

## UTILIZATION OF FACEBOOK BY SCHOOL CHILDREN IN THE APPRENTICESHIP SEEKING PROCESS

Tom SANDER<sup>1</sup>, Phoey Lee TEH<sup>2</sup>, Biruta SLOKA<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Ludwigshafen am Rhein, Ernst Boehe Str. 4, 67059 Ludwigshafen, Germany

<sup>2</sup>Faculty of Science and Technology, Sunway University, No. 5 Jalan University, Bandar Sunway, 46150 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia

<sup>3</sup>Faculty of Economics and Management, University of Latvia, Aspazijas Bulv. 5, Riga, LV-1050, Latvia

E-mails: <sup>1</sup>tomsander@hotmail.de (corresponding author); <sup>2</sup>phoyleet@sunway.edu.my;

<sup>3</sup>biruta.sloka@lu.lv

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**Abstract.** The search for a practical apprenticeship place can be the first step in the business world for German students. The students have to apply for this placement, as Companies require applicants. Facebook is one of the most often used social networks among the younger generation in Germany, which can provide a direct communication channel between businesses and candidates. The research evaluates the reasons to use Facebook to identify a solid apprenticeship training platform for German students. Research methods applied: scientific publication analysis, survey (by paper-based questionnaire) of German students of the ninth and tenth grade. Analysis of survey data by main indicators of descriptive statistics: arithmetic mean, mode, median, and standard deviations to get an impression of evaluations on analysed aspects by survey respondents. Analysis of variance – ANOVA – is applied to study the difference of the assessments between female and male school children and the differences between the ninth and tenth classes. The existence of correlations between the intensity of use of social network sites (SNS) and the apprenticeship seeking process have been investigated. The results of the research have shown that there are differences in evaluations, on analysed aspects, between female and male school children in the analysed classes on the occasion career entry by the apprenticeship.

**Keywords:** apprenticeship seeking process, Facebook, social network sites, human resources management.

**JEL Classification:** M51, D85, E24.

### 1. Introduction

The paper investigates the interest of school children seeking apprenticeship training placement through the *Facebook* channel. The objects of study concentrate on students from the ninth and tenth class of German schools. They have the opportunity to get a degree after the tenth class and to start an apprenticeship in cooperation with a company.

This apprenticeship guides the students to their profession of choice. The students have to apply to a company to get an apprenticeship training place. The search of the apprenticeship place has a high relevance for a successful professional future for them. A good apprenticeship practical training position is a door opener for interesting employment opportunities. It is a similar situation as adults apply for a job opportunity. The company selects the school children and provides offers for the educational program in close relation to praxis.

Students in the ninth and tenth classes have technical experience, and all members of the sample have access to the internet; they are currently searching for an apprenticeship or for further educational programs to get a higher degree. This paper concentrates on the search after an apprenticeship and the influence of *Facebook*. *Facebook* is a common SNS which is used by school children to exchange and collect information. It is very popular to share information with friends and to use *Facebook* to collect interesting information (Cheung et al. 2011; Lee et al. 2015; Mayer et al. 2016; Lee Cheng, Teh 2016). The current research concentrates on the use of *Facebook* by school children to identify trainee opportunities. The research question is “How school children use *Facebook* to investigate companies as an apprenticeship provider?”. Business SNSs are concentrating on business related issues. Research has evaluated that business SNSs are more commonly used for the employment-seeking process. The membership of business SNSs are mainly for adults, but not for school children (Caers, Castelyns 2010). That triggers the need to investigate if the popular social media platform, e.g. *Facebook* could be the tool used for the similar purpose.

Organisations need young individuals and well-educated employees. They are offering their apprenticeship places on different channels to the school children. These companies use *Facebook* to get in touch with potential candidates. The use of *Facebook* by the target group for the apprenticeship seeking process needs to be investigated. This information is useful for companies to decide to use Facebook as an effective and efficient tool for the human resources management, to communicate about apprenticeship information with school children. *Facebook* offers the opportunity to contact their target group and to directly communicate with a specific group (Rimkuniene, Zinkeviciute 2014). It also provides opportunities to present videos, posts or other information to the potential apprentice. The company can submit their benefits and advantages to motivate school children to apply for an apprenticeship training position. *Facebook* is assisting in branding and exposing their news to a broad audience (Li, Bernoff 2011; Soares, Pinho 2014); as well as disseminating companies, blogs, or field reports from current apprentices to transfer information to potential candidates. The apprentice has a similar language to the prospective candidates. It promotes quicker and easier information dissemination among them. Theoretically, *Facebook* is a good place to forward information to a broader audience, but the effectiveness and efficiency of the data transfer depends on the quality of the content (Ang 2011; Levickaite 2010; Filip et al. 2015). The first key issue to discuss in this study is the value of content shared among the apprenticeships.

Additionally, the influencing factors of the period of start and end date of participants are also discussed. The ninth and tenth class have a different scheduled time to leave school. The idea is to investigate the existence of influence on the timeline. The assumption is the actuality of a topic and priority of the situation change the behaviour of the school children. The priority of the event changes the use of *Facebook*. School children will change their behaviour if the distance to their degree is decreasing. The assumption is that the prospective use of SNS is directly proportionate to the distance to a life event, such as examinations.

Research has investigated that there is a difference between men and women in using SNSs (Sander *et al.* 2016; McDonald *et al.* 2009) but few have examined whether access to information about job opportunities varies by race and gender. Findings from nationally representative survey data reveal significant white male advantage in the number of job leads received through routine conversations when compared to white women and Hispanics. Differences in social network resources (social capital. This research expands the investigation from men and women to boys and girls among school children. Some organisations are more interested in reaching female or male candidates for different reasons. Gender targeting provides a suitable, tailor-made solution to establish contact with the specific target group, which supports the success of the organisations to reach successfully potential applicants with few costs.

The intensity of use of SNSs influences the behaviour of SNS members. The assumption is that the use of SNSs correlates with the needs and interest of SNS members (Cheung *et al.* 2011; Ellison *et al.* 2007). The benefit of school children is considered different to adults. The factor to use SNSs can be influenced by the duration of membership, number of contacts and utilisation in minutes per day. A regular user is more experienced and deeper involved in the network. That leads to the general assumption that the intensity use of SNSs influences the research for information. The specific assumption for this article is that the intensity of use of SNS influences school children with their investigation for information about possible apprenticeship places.

Social media is a broad field with many different tools. It is impossible to describe the entirety of social media in one paper, and the differences between the social media tools make it necessary to concentrate on one kind of social media like *Facebook* (Sander 2013). That is a limitation of the paper, but the differences between private and business SNSs exist, and the behaviour of individuals on these two different SNSs is not comparable (Sander *et al.* 2015). The scientific pragmatism leads to the concentration on one social media tool because it is not possible to research all social media tools with their differences. *Facebook* was selected, as it is the most popular among the schoolchildren in grades nine and ten, which was the research target audience for the current research.

The used methods for the research are the literature review to provide a theoretical basis, there is applied quantitative investigation with a survey to test the theory and as-

sumptions for the investigated issues. For survey data processing and data analysis use the paper the main indicators of central tendency or location (arithmetic mean, mode and median) as well as the most often used indicator of variability – standard deviation to investigate the distributions of responses to the survey. Spearman correlation and ANOVA were applied to test significant differences of evaluations in a study of analysed aspects by respondents and to describe the use of *Facebook* as a tool for the apprenticeship seeking process.

The novelty of this study has the focus to the perspective of research in studying school children with their apprenticeship opportunities on *Facebook* in promoting apprenticeship seeking processes through social media.

## 2. Theoretical discussion

SNSs are platforms on the internet to share and exchange information between individuals. This paper investigates *Facebook* as a private SNS which is mainly used to create ties to friends and to exchange private issues (Levickaite 2010; Boyd, Ellison 2007). Individuals use private SNSs to present themselves with a profile to an audience and companies can use SNS profiles to present their business to a broader audience. The businesses can use the SNSs presence as a communication channel for their new products, company culture or employer branding relevant content to interested individuals who have a tie with the enterprise for example (Ang 2011; Bellou et al. 2015; Filip et al. 2015). This member is denoted “follower” because they are following an organisation, and use the tie to the company via *Facebook* to be up to date and to collect additional information. The member can discuss with the group the new products or apprenticeship opportunities. They can collect exclusive information, and some companies offer the chance to get in touch with their employees (Bernoff, Schadler 2010; Teh et al. 2014). The data represents the reality and is more authentic because the information is from people who are involved. They present their daily business in their language. Marketing departments do not primp the information for example.

The companies expect that some of the followers forward the content of their profile to their contacts, that the members improve the innovations of the organisation or collect information which supports the decision to apply for an apprenticeship with the business for example (Moolenaar, Slegers 2010). The follower is expecting additional information and having an advantage with their tie to the company e.g. exclusive updates for a product, to get the opportunity to test innovations or to collect additional information about a product. The exchange of information and expert knowledge, expertise of individuals to another person is a resource. The exchange of information and resources creates obligations (Lin 2001; Rimkuniene, Zinkeviciute 2014). The period of the relationship and actual behaviour creates trust and increases the value of the information. These network effects are explained with the social capital theory. The members can penalise the misuse of the SNSs and reduce the benefit for the individual.

The use of social networks for the employment-seeking process is well researched (Granovetter 1995; Sander 2013). The use of SNSs for the employment-seeking process for adults is under observation of some authors at the moment (Ollington 2013), but the situation of school children who seek an apprenticeship is not under investigation. The gender differences to use SNSs for the employment-seeking process has been done for adults, and there are differences between female and male adults (Sander *et al.* 2016). That leads to the assumption that girls and boys are differently using *Facebook* for the investigation of information about apprenticeship training places.

The measurable investment in SNSs is time and creation of contacts. The individuals invest their leisure time in private SNSs to organise their private life. That leads to the hypothesis: If school children invest more time in SNSs then they are using more intensive SNSs to identify information about possible apprenticeship training places.

The time to create a contact and the number of contacts is an indication for the use of SNSs and the involvement in SNSs.

The new perspective for the use of *Facebook* for the apprenticeship practical training places is the urgency. The individuals need a practical apprenticeship place or other solution for their next level of education. That means the 10<sup>th</sup> grade has a higher pressure to identify suitable places than the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, which is the assumption. This assumption leads to the hypothesis: If the time to an event is closer then school children are more intensive using *Facebook* to collect information about this event.

Social capital theory is the theoretical background for this research. The social capital theory explains the mechanism of networks. Particularly for the exchange of resources and information. The reason to be a member of a social network is for the benefit of the individual (Obukhova, Lan 2012; McDonald 2011). The social capital provides additional information and more valuable information to social network members because the information is exclusive. The sharing and exchanging of information is an investment in the relationship, to maintain the relationship and the individual who provides the information expects obligations or has a benefit with providing the information (Wasko 2005). For this research provides the social capital theory with the reason to share information in the network *Facebook* and explain the mechanism of SNSs theoretically (Valenzuela *et al.* 2009). The companies provide the information to school children about their apprenticeship places and expect the students to apply. The school children get more and deeper information as they increase their knowledge about the apprenticeship requirements. They can investigate if the apprenticeship place is of interest for them. That means both groups have an advantage and gain a benefit with their membership in a network. Companies get interesting, well-informed applicants and school children have the opportunity to find the best suitable apprenticeship training place for them. The information supports their decision for or against a company or possible apprenticeship training area.

### 3. Dataset description and methodological issues

The research is based on a project at the University of Ludwigshafen. The survey was organised by the paper-based questionnaire which had questions about the needs and use of school children regarding the transfer of information about apprenticeship opportunities via *Facebook*. The questionnaire is asking for the opinion and approach of the school children. The population are students in the ninth and tenth classes at a secondary modern school, who are finishing their school career soon. The sample had 143 participants. The distribution of gender is 55.3% male, and 44.7% female. The participants were asked for their grade, and 47.6% were in class ten, and 52.4% in class nine. The age range for those classes was between 14 and 16 years. All participants were living in Germany and spoke German. They were visiting the same kind of school and had similar requirements. The surprising information is that the use of *Facebook* is not as popular as expected. 65% (92 of the 143 participants) of the respondents reported that they were a member of *Facebook* but all participants knew *Facebook*. The results regarding the intensity to use *Facebook* are presented in Table 1. For most of the respondents duration of membership of *Facebook* is four years (characterised by mean, median and mode) as indicated in Table 1.

That means that the majority of the *Facebook* participants have in average four years of *Facebook* user experience, 300 contacts and use 35 minutes per day. The standard deviation for time to use *Facebook* per day in minutes and number of contacts at *Facebook* indicate that the variability of responses is rather high.

Table 1. Key indicators of descriptive statistics on evaluations regarding the intensity to use *Facebook* by the participants, authors' elaboration

Indicators	Duration of membership of <i>Facebook</i> in years	Time to use <i>Facebook</i> per day in minutes	Number of contacts of <i>Facebook</i>
n	92	81	83
Mean	3.59	35.60	356.18
Median	4	20	300
Mode	4	10, 20, 30, 60	300
Standard Deviation	1.57	43.27	246.01

The Cronbach's alpha for the questionnaire is 0.787 which is excellent and confirms the reliability of the survey.

The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) has been applied to identify differences in response on evaluations of analysed aspects in the survey between gender and between school classes. The Spearman correlation compares the relationship between the use of SNSs and the statements of the participants. The use of SNSs is defined as "use in minutes per day", "duration of membership" and "number of contacts". The time to use

SNSs and efforts to create and maintain relationships can be specified as an investment. The knowledge about the influence of the use of SNSs on the apprenticeship seeking process supports the understanding of the mechanism and use of SNSs.

#### 4. Overview of the statistical results

The statistical results provide fascinating insights into the use of *Facebook*. The first statement is about the usefulness of *Facebook* to investigate information about apprenticeship training positions or to follow companies on *Facebook* to get access to apprenticeship training position relevant information. Both results have the mode four. That means the majority of the respondents selected the fourth stage on a scale from one for a full agreement to six for total disagreement. The indicators of location are presented in Table 2.

The participants disagree with 72% to follow companies on *Facebook* and with 52% to investigate their information of *Facebook* about apprenticeship places. They have mainly selected response options of four, five or full disagreement on a scale from one for a full agreement to six total disagreements. Young people avoid the opportunity to use *Facebook* to identify apprenticeship or company relevant information. None of the respondents selected the possible evaluation level indicated by 1 for “full agreement” for both analysed statements. That is a clear result that *Facebook* is not the source for seeking and sharing the information about apprenticeship training positions and companies for practical placements.

Table 2. Indicators of central tendency or location of respondent’s opinion regarding the usefulness of *Facebook* to investigate apprenticeships or company relevant information, scale from 1 for full agreement to 4 for full disagreement, source authors elaboration, n = 143

Statistic indicators	<i>Facebook</i> is a useful place to investigate information about Apprenticeship training positions	Are you a follower of companies at <i>Facebook</i> ?
Mean	3.27	3.52
Median	3	4
Mode	4	4

The questionnaire has two questions with statements. The statements are regarding how to use *Facebook* for the apprenticeship seeking process. The questions explain the reason for young individuals to use or not to use *Facebook* for the apprenticeship seeking process. The first statement is “the Following information should be presented by companies on *Facebook* for apprenticeship training positions”. The explanations for the questions describe the opportunities which can be provided by organisations via *Facebook* to potential candidates. The statements have the ability to be an advantage for individuals. The results provide the answer on the needed content of companies *Facebook* presence to be more attractive to potential candidates and to fulfil the expectations of school children to be beneficial to identify apprenticeship opportunities.

The median and mode are on level one, and two and arithmetic means are around 2 (on 1–4 evaluation scale, where 1 – full agreement with the statement and 4 – full disagreement with the respective declaration). That means the participants agree that additional information on Facebook about practical apprenticeship places is an advantage in their opinion. They are expecting advertisements and the opportunity to ask questions and this aspect is the highest rated compared with the ratings of other statements. The application format Facebook and the chance to apply via Facebook is not as well accepted as the other statements. The median three and mode four is a clear tendency to full disagreement. The other three statements are mainly accepted; all three statements have the mode 1 and median 2. The results of the median and mode are supported by the results for the mean. The results give a clear picture that school children know what kind of content can be exchanged and be beneficial for them. They have collected this experience from other situations e.g. innovations of products. The results of the survey are presented in detail for the statements in Table 3.

However, they are not using Facebook advantages for the apprenticeship seeking process as seen in Table 2. Their reasons not to use Facebook are presented in Table 4. The next statement that has to be evaluated by the participants is “Reasons not to use Facebook to find information about companies which offers apprenticeship training positions”. The answer opportunities provide possible reasons not to use private SNSs for the apprenticeship seeking process. There are three answers with mode and median 1. That means only a few participants agree completely. The participants anticipate Facebook as a tool for their leisure activities, and they are not aware that they can use this tool to identify information about apprenticeship opportunities, that it is a reservoir for private issues.

Table 3. Indicators of descriptive statistics for the statement “Following information should be presented by companies on Facebook for apprenticeship training positions”, Evaluation scale from 1 to 4, 1 for full agreement and 4 for full disagreement, n = 143, authors’ own elaboration

Statistic indicators	Apprenticeship training position advertisements	Current information about apprenticeship training positions and vocational education	Information about recognised occupations requiring formula training	Field reports from trainees	Opportunity to ask questions	Application form on Facebook
Mean	1.80	1.81	1.92	2.10	1.71	2.46
Median	1	2	2	2	1	3
Mode	1	1	1	1: 2	1	4
Standard Deviation	1.19	1.11	1.15	1.18	1.16	1.34

The school pupils are not interested in searching on private SNSs for these issues because they conduct Facebook in their leisure time. Another surprising result is that school children report not finding information about apprenticeship training positions on Facebook.



Table 4. Main indicators of descriptive statistics for the statement “Following information should be presented by companies on Facebook for apprenticeship training positions”, Scale from one to four, one for full agreement and four for full disagreement, n = 143, authors’ own elaboration

Statistic indicators	I use <i>Facebook</i> only for my leisure activity	I am not aware that <i>Facebook</i> is a place to research information about apprenticeship training positions	I do not trust <i>Facebook</i>	I could not find information about apprenticeship training positions
Mean	2.03	1.75	2.01	1.81
Median	1	1	2	1
Mode	1	1	1	1
Standard Deviation	1.42	1.25	1.14	1.48

That means companies have to improve their *private SNS* presence so that individuals can find the required information quickly and easily. The only statement with median two and mode one is “I do not trust *Facebook*” in this context. The median two compared with the other results is the weakest result. That means the influence of trust is not as large as expected before. The social capital theory explains the exchange of resources with trust. Trust is important so that SNSs operate well (Valenzuela *et al.* 2009; Sabatini, Sarracino 2014). This has to take into consideration the explanation of the theory. The details of the survey data analysis is presented in Table 4. The next results are the significant correlation coefficients between the intensity of the use of SNSs which is explained as an investment in SNSs. The surprising result is that the duration of membership in years does not have any significant correlation. That means the history and experience with *Facebook* does not affect the use of *Facebook* for the apprenticeship seeking process. The number of contacts has one significant negative correlation coefficient with  $-0.3$ . This result is a tendency that the number of contacts influences negatively the exchange of information on *Facebook* for the apprenticeship seeking process. That means individuals with more contacts are less interested in being a follower of companies on *Facebook*. The use of *Facebook* many times per day has three significant results. The individuals who use *Facebook* several times per day for their leisure time have a correlation coefficient of  $-0.249$ .

In general, the statistically significant correlation coefficients are on a low level, but there are tendencies which support findings to explain reasons to use or not to use *Facebook* for the apprenticeship seeking process. The daily time on the use of private SNSs is not compatible with the use of *Facebook* for the apprenticeship place seeking process. The school children who invest time in *Facebook* avoid this kind of SNS to investigate apprenticeship availability.

Table 5. Spearman correlation coefficient between the use of Facebook for the apprenticeship seeking process and intensity of use of Facebook, n between 81 and 83, authors' elaboration

		Time to use Facebook per day in minutes	Number of contacts at Facebook
Are you a follower of companies on Facebook?	Correlation Coefficient	-0.13	-0.30**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.22	0.006
I use Facebook only for my leisure activity	Correlation Coefficient	-0.24*	-0.05
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.02	0.61
I am not aware that Facebook is a place to research information about apprenticeship training positions	Correlation Coefficient	0.30**	0.04
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.005	0.66
I do not trust Facebook	Correlation Coefficient	0.23*	0.03
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.03	0.76

Note: \* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed); \*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Trust influences the use of SNSs and the evaluation of the statement of the school children regarding trust is unexpected. School children who use more time in minutes per day on Facebook have less trust for the employment-seeking process. That is surprising and can be a reason not to use private SNS for the apprenticeship seeking process. The number of contacts has a negative impact, and the assumption that private SNS members with many friends use Facebook for the apprenticeship seeking process is not confirmed. That means the intensity of the use of Facebook has a negative influence on the apprenticeship practical training places search process.

Table 6. ANOVA to compare the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> class, relevant significant results are presented, authors' evaluation

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Facebook is a useful place to investigate information about Apprenticeship training positions	Between 9 <sup>th</sup> and 10 <sup>th</sup> class	5.076	1	5.076	5.536	0.02

The analysis with an ANOVA about differences on analysed aspects between the genders provides more significant results compared with the school grade nine or ten. That means the interest to collect information is statistically significantly different with

high probability. The interesting point is that only the statements for the topic “the following information should be presented by companies on *Facebook* for apprenticeship training positions” differ statistically significantly with high probability. This is an indication that school boys and school girls have different interests in the kind of information at the *Facebook*.

Table 7. ANOVA to compare school girls and schoolboys, relevant significant results are presented, authors' evaluation

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Apprenticeship training positions advertisements	Between male and female school children	15.578	1	15.578	11.749	0.001
Current information about apprenticeship training positions and vocational education	Between male and female school children	14.853	1	14.853	13.004	0.000
Information about recognised occupation requiring formula training	Between male and female school children	12.564	1	12.564	10.089	0.002
Field reports from trainees	Between male and female school children	11.616	1	11.616	8.758	0.004
Application form at <i>Facebook</i>	Between male and female school children	7.736	1	7.736	4.367	0.038

The other topic “Reasons not to use *Facebook* to find information about companies which offer apprenticeship training positions” does not have significant differences. That result indicates that the motivation to use or not to use *Facebook* does not depend on the gender in this age group.

## 5. Conclusions

The results explore the use of *Facebook* for the apprenticeship seeking process. The use of *Facebook* for this situation is different between male and female school children under consideration of the kind of information. The ANOVA could not find a significant difference between female and male students for the reasons not to use *Facebook*. That means to avoid *Facebook* as a tool for the apprenticeship seeking process, is not different between female and male school children. That means the statement about the differences between a female and male user on *Facebook* is partly confirmed, but the evaluation presents similarities.

The assumption that the timely distance to an occasion influences the behaviour of individuals is mainly rejected. Only the statement “*Facebook* is a useful place to

investigate information about apprenticeship training positions” provides a significant difference. That displays that the difference between tenth and ninth, class to anticipate Facebook as a useful place for the apprenticeship seeking process is not confirmed with the statements “Reasons not to use Facebook to find information about companies which offers apprenticeship training positions” and “Following information should be presented by companies on Facebook for apprenticeship training positions”. The expectation that the distance to the occasion increases the interest for information about relevant apprenticeship topics or that the tenth class is more aware of the opportunity to collect information about apprenticeships providing organisations is not confirmed. That means this statement can be mainly rejected for the apprenticeship seeking process.

The intensity of use of Facebook and the behaviour to use Facebook for the apprenticeship seeking process has various results. The first interesting point is that there does not exist any significant result or applicable correlation coefficient for the duration of membership on Facebook. That means the history and experience do not influence the use of Facebook for the apprenticeship seeking process. The number of contacts has a significant correlation coefficient of  $-0.3$  for the statement “Are you a follower of a company on Facebook”. That means that individuals with many contacts do not follow companies on Facebook. That is contrary to the hypothesis that the intensity to use Facebook influences the use of Facebook for the apprenticeship seeking process positively. The number of contacts has a negative influence. An explanation can be that many friends on Facebook are single friends and that the participants are not willing to use Facebook to follow companies. They are using Facebook only for personal reasons to gain the largest benefit from Facebook and to fulfil the purpose of Facebook. The second indicator to explain the influence of intensity to use Facebook on the behaviour is the time which is invested daily in the use of Facebook, time to use Facebook per day in minutes. There the result is if people use Facebook only a few then are using Facebook for their leisure time and not so much for apprenticeship seeking reasons. The correlation coefficient is  $-0.249$  between “time to use Facebook per day in minutes” and “I use Facebook only for my leisure activity”. Members of Facebook who employ a high intensive Facebook usage, have a lower level of trust on Facebook, and they are less aware that Facebook is a place to research information about apprenticeship training positions. The assumption for this result is that experience and history with Facebook can reduce trust. An explanation could be that school children who use Facebook more often are more aware of risks and disadvantages.

The results lead to the recommendation that companies need a strategy to be more present and visible for the school children in Facebook regarding information about apprenticeship. The companies have to lead to employment relevant content more accurate that the students can find the information quickly and easily. There needs tailor made a strategy for schoolgirls and schoolboys because they have different interests, and are not reachable with the same kind of information. The distance to the occasion

does not influence the use of *Facebook* with the sample. The companies have to change their communication that *Facebook* can be used for the apprenticeship seeking process.

At the moment school children do not use *Facebook* to search information about companies or practical apprenticeship places. They are not following corporations, and for them, *Facebook* is a private place for their leisure time. They are not willing and prepared to use *Facebook* for public reasons. Under consideration of potential apprenticeship relevant information, the school children provide the feedback that they do not trust *Facebook*. That is valuable information for human resources management because the use of *Facebook* for apprenticeship relevant issues is not useful. The use of *Facebook* is ineffective and can lead to a negative promotion. The results of the study recommend not to use *Facebook* for apprenticeship practical training places or relevant topics.

There is a need for further research with a larger respondent age distance between the groups e.g. eighth and tenth class students, but there may be a reduction in relevance to investigate, as apprenticeship related topics are not given to students in the eighth class because they are too young. Companies have to be aware that school children do not trust them on *Facebook*. It has the appearance that *Facebook* is not an appropriate place for apprenticeship related issues. It can be that organisations destroy their reputation. They could be victims of the adverse reactions e.g. transgressing the notion of a public vs. private persona if they use *Facebook* in an inappropriate way. Further factors which influence the use of SNSs and another live setting of individuals have to be researched more deeply to provide a clear answer.

The limitation of the research is that the distance between the compared groups could be too small. Maybe a larger age gap would provide another result and deeper insights. The sample is only valid for Germany and needs a larger sample size to compare the results with other school types and regions. To generalise the results for all SNSs needs the research and expansion to other private SNSs e.g. *Instagram* could be useful for further research.

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**Tom SANDER** is giving lectures at university of Ludwigshafen for master and bachelor Students. He is doing social network sites related projects there and he is supervisor for bachelor thesis. Tom Sander hold MBA degree and Diploma in business administration. Currently he is doing his phd at University of Latvia. He has visited conference in Australia, Asia and Europe.

**Phoey Lee TEH** is an Associate Professor in Department of Computing and Information Systems. She obtained her PhD in Management of Information Systems from University Putra Malaysia (UPM) in 2011. She obtained a Master in Information Technology from University of Science, Malaysia (USM) in 2003 and a Bsc.(Hons) Remote Sensing from University of Technology, Malaysia (UTM) in 2002. She has published over thirty-five papers journals, book chapters, conferences, and workshops. Her researches focus mainly on Social Computing, Social Network Analysis, Data Analytics and Sentiment Analysis. She is a member of IEEE and the Association of Information Systems.

**Biruta SLOKA** is a Professor in University of Latvia, Faculty of Economics and Management, has been involved in several research projects, has significant amount of scientific publications, was supervisor of doctoral students who have defended dissertations, was leading EuroFaculty Riga centre, is member of several professional associations and is a president of Association of Statisticians of Latvia.