Promoting gender-neutral campaigns, offering affordable premium features, and simplifying navigation will improve accessibility and usability. Regular feedback surveys, recruiter connection features, and Q&A sessions can bridge gaps between users and recruiters. These strategies will strengthen LinkedIn's role as a leading platform for networking, job searching, and career growth.

## CONCLUSION

The study highlights LinkedIn's role in aiding job opportunities and career readiness for students, with networking tools being the most used feature. However, challenges like limited job listings in specific fields and difficulty connecting with professionals hinder its effectiveness. Many students applied for jobs via LinkedIn without securing interviews or offers, though LinkedIn Learning emerged as a key resource for career development. Statistical analyses showed no gender-based differences in usage, but limited access to premium features and difficulty finding relevant jobs were major barriers. Addressing these challenges, such as improving job listings, enhancing networking tools, and expanding premium feature accessibility, can significantly boost LinkedIn's effectiveness in supporting students' career growth and professional development.

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