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Impact of Facebook on Employability

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In order to complete the current study, four fictitious applicants, two males and two females, were created. Participants were informed that the candidates were applying for a research assistant position in the Psychology Department. Participants observed a positive transcript of each candidate's interview, an excellent resume, and screenshots of the candidates' Facebook pages. The Facebook content was the only component of the candidates' application packages that were varied, with one female and one male having a positive social media presence and other two applicants having a negative social media presence. After the participants viewed each candidate's application materials, they rated the candidate as either "Not Satisfactory," "Neutral," or "Excellent." Upon completion of the individual assessments, the participants rank ordered each candidate, first through fourth.

The results of the current study are as follows: the candidates with a positive social media presence were rated significantly higher than the candidates with a negative social media presence. Furthermore, although it was hypothesized that the female candidates would be rated more favorably than the male candidates, independent of their social media presence, it was found that gender did not significantly impact the ratings. This displays the fact that there was no gender bias among the participants. Lastly, when the participants were asked to rank order the candidates, the candidates with a positive social media presence were rated first 86% of the time while the candidates with a negative social media presence were rated first 14% of the time. In all, the results of the current study display the fact that social media can affect employability and, because of this, prospective employees should be aware of the content they post on their own social media accounts as it could potentially hinder their chances of receiving a job offer.