



OULUN YLIOPISTO
UNIVERSITY of OULU

OULU BUSINESS SCHOOL

Kaisu Jansson

**ONLINE RECRUITMENT AND MILLENNIALS: RECRUITMENT COMMUNICATION
AND ONLINE ASSESSMENT**

Master's Thesis

Department of International Business Management

December 2016

Unit Department of International Business Management			
Author Kaisu Jansson		Supervisor Juha Tuunainen	
Title Online recruitment and Millennials: recruitment communication and online assessment			
Subject International business	Type of the degree Master's degree	Time of publication December 2016	Number of pages 84 + 1
Abstract <p>Recruitment has shifted from traditional channels and practices to processes taking place online and recruitment research has subsequently started to investigate online recruitment processes. While there have been conflicting perceptions amongst recruitment researchers about whether the organizational or the applicant perspective has been neglected in recruitment research most of the present literature focuses on the first phase of the recruitment process, attracting applicants. This thesis takes the perspective of the applicant, and in this case the Millennial generation, and investigates the later phases of the recruitment process, recruitment communication and online assessment. The aim is to find out what kind of preferences Millennial applicants have towards recruitment communication's timing, content and media and different online assessment methods such as online tests, digital interviews and gamification.</p> <p>This thesis is conducted as a qualitative research with a factist perspective. After extensive review of recruitment and Millennial research a theoretical framework is developed. Empirical data is gathered through semi-structured thematic interviews and analyzed with content analysis. The research findings are then applied to the theoretical framework and the framework is adjusted to depict the preferences of the Millennial applicant towards recruitment communication and online assessment methods.</p> <p>The research findings suggest the Millennial applicant has several expectations towards both recruitment communication and different online assessment methods. Recruitment communication is expected to happen in a continuous manner to avoid uncertainty and show the hiring organization's respect and valuation towards the applicant. Recruitment communication should also be efficient and convenient for the applicant, and email is found to be the preferred communication medium. The Millennial applicant also expects feedback on his or her performance as well as reasoning for selection decisions. Concerning different online assessment methods, the Millennial applicant prefers assessment methods that make them feel they have influence over recruitment outcomes. In addition, perceptions of validity and relevance as well as efficiency and convenience affect Millennials' preferences concerning different online assessment methods.</p> <p>The research findings have several managerial implications. Designing recruitment processes in which millennial preferences are taken into consideration can produce better applicant experience and have a positive effect on the company image. Although measures have been taken to ensure research reliability, the number of research participants and the same field of study of the research participants limit the generalizability of the research results.</p>			
Keywords e-recruitment, generation Y, digital assessment, recruitment behavior			
Additional information			

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION.....	7
1.1	Introduction to the topic and research gap	7
1.2	Goal of the research and research questions	9
1.3	Methodology	10
1.4	Structure of the research.....	10
2	TRADITIONAL RECRUITMENT.....	12
2.1	Recruitment as part of human resource management	12
2.2	Traditional recruitment process.....	13
2.3	Recruitment channels	15
3	ONLINE RECRUITMENT	17
3.1	Online recruitment definition and the recruitment process	17
3.2	Online recruitment practices	21
3.2.1	Web 1.0 recruitment practices and applicant attraction.....	21
3.2.2	Web 2.0 recruitment practices	24
3.3	Advantages and disadvantages of online recruitment.....	25
3.4	Recruitment communication.....	28
3.5	Online assessment of applicants	32
3.5.1	Online tests.....	33
3.5.2	Digital interviews.....	34
3.5.3	Gamification	37
3.6	Theoretical framework.....	38
4	MILLENNIALS	40
4.1	Defining generation as a concept.....	40
4.2	Millennial generation’s distinct qualities.....	42
4.3	Millennials in recruitment research	44

4.4	Hypotheses for the empirical research.....	46
5	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	48
5.1	Qualitative research, the factist perspective and abductive logic.....	48
5.2	Gathering of data: thematic interviews	49
5.3	Content analysis as data analysis method.....	53
6	MILLENNIALS' PREFERENCES IN RECRUITMENT COMMUNICATION AND ONLINE ASSESSMENT	55
6.1	Reviewing the preferences.....	55
6.1.1	Recruitment channel preferences	55
6.1.2	Recruitment communication preferences	56
6.1.3	Online assessment method preferences	60
6.2	Key issues in defining Millennials' preferences	62
6.2.1	Relevance and coverage of recruitment channels.....	63
6.2.2	Avoiding uncertainty in recruitment communication.....	63
6.2.3	Feeling respected and valued in recruitment communication.....	64
6.2.4	Having influence in recruitment communication and online assessment	64
6.2.5	Efficiency and convenience of recruitment communication and online assessment	65
6.2.6	Validity and relevance of online tests and gamification in recruitment	65
7	CONCLUSIONS	67
7.1	Answering the research questions	67
7.2	Theoretical contribution.....	69
7.3	Managerial implications.....	74
7.4	Research reliability and limitations	76
7.5	Future research suggestions.....	78
	REFERENCES.....	80

APPENDICES	85
Appendix 1 Outline of a semi-structured interview.....	85

FIGURES

Figure 1. Traditional paper-based recruitment process	14
Figure 2. Online recruitment process	19
Figure 3. Online and traditional recruitment process compared	20
Figure 4. The advantages and disadvantages of online recruitment.....	28
Figure 5. Theoretical framework: Online recruitment process	38
Figure 6. The research participants.....	51
Figure 7. Online recruitment process with Millennial applicants.....	73

1 INTRODUCTION

The topic of this master's thesis is Millennials' thoughts and preferences concerning recruitment communication with a hiring organization and different online assessment methods. The aim is to shed light to how Millennials perceive different kinds of recruitment communication related issues between the hiring organization and the applicant as well as different online assessment methods. In this chapter the reader is first introduced to the topic and the research gap is identified. Then goals of the research and the research question are examined, before addressing the methodology and the structure of the research.

1.1 Introduction to the topic and research gap

Recruitment has shifted from traditional methods like newspaper and radio adds to practices taking place online, and the Internet has become a leading tool for recruiting and selecting employees (Cappeli 2001). The terms e-recruitment, electronic recruitment, online recruitment and Internet recruitment are used synonymously in research. According to Galanaki (2002) online recruitment research first started in the mid 80s and the industry has been developing ever since. By now online recruitment is a well-recognized trend in human resource functions (Aboul-Ela 2014). Online recruitment can be defined as advertising companies' vacancies online (Galanaki 2002) or as the use of Internet to identify and attract potential candidates (Parry & Wilson 2009). Whereas the initial developments in the recruitment field meant moving from traditional recruitment channels like newspaper and radio to career websites and job boards online, more recently the so-called web 2.0 services such as online social networks, virtual realities and blogs have emerged as recruitment tools (Girard & Fallery 2010). Online recruitment today therefore presents a varied set of different practices that happen on the Internet. A throughout definition and description of online recruitment, online recruitment process and practices will be provided in chapter 3.

While some researchers argue that online recruitment research has neglected organization's perspective and concentrated too much on the applicant perspective

(i.e. Parry & Tyson 2008, Holm 2012) some state the opposite calling for applicant perspectives to online recruitment (i.e. Ollington & Harcourt 2013, Melanthiou, Paciou & Constantinou 2015). The differing suggestions might stem from the fast pace of development in the online recruitment field. Holm (2012) argues that research has not kept up with changes in recruitment practices and according to her literature review most research has concentrated on corporate website site design, applicant's perceptions of career websites and online recruitment system design. Also Walker, Helmuth, Field and Bauer (2015) suggest online recruitment research has concentrated mostly on attracting applicants. The literature review for this thesis also identified a significant amount of research addressing applicants' attitudes towards corporate recruitment websites and attracting applicants to apply (i.e. Birgelen, Wetzels & Dolen 2008, Teoh, Tan & Siong 2013). Attracting applicants is obviously crucial for the success of a recruitment process, ensuring the organization has a large enough pool of applicants from which to make its hiring decisions. However, attracting applicants is only the first part of a recruitment process while later phases of the process have been somewhat neglected in applicant research. The recruitment process as a whole will be discussed in chapter two and three, and this thesis especially focuses on two later phases: communication with applicants and online assessment of applicants. It can be stated that there is a gap in research when it comes to addressing applicant perspective in online recruitment process's communication and assessment phases that this thesis aims to fill.

Millennials, or generation Y, are the newest generation entering the workforce and are defined as population born during a specific time period. The start and end dates of this period have varied in research, beginning dates varying from 1977 to 1982 and end dates from 1994 to 2003 (Shaw & Fairhurst 2008). By now, research has identified Millennials as a distinct group with different work-related expectations and perceptions compared to earlier generations. Millennials have been defined as tech-savvy and born-digital (Eisner 2005, Shaw & Fairhurst 2008, Dery, Tansley & Hafermalz 2014) and therefore present an interesting target group for online recruitment. Research that includes Millennial perspective to online recruitment practices is scarce, and for example Ladkin and Buhalis (2016) suggest that online and social media recruitment research would benefit from perceptions from the younger workforce who have a specific engagement with web 2.0. Their view is

supported by Dery et al. (2014) who state that online recruitment processes are characteristic especially to graduate recruitment, but little research exists that addresses graduates in online recruitment. The literature review conducted for this thesis revealed some research addressing Millennials' perspective to online recruitment, and most of this research specifically addressed attracting Millennials to apply to a hiring organization. Less is known of Millennials preferences and thoughts of the later phases of the recruitment process, an area that this thesis addresses.

1.2 Goal of the research and research questions

In addition to the academic need for this study stemming from the research gap in online recruitment process's later phases and applicant perspective, the research has also managerial motivations. Companies are facing a challenge with recruiting and retaining the best talent. The challenge has been referred to as the "talent war", where technology and the ubiquitous nature of knowledge has made it easier for companies to locate the needed talents, but harder to attract them (Spitzer 2014). This research could provide knowledge that helps companies to design their recruitment process to meet the expectations and preferences of Millennials. There is also personal motivation for this research. Working in the recruitment field, I have experienced first hand the difficulty of not only attracting but also maintaining in the recruitment process the best talent amongst new graduates. This research could therefore produce knowledge that could benefit also myself in my career.

As mentioned, the goal of the research is to shed light to Millennials' preferences of recruitment communication and assessment methods in online recruitment processes. The research question is therefore divided to two.

RQ 1: What kind of preferences do Millennials have concerning recruitment communication between the organization and the applicant related to timing, content and media?

RQ 2: What are Millennials preferences concerning online assessment through online tests, digital interviews and gamification?

1.3 Methodology

This thesis is conducted as a qualitative research and the methodological orientation more specifically is a factist perspective. The factist approach understands interview data as a source of information of the object of study, in this case Millennials' preferences concerning recruitment communication and online assessment. This means that the researcher assumes that what information is retrieved from the interviewees more or less presents the reality. Therefore, the interest is only on the content of the interviews, not so much the style of speech or the interactional nature of the interviews. (Alasuutari 1995: 47–48.) The analysis in this research is also based on an abductive logic. Abductive logic is suitable as some theoretical basis and ideas are possible to derive from existing research, and this knowledge is used to guide the gathering and analysing of the interview data (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2000: 136). Chapters two to four examine previous recruitment and applicant literature and form the basis for the empirical research. Four semi-structured thematic interviews were conducted and content analysis is used as a method to analyse the interview data. The methodology is further explained in chapter five.

The aim is to add knowledge and understanding of the chosen topic, which is characteristic of qualitative research. As there is only scarce previous research a qualitative method is suitable for gaining an initial understanding of the topic.

1.4 Structure of the research

After the introductory chapter, chapter two focuses on traditional recruitment research. First, recruitment as a human resource function is defined and traditional recruitment process discussed before addressing traditional recruitment channels.

Chapter three discusses online recruitment research. The chapter introduces different online recruitment definitions, explains the recruitment process and different online recruitment practices as well as the advantages and disadvantages of online recruitment. Subchapters 3.4 and 3.5 then discuss the limited research that has addressed communication with the applicants during online recruitment process and different online assessment methods, which are in the empirical focus in this study.

Lastly in chapter three, a theoretical framework for the empirical research is developed according to the discussed previous research.

Chapter four introduces research about Millennials. The chapter begins with problematizing the concept of a social generation and addresses also opposing views to the generational school in research. Then, research that has addressed Millennials' attributes in the working life is discussed before discussing research about recruitment of Millennials. Lastly in chapter four some hypotheses are made for the empirical research based on the existing Millennial research.

Chapter five explains the methodology of the empirical research. First, it discusses qualitative research and the methodological orientation of the research. Then, the method used for gathering the empirical data, a thematic interview, is explained in. Lastly in chapter five content analysis as a data analysis method is introduced.

Chapter six discusses the empirical findings of the research. The empirical data is first reviewed and Millennial preferences related to the research topic are listed. Then, reasons behind these preferences according to the data analysis are discussed. Chapter seven in turn answers the research questions according the research findings and considers the theoretical contribution of the study. In addition, managerial implications of the research as well as research limitations are discussed before lastly providing suggestions for future research.

2 TRADITIONAL RECRUITMENT

Before discussing online recruitment, which will be in the empirical focus of this study, it is worthwhile to consider recruitment before the digital developments in the field. In this chapter the reader is introduced to traditional recruitment literature. The chapter forms the basis for this study by familiarizing the reader with recruitment function as such. First, recruitment is discussed as a human resource function. Then traditional recruitment process and different recruitment channels are introduced.

2.1 Recruitment as part of human resource management

A much-sited definition of recruitment is by Barber (1998), who states that recruitment “includes those practices and activities carried on by the organization with the primary purpose of identifying and attracting potential employees” (Barber 1998: 5). As a function in organizations recruitment is usually understood as part of human resource management. According to Helsilä (2009) human resource work in organizations includes three types of activities. The first type includes the formation of the company’s human resources, which happens through recruitment, introduction and training of employees. The second type includes activities for directing and administrating human resources, for example by managing employment issues, salaries and work wellbeing. The third kinds of activities are directed to developing human resources, for example by training and development discussion. (Helsilä 2009.) Vaahtio (2005) describes human resource management more shortly to include recruitment, talent assessment, development and management and rewarding. Singh and Finn (2003) also emphasize recruitment’s close relation to human resource management. They state that ideally recruitment follows from a systematic human resource planning process in which the organization analyses and plans the flow of people into, through and out of the organization. According to the authors recruitment also goes hand in hand with the selection process by which organizations evaluate the suitability of candidates for various jobs. All in all, recruitment has been defined in literature as a human resource function aimed at acquiring the needed workforce for the organization.

According to Helsilä (2009) the right personnel is the company's most important resource, which also emphasizes recruitment's strategic role. Related to this, recruiting a new employee is also always a risk. According to Rantala (1999) an unsuccessful recruitment of a new employee can cause unexpected losses or even be completely unprofitable if the employee quits or is fired. This places pressure on managing recruitment activities effectively. Rantala (1999) argues that instead of considering recruitment as a single event, recruitment should be seen as a progressive process that aims to minimize uncertainties and risks related to recruitment. Recruitment's close connection to human resource management and planning is necessary to avoid recruitment failures. Singh and Finn (2003) emphasize the need for effective human resource planning processes, so that the organization does not pursue wrong kinds and numbers of people, as well effective recruitment to avoid processing and selecting candidates that are not the best on the market.

2.2 Traditional recruitment process

The recruitment process has been examined in literature to a good extent. Koivisto (2004) addresses the importance of defining the requirements of the open position, the key qualities needed to succeed in the position as well as the purpose of the position before starting the recruitment process. In addition, the author suggests addressing the kind of issues the selected candidate will face in the position and take into account the needed personality characteristics in light of these issues. Rantala (1999) presents a more throughout definition of a recruitment process and considers the issues raised by Koivisto (2004) as the first part of the process, that is analyzing the available position, the necessity of the position and the recruitment criteria. The second step in the process is announcing and communicating the open position, which includes choosing the recruitment channels and reaching potential candidates. The third and last part of the process is selecting the new employee that includes defining selection criteria and selecting the best-suited candidate. (Rantala 1999.) Holm (2012) takes Rantala's (1999) analysis further and presents a throughout explanation of a traditional, paper based recruitment process according to her review of literature. In this model (Figure 1.), Holm (2012) explains the tasks, subtasks as well as specific activities related to each phase of the process. The traditional

recruitment process will be compared with online recruitment process in the next subchapter.

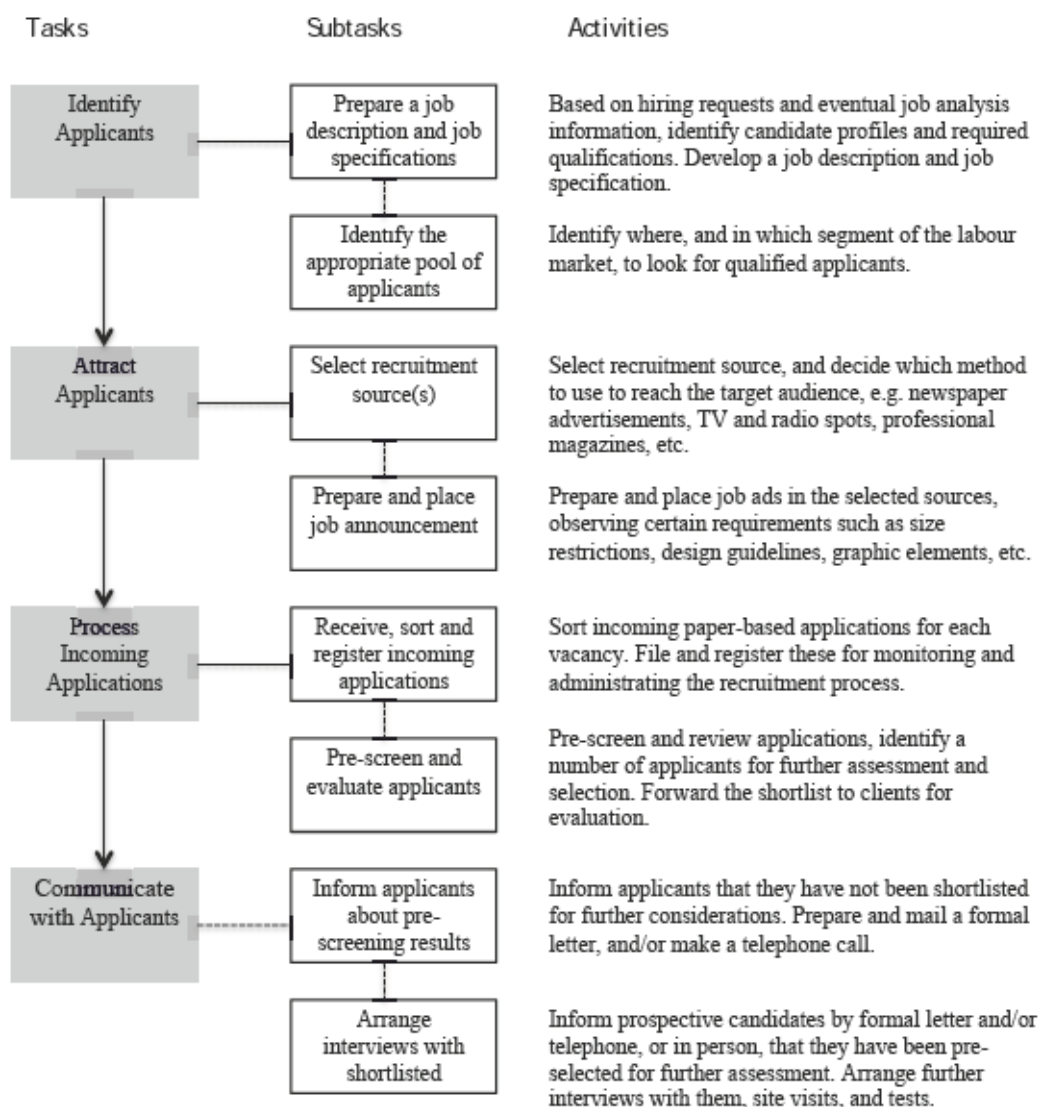


Figure 1. Traditional paper-based recruitment process (adapted from Holm 2012)

According to Holm's (2012) model the recruitment process starts with analyzing the job requirements and preparing a job description according to which the recruiter identifies qualified candidates and their position in the market. The first phase is relatively similar to the analysis phase in Rantala's (1999) process description, as is the second phase that is choosing recruitment channels and preparing a job announcement. After the attraction phase, the incoming applications are processed. The phase requires manual filing and registering of the applications, reviewing the applications and selecting the best suitable for further evaluation. After processing

comes communication with both the dismissed and selected candidates by mail or phone, and arranging interviews, site visits and tests with the selected candidates.

Holm's (2012) traditional recruitment process ends to the communication phase, and carrying out interviews and other assessment methods are excluded from the model. As assessment of the candidates is obviously critical for the recruiter and managers to be able to make successful hiring decisions, in this research candidate assessment is also considered as part of the recruitment process. The communication and the assessment phase of the recruitment process will be discussed in the next chapter according to online recruitment, as they are of interest in this research. Processing of the applicants is also not discussed further as in this research focus is on the applicant perspective. Out of the traditional recruitment process, different recruitment channels of the attraction phase are next discussed further.

2.3 Recruitment channels

Attention to traditional recruitment channels is worthwhile, as they are also an area where the digital developments have changed recruitment processes quite much. Different recruitment channels for announcing open positions and reaching candidates have been discussed to a good extent in literature. A much-cited research by Russo (Russo 1996 via Rantala 1991) separates formal and informal recruitment channels. When using informal recruitment channels, the hiring organization announces the open position through its own contact network. Examples of informal recruitment channels are add in the company's in-house personnel magazine, the company's current employees' or management's references of suitable candidates, the candidates previous employers reference or candidate's own contact to the company. The benefit of using informal channels is having some preceding knowledge of the potential candidate, but the disadvantage might be a low number of candidates. To increase the pool of potential candidates, the company can use formal recruitment channels. The formal channels include adds in a newspaper, radio or TV, recruitment events and employment agencies. (Russo 1996 via Rantala 1991.) The division of informal and formal channels can also be seen as separating internal and external recruitment channels. As said, using informal channels the hiring organization gains applicants already familiar to the organization while formal

channels produce applicants new to the organization. In this thesis, the focus is on the formal/external recruitment channels rather than internal recruitment.

Lastly, it is also important to note that traditional recruitment research has not been especially interested in the applicant perspective to different recruitment channels or processes. Lievens and Harris (2003) point out that in traditional recruitment the emphasis is put on assessing candidate's qualifications, and online recruitment has shifted the focus on attracting applicants. As Spitzer (2014) argues, technological developments produce constantly changing talent needs in organizations put more pressure to finding and retaining the needed talent. Therefore, when recruitment shifted from the above-mentioned traditional methods to online practices, attention was drawn also to the applicant side of recruitment. Online recruitment research has advanced in including applicant perspective especially in how to best attract applicants. This study will add to the applicant research by examining applicant preferences in later phases of recruitment process. The next chapter will discuss online recruitment research.

3 ONLINE RECRUITMENT

It is rather obvious that the definition of a recruitment process and channels introduced the previous chapter are somewhat outdated today. In the digitalizing world also recruitment has moved online. This shift has been addressed in recruitment research. Koivisto (2004) identifies reaching the candidates that have traditionally been reached by printed media as recruitment's future challenge. Also Vaahtio (2005) suggests that traditional recruitment channels, such as direct contacts of candidates, newspaper ads and employment agencies are getting new rivals with Internet, new recruitment service firms, consultants and staffing services. Ziesemer (2003) argues that the technological shift in recruitment started already in the 80s, when companies started using computers for searching potential employees from different databases and that this search process then moved to Internet websites. This shift has affected the recruitment process technically the most. An important research in the field of online recruitment is conducted by Cappelli (2001). Cappelli (2001) suggests that recruitment's move to the Internet and the birth of online recruitment have brought radical change to corporate recruiting but also that the revolution has only begun. As Cappelli's (2001) research was carried out fifteen years ago, recruitment practices have by now developed significantly and recruitment research has consequently progressed.

The next subchapters first introduce a definition of online recruitment and a model of online recruitment process. Then, different web 1.0 and web 2.0 recruitment practices are discussed, along with research that has addressed different practices in attracting applicants. Then, the advantages and disadvantages of online recruitment are discussed in. Subchapters 3.4 and 3.5 will narrow the empirical focus of this study to recruitment communication between the applicant and the organization and online assessment methods. Lastly, subchapter 3.6 will present the theoretical framework developed from previous research.

3.1 Online recruitment definition and the recruitment process

The terms online recruitment, electronic recruitment, e-recruitment and Internet recruitment are used synonymously in research. For consistency in this research the

term online recruitment will be used throughout the research, with few exceptions. Online recruitment has been defined for example as advertising companies' vacancies online (Galanaki 2002), as the use of Internet to identify and attract potential candidates (Parry & Wilson 2009) or as recruitment of candidates over the Internet (Heery & Noon 2008). However, these definitions are rather narrow in a sense that the term has expanded to being used to describe a recruitment process in general (Armstrong 2014) and therefore includes also recruitment management practices. Holm (2012) presents a more comprehensive definition to e-recruitment as

“organization of recruitment process and activities, which, by means of technology and human agents, facilitate time- and space-independent collaboration and interaction in order to identify, attract, and influence competent candidates” (Holm 2012: 245).

The notion of time- and space independence of online recruitment in Holm's (2012) definition emphasizes online recruitment's difference to traditional, paper based recruitment. According to Holm (2012) in traditional recruitment the tasks and subtasks of the recruitment process are completed rather sequentially (see Figure 1.), while in online recruitment the process becomes less sequential. Numerous authors have presented different models to explain the online recruitment process, one of the first being Cappelli (2001). Cappelli (2001, see Figure 2.) perceives the online recruitment process as consisting of three steps before the actual hire: attracting, sorting and contacting candidates. In the attracting phase, attention is in designing a website that will draw as many applicants as possible by company's reputation, product image et cetera. In the sorting phase, companies can use sophisticated and standardized online tests for screening the candidates. In the contacting phase, e-recruitment systems automated features ensure contacting the most desirable candidates quickly.

Cappelli's (2001) model entails similar phases than does Holm's (2012) model of a traditional recruitment process (see Figure 1). Both models entail an attraction phase, a processing/sorting phase and a communication phase. What is different in online recruitment process, are the actual activities in each phase. While in the traditional process attraction relies on channels like newspapers and TV, in online recruitment process applicants are drawn to the company's website. Traditional recruitment relies

on manually processing incoming applications while online methods enable standardized tests to narrow the applicant pool in the sorting phase. Traditional recruitment requires preparing actual letters to be posted or making phone calls to both shortlisted and dismissed candidates, while the online practices enable automated emails that quickly reach the chosen candidates as well as the dismissed. These differences already point to some advantages that online recruitment has over traditional recruitment, which will be further discussed later in subchapter 3.3.

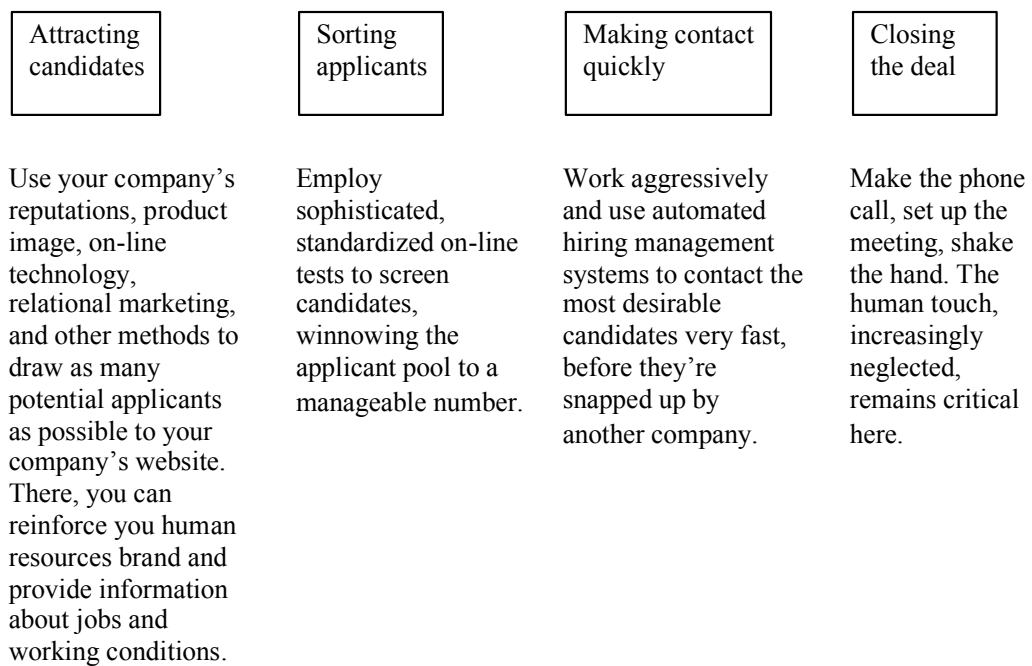


Figure 2. Online recruitment process (adapted from Cappelli 2001)

However, Cappelli's (2001) model still presents online recruitment quite like a sequential process as the traditional recruitment process. As mentioned, Holm (2012) argues that online recruitment enables time-and space independent activities. The author presents a description of the online recruitment process compared to traditional recruitment process (Figure 3.) in which the less-sequential nature is well presented.

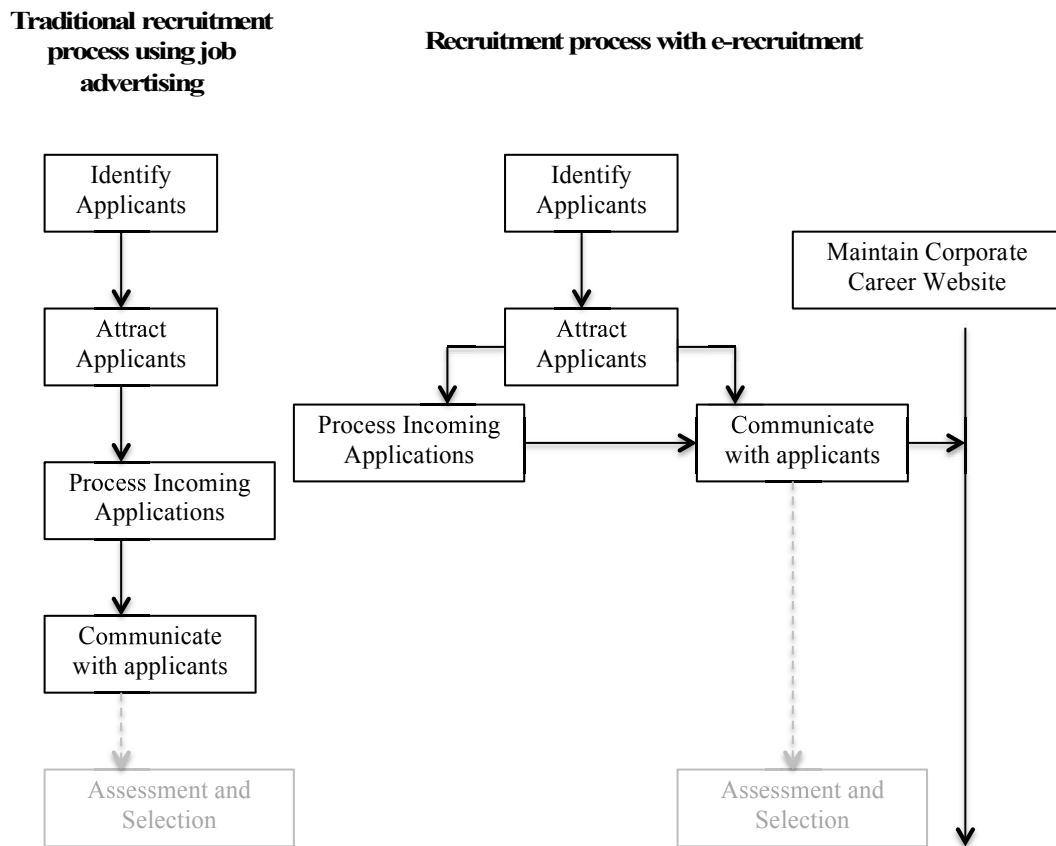


Figure 3. Online and traditional recruitment process compared (adapted from Holm 2012)

Holm (2012) suggests attracting applicants, communicating with the applicants as well as processing the applications can be performed simultaneously. Technology enables communication to start with the applicants the same time the job announcement is posted and rather than informing the applicants after processing all of the applications, the applicant can be informed about the progress of their application in different points in time. Also, processing the applicants, that is pre-screening, evaluating applications and shortlisting, begins short after the job announcement has been posted. (Holm 2012.)

According to Holm (2012) communication with the applicants becomes a focal task of the whole process, as it connects several other tasks in the process and is performed throughout the process. Communication with the applicants at different stages of the recruitment process is also of interest to this research and recruitment communication with the applicant will be discussed in chapter 3.4. What is new in Holm's (2012) process description is also the on-going task of maintaining the

corporate career website. The task is independent of individual hiring processes but still interrelated with the objectives of each recruitment process.

In addition, in Holm's (2012) model assessment and selection are included as next phases of the recruitment process. These phases are however not explained further. In this research focus will be drawn also on the assessment phase of the online recruitment process and chapter 3.5 discusses different online assessment methods.

3.2 Online recruitment practices

This chapter discusses different online recruitment practices that are used to reach and attract applicants. While in traditional recruitment the recruitment channels were divided to formal and informal, here the discussion is about web 1.0 and web 2.0 practices. The change from channels to practices is done because online recruitment practices emphasize the active role of the job seeker as well. Online recruitment channels would suggest ways for organizations to find and attract applicants, while online recruitment gives also the candidate a possibility to search for jobs and job related information in a wider sense than in traditional recruitment. Chapter 3.2.1 discusses web 1.0 recruitment practices and research that has addressed applicant attraction using these practices. Chapter 3.2.2 discusses web 2.0 channels, out of which online social networks have presented most interest in research.

3.2.1 Web 1.0 recruitment practices and applicant attraction

Online recruitment can be addressed through the type of technology being used in the recruitment process. Girard and Fallery (2010) explore online recruitment through what they suggest are web 1.0 and web 2.0 services. According to Girard and Fallery (2010) web 1.0 recruitment includes company's own career websites, commercial job boards and company's own online recruitment systems. As companies' own recruitment systems are invisible to the candidate, the focus here is on career websites and job boards.

Career websites and job boards have for a long time been the centre of online recruitment research, naturally due to lack of other kinds of online recruitment

technologies. Parry and Wilson (2009) for example divide online recruitment solely to commercial job boards and corporate websites. A commercial job board acts as a search medium for both applicants looking for jobs and companies looking for potential employees. They act similarly to a traditional newspaper listing of available job openings, while making it possible for applicants to register to the job board with their own CV so that companies can search the job board's database for potential candidates (Lievens & Harris 2003, Borstorff, Marker & Bennett 2005). The biggest online job board is Monster.com (Lievens & Harris 2003).

Companies' own career websites have been studied to a good extent. Borstorff, Marker and Bennet (2005) emphasize the simplicity and ease of implementing a career website for posting job announcements and receiving applications in return, which makes the company's career website most popular of online recruitment tools. According to Lievens and Harris (2003), company's career website's main function is to provide the candidate with adequate information about the company and the available positions as well as serve as a platform for applying. Due to its popularity, corporate career websites have been studied to a great extent also in research that has addressed attracting applicants.

A much-cited research by Williamson, Lepak and King (2003) discusses the effects of different orientations of company recruitment web sites on applicant attraction. According to the authors, company recruitment web sites can have a recruiting, screening or dual-purpose orientation. A recruiting orientation means the website is used to provide the applicant with information about the organization and to promote the organization. A screening orientation on the other hand means that the web site is used for gaining information about the applicant to be used in recruitment decisions while a dual-orientation web site has both recruiting and screening goals. Williamson et al. (2003) suggest a recruiting or a dual-orientation produce more positive reactions from applicants than a screening orientation does and especially produces higher attraction to the employer. In addition, the authors find web site usability and perceived usefulness of web site content to also affect applicant attraction and call for further research on website attributes. (Williamson et al. 2003.)

Other scholars as well have found website usability and information provision to attract applicants and affect their application behaviour. Cober, Brown, Levy, Cober and Keeping (2003) find the navigational usability of a website to affect applicants attraction to a company and also their intentions of telling their friends about the site. Another usability related attribute, the ease of applying through the career website, is found to affect the applicants' attitude towards the prospective employer and this way also their application behaviour. User-friendliness and website efficiency are attributes that many scholars have found to affect applicant attraction (i.e. Birgelen et al. 2008, Sylva & Mol 2009, Teoh, Tan & Siong 2013). Another point that Cober et al. (2003) make is that perceptions of pay, organizational culture and developmental opportunities the organization offers affect applicants' attraction to the organization in both traditional and online recruitment. This finding emphasizes information provision of the company's career website. Birgelen et al. (2008) emphasize adequacy of information provided in the website and suggest applicants' favourable attitudes stem from the perception that information is personally relevant, accurate and up-to-date.

In addition to website usability and information provision, Sylva and Mol (2009) address process fairness and Internet selection image that affect applicant satisfaction to an online recruitment system. Their research suggests how fair the application and selection process is perceived by the applicant to affect their perceptions of the online application system as well. Internet selection image on the other hand refers to applicant's attitude towards the use of Internet for recruitment and selection purposes, which in turn affects their perceptions of online recruitment systems as such. Other researchers as well have acknowledged the differences amongst different applicant pools and applicants' attitudes towards Internet and online recruitment. Williamson et al. (2003) suggest that individuals who are more Internet savvy view the information provision and ease of use of the career website as cues of organization's quality and therefore are more attracted to organizations with user-friendly and informative web sites than less Internet savvy individuals. Birgelen et al. (2008) also suggest people experience different levels of comfort using Internet to communicate with people and organizations, which affect their attitude towards company career websites. The target group of this research, Millennials, have been described in research as tech savvy and born digital (Shaw & Fairhurst 2008), which

suggests they hold favourable attitudes towards online recruitment as such and also appreciate user-friendly and informative career websites.

As can be seen, research has advanced in discovering what kinds of career websites help attract applicants to apply. However, less is known of applicants' reactions to more advanced online recruitment practices, which are discussed next.

3.2.2 Web 2.0 recruitment practices

Girard and Fallery (2010) suggest web 1.0 is becoming insufficient for reaching online recruitment's goals and that newer web 2.0 tools present a shift from exchange based recruitment practices to a relationship-based approach. Web 2.0 tools give the applicant the possibility to create wider networks and establish new relationships and for the organization the possibility to increase its social capital. The authors list the following web 2.0 recruitment practices:

Blogs. Blogs can be written both by applicants and recruiters and be used in recruitment. Also micro-blogs like Twitter can be used both by recruiter and applicants for recruitment purposes.

Online social networks. Facebook present a generalist online social network while LinkedIn is more specialized. While users can stay in touch with friends and colleagues, online social networks present recruiters a possibility of finding also passive applicants.

Virtual worlds. These can be 3-D platforms like secondlife.com and present a place of expression that also encourages creation of online communities.

Cooptation websites. These websites present a network of people who are financially motivated to find potential applicants within their own entourage.

RSS feeds (Real Simple Syndication). RSS feeds enable following information from different websites in real-time. This is beneficial for candidates who can be informed of job opportunities the minute they are published online.

Video platforms. For example Youtube.com presents possibilities for both the applicant and the hiring company. The applicant can present their CV and the company their work and job openings. (Girard & Fallery 2010.)

Out of these tools, online social networks and social media have been of most interest in online recruitment research while research of the other tools did not come up in the literature review for this research. While traditionally employers have used their current employees networks for finding potential candidates, social networks have put the recruiter to a centralised position between job seekers and organizations (Ollington & Harcourt 2013). According to Doherty (2010) social networks have changed the concept of a traditional CV as in social networks a recruiter can review a profile in a matter a seconds. Ollington and Harcout (2013) study online social networks from the recruiter's perspective and find that recruiters use these networks for both attracting applicants and for screening them. For attraction purposes, the recruiters most commonly use LinkedIn while Facebook serves as a medium for screening the applicants. The multiple purposes of social media for recruitment are also studied by Dutta (2014), who suggests that social media has several indications to online recruitment; it can be used as a recruitment channel, a tool for managing employer brand, means to communicate with applicants as well as a way to gain information about the candidates personality and interests. All in all, Dutta (2014) suggests social media can be used for active recruitment as well as employer branding and applicant attraction.

As mentioned, research of other web 2.0 recruitment practices is still in its infancy and the literature review conducted for this thesis revealed no such research. The next subchapter will now discuss advantages and disadvantages that research has identified with online recruitment.

3.3 Advantages and disadvantages of online recruitment

Online recruitment's advantages and disadvantages have been studied to a good extent in literature. Lievens and Harris (2003) address online recruitment's differences to traditional recruitment and find four major differences. First, in traditional recruitment the emphasis is put on assessing candidate's qualifications,

while online recruitment focuses on attracting applicants, which gives the recruitment field a marketing orientation. Second, using online recruitment methods makes it easier for the applicants to search and apply for jobs. Third, online recruitment enables companies to pass more information for the candidate's disposal before they apply. Fourth, online recruitment is less expensive than traditional recruitment. (Lievens & Harris 2003.)

The differences discussed by Lievens and Harris (2003) clearly emphasizes the benefits of online recruitment. Other scholars have found advantages as well, cost-benefits of online recruitment being one of the most emphasized advantage. Galanaki (2002) mentions cost benefits of online recruitment due to cheaper job adds than in traditional recruitment as well as economies of scale while Singh and Finn (2003) suggest online recruitment lowers recruitment costs due to new, more efficient processes it demands. Cost advantages are also pointed out by for example Aboul-Ela (2014) and Borstorff et al. (2005). Another commonly mentioned advantage of online recruitment is saving time. Online recruitment shortens the time period needed for completing a recruitment process (Galanaki 2002, Borstorff et al. 2005, Doherty 2010, Aboul-Ela 2014, Melanthiou et al. 2015), which naturally brings also cost savings.

Online recruitment also has advantages related to the size and quality of the applicant pool it can produce. Online recruitment methods can reach a wider, global audience than traditional methods (Galanaki 2002, Aboul-Ela 2014) and especially social media can be used to address market niches and specific audiences (Dutta 2014). Some researchers have also argued that online recruitment can attract better quality of applicants (Melanthiou et al. 2015). All in all, it can be stated that online recruitment can help attract a large enough pool of applicants with specific, desired characteristics that would be more difficult and expensive to attract using traditional methods. Lastly, online recruitment has been found to benefit the company's image (Galanaki 2002) and recruitment brand (Doherty 2010).

Online recruitment has also disadvantages. Online recruitment produces also costs, mainly in the implementation phase. Corporate owned online systems can be

expensive to implement (Melanthiou et al. 2015) and online recruitment requires IT savvy recruiters, which can require training of HR personnel (Singh & Finn 2003).

The larger and better matching pool of applicants mentioned as an advantage earlier can also be a disadvantage. Online recruitment can produce too many applicants (Galanaki 2002) and managing a big pool of applicants naturally requires resources and creates costs. On the other hand, another disadvantage related to the pool of applicant is that online recruitment does not reach all applicants (Galanaki 2002). One reason for this is digital divide between¹ applicants (Ladkin & Buhalis 2016) and research suggests online recruitment is best suitable to young applicants (Galanaki 2002) and for the computer savvy job seeker (Borstorff et al. 2005). Also social media recruitment research has addressed this disadvantage and Doherty (2010) suggests social media should not be used as the only recruitment channel while Dutta (2014) calls for careful consideration of the target segment of the available position when using social media for recruitment.

Discrimination of applicants is also an issue that might rise using online recruitment. According to Singh and Finn (2003) discrimination can occur due to digital divide as well as selection practices. Doherty (2010) raises concern for discrimination due to social media screening of applicants, because of the blurring boundaries of private and professional in social media. According to Melanthiou et al. (2015) social media screening of applicants can result in discrimination because of sex, age, religion or other attributes, which in turn can produce legal liabilities for the organisation. The advantages and disadvantages are presented in the figure on the next page.

¹ Digital divide is used to explain the difference between those in favor of using digital technology and those against it, or the gulf between those with access to current technology and those who do not, and to the social or educational inequality that results from this divide. (Oxford English Dictionary 2016b)

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> < Ease of searching and applying < Ability to pass more information for the applicant < Cost benefits < Time benefit < Image & recruitment brand benefits < Applicant pool benefits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wider, global audience - Addressing niches - Quality of applicants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> < Implementation costs < Applicant pool problems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Too many applicants - Inability to reach all applicants (digital divide) < Discrimination and resulting legal liabilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discrimination due to digital divide - Discrimination due to selection practices in social media screening of applicants

Figure 4. The advantages and disadvantages of online recruitment

3.4 Recruitment communication

By now, this chapter has identified the reader with the definition of online recruitment, the online recruitment process, web 1.0 and 2.0 recruitment practices as well as the advantages and disadvantages of online recruitment. Now, the empirical focus of the study is narrowed to recruitment communication in the current chapter and to online assessment in the next chapter.

As has been mentioned already previously, most recruitment research with an applicant focus concentrates on the attraction phase of the recruitment process (Holm 2012, Walker et al. 2015). According to Holm (2012) research has advanced in corporate career website design, applicant perspective of career websites and e-recruitment system design. Some of this line of research was also discussed in chapter 3.2. Focus on applicant attraction has lead to lesser attention to later phases of the online recruitment process. Here, the focus is on communication between the applicant and the organization, the next phase of the online recruitment process and the first empirical focus area of this thesis. This chapter discusses what is known about communication between the applicant and the organization in online recruitment research so far and from this knowledge develops focus areas for the empirical research.

Recruitment communication is for the most part in research considered as communication to attract applicants. Allen, Van Scotter and Otondo (2004) state that research has recognized the importance of effective communication and the role of the sender (recruiter) and the message content in attracting applicants. However, in this research attracting applicants and communication with the applicants are considered separate tasks of the recruitment process (see Figure 3. page 20), although they are performed simultaneously. The focus of this research is on the communication between the organization and the applicant after the attraction phase of the recruitment process. In other words, interest is placed to communication happening after the applicant has already sent his/her application and joined the applicant pool. Communication between the applicant and the interviewer, which has also presented interest in literature (i.e. Ugbad & Majors 1992, Ralston & Brady 1994), is considered in this thesis as part of the assessment phase of the recruitment process and therefore not discussed further. To be precise, this study focuses on communication between the applicant and the organization after the applicant has submitted his/her application, before and after (but not during) the assessment of the applicant and after the organization has made its hiring decision (the communication points are presented in Figure 5 on page 38). The literature review conducted for this thesis revealed only few studies that have addressed communication with applicants during the recruitment process after the submission of application. What is more, even fewer studies were identified to address communication happening online.

First, the literature review conducted for this research revealed few studies of communication before the assessment phase of the recruitment process. Walker et al. (2015) focus on the initial correspondence between the organization and the applicant. They suggest previous research has examined how explanations of selection decisions provided by the organization influence applicant perceptions of fairness but no research has addressed how initial correspondence before the applicant has participated in any selection activities affects applicants' perceptions. They point out that it is a common practice in organizations to send a verifying email to applicants after receiving an application or reference information, and examine how this initial correspondence affects applicant's perceptions of fairness and this way perception of the organization. Walker et al. (2015) suggest initial correspondence to be a critical contact that applicants use to evaluate how interested

the organization is on them as an applicant. Results indicate that organizations should provide adequate information in a sensitive matter in the initial correspondence to enhance applicant's fairness perceptions and help maintain their interest in the organization. More specifically, important content in the emails send by the organization were acknowledging the reception of all application materials, giving a time frame for hearing about application decision, verifying the job applied for, using the applicant's name, providing organizational representative's contact information, and thanking the applicant. (Walker et al. 2015.)

Second, communication with the applicant about his or her position after an interview or other assessment activity has been found to affect applicant perceptions. Boswell, Roehling, LePine and Moynihan (2003) find follow-up after an interview to be an important issue that has an impact on applicant perceptions. Especially prompt follow-up has a positive effect, while no follow-up or slowness in getting back to the applicant and delays in the communication produce negative effects. Rynes, Bretz and Gerhart (1991) support these findings and also find delays in communication after interviews to have a negative effect on the applicant that might result in the applicant dropping out of the recruitment process. Both Bauer et al. (2001) and Ployhart, Ryan and Bennett (1999) study the effect of communication with the applicant about assessment and selection decisions on applicants' perceptions of fairness of the recruitment and selection process. Their findings suggest that applicants' fairness perceptions are improved if the organization manages to deliver information about the selection process in an interpersonally sensitive matter. These findings emphasize the importance of communication right after an interview or other assessment activity.

It could be stated that research has identified communication with the applicant right after the reception of the application (Walker, Bauer, Cole, Bernerth, Field & Short, 2013, Walker et al. 2015) timely follow-up after the interview (Boswell et al. 2013, Rynes et al. 1991) and a sensitive manner of informing the applicants about the selection process and its outcomes (Bauer et al. 2001, Ployhart et al. 1991) as important issues that affect applicants' reactions to the organization and their interest and motivation towards the recruitment process. However, research about organization-applicant communication after the attraction phase in the recruitment

process is scarce, let alone research on communication through online methods. Besides Walker et al. (2013, 2015) studies of initial email correspondence, no research was found addressing other online communication methods. Social media, which was discussed in chapter 3.2.2, has received attention in online recruitment research but the attention has not precisely been on applicant communication as understood in this research. Ladkin and Buhalis (2016) characterise social media recruitment as enabling a multi-way dialog between the organization and its current and prospective employees and Dery et al. (2014) also point out a dialog-approach suggesting social media should not be used to broadcast conventional messages to applicants but as a platform for engaging with them. The analysis has not been taken any further, however, and no research was found addressing applicant communication in social media during a recruitment process.

The lack of research on organization-applicant communication during the online recruitment process after the attraction phase of the process presents an interesting basis for this study. The empirical research of this thesis therefore aims to shed light to applicants', in this case Millennials, thoughts and preferences of recruitment communication through online methods. The following three aspects of online communication will be of interest:

Timing. During which phases of the recruitment process Millennials want to communicate with the organization and how regularly do they expect communication to happen? The research presented here suggests that communication right after the submission of an application and right after an interview to be important for the applicant.

Content. What content do Millennials expect to be communicated during the recruitment process? Previous research suggests important content after the submission of an application to be acknowledgement of the reception of application materials, a time frame for the recruitment process, verifying the job applied for, using the applicant's name, organizational representative's contact information and thanking the applicant (Walker et al. 2015). After an interview, research suggests selection decision should be communicated in a sensitive matter, but less is known of what kind of content the applicants expect to be communicated.

Media. Which media do millennials prefer in communication with the organization during the recruitment process. This aspect has not been covered significantly in previous research.

3.5 Online assessment of applicants

In addition to communication between the applicant and the organization, the second empirical focus area in this study is online assessment of the applicant. This subchapter discusses what is known of different online assessment methods so far and develops focus areas for the empirical research.

When it comes to assessment of applicants, the last part of the recruitment process before the organization makes hiring decisions, Winsborough and Chamorro-Premuzic (2016) suggest that digital development can change the way talent is assessed, as most people spend time online. The authors suggest that talent identification tools are lagging behind and introduce four areas where talent identification (i.e. talent assessment) should advance. First, the authors suggest that *digital interviewing* should be used to save time and standardize the interviewing process. This means that candidates would record a video via webcam to answer to pre-recorded questions. What is more, a voice-profiling tool could then be used to assess the voice of the candidate, so that attractive voices move on to the next round of interviews. Second, the researchers suggest *social media analytics and web scraping* to advance recruitment processes. This would mean algorithms that screen the profiles on social media to identify profiles with specific attributes. The authors do not however take into account the possible legal liabilities that go with using social media for screening purposes, which were discussed in chapter 3.3. Third, for identifying and analysing talent the company already has, the authors suggest *internal big data and workplace analytics* be used. As much of work today is digital in nature, companies can benefit from the vast-amount of work-related behaviour data that is produced in-house. Fourth and last area they mention is *gamification*, that can be used to enhance candidates so-called user-experience by entailing features from video games or to shorten and spicing up traditional assessment methods. (Winsborough & Chamorro-Premuzic 2016.)

As in this research the focus is on external recruitment, the internal big data and workplace analytics suggested by Winsborough and Chamorro-Premuzic (2016) are not of interest. As social media's reliability in candidate assessment can be questioned and research has pointed out its shortcomings, it is not considered here as an assessment method. However, digital interviewing and gamification along with online tests have presented areas of interest in online assessment research to some scholars in the field. These assessment methods are therefore reviewed further and are in the empirical focus in this thesis.

3.5.1 Online tests

Personality tests are commonly used in recruitment to assess applicant's suitability for the available position. As so many other functions and tasks in companies, also assessment tests are being transferred to an online environment. O'Leary, Lindholm, Whitford and Freeman (2002) suggest that computer-based assessments have significant advantages over the traditional paper-based testing due to efficiency and cost-effectiveness in administering, scoring, interpreting and reporting the results of the tests. However, the authors point out that Internet based testing for high-stake recruitment has also risks related to security of the test site and possible cheating, in other words making sure the person taking the test at home is the actual applicant.

Online testing research has centred on the validity of the tests as well as applicant differences' effect on test results. Meade, Michels and Lautenschlager (2007) study how comparable new online tests are with traditional paper-and-pencil personality tests. They suggest that due to the digital divide amongst candidates, companies might offer their applicants the possibility to choose between a traditional test and an online test. In this case, however, the results are not completely comparable. Meade et al. (2007) find that candidates who choose to take the test on a computer also spent more time on the Internet and playing computer games than candidates choosing the traditional test. Johnson and Gueutal (2013) support these findings and suggest online tests to be validated before implementation, as traditional pen-and-paper tests cannot simply be moved to an online environment without risking comparability of test results. Their literature review also reveals that candidates are starting to prefer online tests as they are perceived more valid and relative to job tasks, that are also

likely to be performed on a computer, than traditional pen-and-paper tests. In accordance with Meade et al. (2007) Johnson and Gueutal (2013) point out that candidates' reactions to online tests are dependent on the level comfort and experience with technology. They also identify research that has found differing response patterns amongst different ethnic groups, which should be taken into account. Johnson and Gueutal (2014) also find that younger people perform better than older people in online tests, although no such difference has been found in traditional tests.

All in all, online tests require validation and attention to different applicant group's preferences and behaviour to be able to use test results for comparisons between applicants. However, literature on online testing from the applicant perspective is scarce. From the research presented here, one could expect Millennials, the focus group of this study, to prefer online tests to traditional tests due to their close relationship with Internet and technology. Other expectations however cannot be made as research on the area scarce. Therefore, this research will aim to find out Millennials perceptions to online tests on the following topics:

Preference over traditional tests. Do Millennials prefer taking personality or other assessment tests online or with a pen-and-paper test?

Level of comfort. How comfortable are Millennials in taking online tests as parts of recruitment process?

Validity. Do Millennials perceive online tests as valid measures of suitability in recruitment processes?

3.5.2 Digital interviews

Digital interviewing has also received attention in recruitment research. Especially videoconferencing interviews have been covered while the literature review for this research identified only few researches on pre-recorded questions and answer-video interview suggested by Winsborough and Chamorro-Premuzic (2016). Videoconferencing interviews will be discussed first before video interviews.

A **videoconferencing interview** is a “live” interview that is streamed online in real-time, enabling two-way video and audio transmission. Videoconferencing interview makes it possible for the applicant and the interviewer to be at separate places but meet in a face-to-face manner. (Toldi 2011.) Research has addressed both candidate and interviewer perceptions of videoconferencing interviews compared to face-to-face interviews. Most research has found applicants to favour face-to-face interviews. In a research by Sears, Chang, Wiesned, Hacket and Yuan (2013) applicants found a videoconference technology in an interview to hinder their interview performance and also to weaken the validity of the interview, meaning that the interview became less job-related. Other research as well finds that applicants prefer face-to-face interviews and view the interview process fairer and are also more likely to accept an offer after a face-to-face rather than a digital interview (Chapman, Uggerslev & Webster 2003, Johnson & Gueutal 2013). Strauss, Miles and Levesque (2001) study applicant’s evaluations of interviewers between different interview media and find applicants to evaluate interviewers as less likable in videoconferencing than in face-to-face interviews. These findings together suggest candidates to prefer face-to-face interviews to videoconferencing interviews.

The interview medium also affects interviewer judgments of candidates, although according to Johnson and Gueutal (2013) research has had mixed findings on interviewer reactions. Sears et al. (2013) find that interviewers give lower ratings of likeability and overall scores for the candidate in videoconference interviews than face-to-face, and are also less likely to recommend the candidate for hire after a videoconferencing than face-to-face interview. On the other hand, Strauss et al. (2001) find no difference in interviewer judgments in videoconference and face-to-face interviews. However, the authors find interviewers to rate applicants more favourably in telephone interviews compared to face-to-face interviews and suggested that for the less attracting looking applicants, telephone interviews result in better ratings than face-to-face interviews.

Videoconferencing interviews have been associated with reduced clarity and immediacy of verbal communication, restrictions of nonverbal communication and limited visual image of both parties (Sears et al. 2013). These issues are likely to affect applicant and interviewer perceptions of each other (Chapman et al. 2003).

Applicants seem to prefer face-to-face interviews, and research on interviewer judgments of candidates between videoconferencing and face-to-face interviews seems to have mixed findings.

A video interview understood as a non-live interview in which audio and video is streamed only one way is has not received much research. A non-live video interview is usually used as an initial assessment of the applicants in recruitment process. In a video interview the applicant answers interview questions without interaction with the interviewer. Toldi (2011) suggests applicants generally favour video interviews, view them as fair and feel like they are able communicate their abilities in a video. These positive findings are related to applicants perceiving the video interview as time saving and providing schedule flexibility as well as the applicants not being restricted in any way about communicating any additional information they want in the video. (Toldi 2011.) In relation to Toldi's (2011) findings, one could argue that a tight schedule for conducting a video interview as well as restrictions on what the candidate should communicate in a video interview could have negative effects on applicant's perception of video interview. However, the literature review for this research identified no other studies on video interviewing so conclusion are difficult to draw.

All in all, research is still rather scarce on digital interviewing which presents an interesting basis for this research as well. In the empirical research, the following areas of digital interviewing will be studied:

Videoconferencing interviews compared to face-to-face interviews. Do Millennials prefer face-to-face interviews to videoconferencing interviews as literature suggests. What reasons are behind preferences of either interview methods? What kinds of thoughts arise towards videoconferencing interviews in general?

Perceptions of video interviews. Do Millennials hold positive or negative perceptions of video interviews? What kinds of thoughts and preferences do they have towards video interviews in general?

3.5.3 Gamification

Gamification is the third and last online assessment method suggested also by Winsborough and Chamorro-Premuzic (2016) that is of interest in this research.

According to Wozniak (2015) despite of gamification's relativity to management and particularly human resources its utility for online recruitment has so far not been studied to a great extent. Wozniak (2015) suggests gamification can be used in two ways in recruitment. Entertaining games can be used to attract applicant's to company's career website and help to provide a good company image. A more involved way to use games is providing the applicants with a chance to play a game in which they can carry out tasks relevant to the job at hand. According to Laumer, Eckhardt and Weitzel (2012) applicants commonly have unrealistic understandings of the job they are applying to and a job simulating game can serve to give them a more realistic image. Both Wozniak (2015) and Laumer et al. (2012) suggest these kinds of games give both the candidate and the employer a chance to assess their suitability for the job. Companies can this way manage a large pool of applicants, as applicants who realize that they do not fit the job after playing the game will drop out of the recruitment process. However, Laumer et al. (2012) suggest that applicants might be reluctant to play these games and their research reveals that applicant's intentions to use games as self-assessment in recruitment are influenced by perceptions of usefulness, ease of use, selection fairness and enjoyment.

However, Wozniak (2015) points out that the accuracy of assessment according to game results might not be high as applicants might adopt a "game-logic" which is different to their "everyday-logic" and therefore act differently than they normally would. Recruitment processes can still be enhanced with game-like elements without creating an actual game also. Dery et al. (2014) study a specific graduate recruitment process and realize that the applicants start to adjust their behaviour and responses in the company's social media platform as they "gamify" the process to improve their chances of making it to the next level. The authors suggest that graduates can be competitive and treat a recruitment process as a game themselves.

Gamification in recruitment is also an area where research is still scarce. The

empirical research in this study will therefore aim to provide information on the applicant, in this case Millennial, perspective to gamification in online recruitment. The areas of interest are the following:

Willingness to play games as self-assessment. How willing are Millennials to use games as self-assessment in recruitment process? Under which circumstances and with criteria do Millennials have to playing games as part of assessment?

Validity of games as assessment method. How valid do Millennials perceive online games as an assessment method in recruitment processes? What kinds of thoughts arise concerning games in recruitment in general?

3.6 Theoretical framework

Based on previous research discussed in this chapter, the theoretical model of this study is presented in figure 5. The framework presents online recruitment process with emphasis on the communication and assessment phase, the empirical focus areas discussed in the previous two subchapters. The framework is adapted from Holm's (2012) model for the purposes of this research.

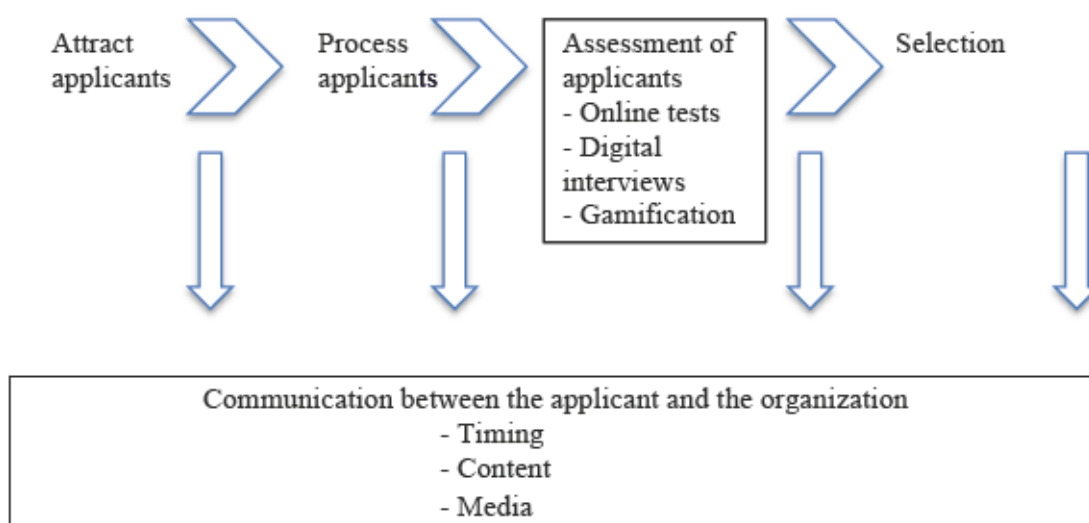


Figure 5. Theoretical framework: Online recruitment process

The framework includes all the phases of the online recruitment process discussed in more detail earlier. Communication is presented as a separate task that is relevant throughout the process. The downward pointing arrows present all the points in time when communication could happen; first after the attraction phase when the applicant has sent his/her application and then before and after every other phase of the process. Communication might happen after processing the applicants and before assessment, then after assessment and before selection, and then lastly after the hiring decisions have been made.

The content of the boxes in communication and assessment present the areas of interest in this study. The empirical data is used to gain insight into Millennial preferences and thoughts concerning recruitment communication's timing, content and media and online tests, digital interviews and gamification as assessment methods. The framework, developed from previous research, guides the gathering and analysis of empirical data. Methodological aspects are discussed further in chapter 5.

4 MILLENNIALS

While recruitment has been under a lot of changes during the last decade or so due to the digital developments in the field, the generational make-up of the workforce has also changed. Millennials are now the newest generation entering the workforce and have been found in research to differ from the previous generations in their work attitudes and expectations. The distinctive qualities setting Millennials apart from previous generations, which will be discussed in this chapter, might also affect their preferences, attitudes and thoughts about online recruitment. This thesis especially aims to examine these preferences and thoughts concerning recruitment communication and online assessment.

This chapter focuses on research of the millennial generation. First, the concept of a generation as such is problematized in chapter 4.1 and critique of the generational school in academia is also discussed. Chapter 4.2 will then discuss research that has addressed the Millennial generation's distinct qualities especially in the working life. Chapter 4.3 introduces research about Millennials and recruitment and lastly in chapter 4.4 the empirical focus areas introduced previously are revised in light of the Millennial research and some hypotheses are formed.

4.1 Defining generation as a concept

The Oxford English dictionary explanation for the term generation includes multiple meanings that are divided to two categories: 'that which is generated' and to 'the action of generating' (Oxford English Dictionary 2016a). As 'the action of generating' refers to bringing something into existence, in defining the term in this research context focus is placed on the first category. The OED definitions in the category 'that which is generated' give the term roughly two kinds of definitions. Firstly, a generation is used to refer to family generations; it can mean the *descendants, offspring or children, a family, breed or a set of members of a family* that are considered a single stage in descent, such as the offspring of the parents. The term can be modified with an ordinal number to form adjectives like *first- or second-generation* addressing the sequence in family generations. The second type of explanations sees beyond the relations of a single family and addresses collective

generations. A generation can mean “people of similar age who are involved in a particular activity or profession at a given time, considered collectively” or “all of the people born and living at about the same time, regarded collectively” or as “*the* — generation: a generation defined or characterized collectively by — (typically indicating an influential or emergent cultural or technological phenomenon)”. In addition to these two types of definitions, a generation is also used to measure historical time and is usually considered to be about thirty years, around the time it takes for children to grow up and have children of their own. (Oxford English Dictionary 2016a.)

As can be seen in the OED definitions of generation, the term can refer to family generations, or more collectively to a wider set of people in society. According to Purhonen (2007) in sociological research the term has similarly been used in two ways, either referring to family generations or to collective, social and societal generations. When a generation is understood collectively as a social generation, it consists of all individuals born in a specific time period, who share a common experience that sets them apart from people of other ages. Usually, the common experience is youth. Family generations and social generations differ in how time and historical chance is perceived. Family generations are born in a stable cycle while the birth of social generations is connected to the pace of change in society. When change in the society is rapid, social generations become shorter, while in a static social environment one could argue there is only one social generation, although many family generations exist. (Purhonen 2007.)

The concept of a social generation is rather new with research starting from 1800 and 1900. At that time development started from the traditional concept of family generations towards understanding generations as collective and oriented towards the future and the development of the society. The concept of social generation has developed in accordance with societal changes, like the First World War and the movements in 1960s. Youth as an age period and the idea of the latest, young generation representing the future in the present is now central to the concept. (Purhonen 2007.)

In the light of previous definitions of generation, the Millennial generation naturally represents the social, collective generation and does not address specific family relations. Typical to a social generation is the specific time period when its representatives have been born and the common experience shared by its members, usually youth. Millennials have been defined as being born between a period with start dates from 1977 to 1982 and end dates from 1994 to 2003 (Shaw & Fairhurst 2008) and they are the youngest generation approaching working life. Glass (2007) argues that differences amongst generations stem from the different experiences during their members' youth, which affect people's outlook on life and work. She suggests that people have different beliefs, values and attitudes that affect their behaviour due to having grown up in different time periods.

Much research has addressed the differences between Millennial generation's values, attitudes and expectations compared to previous generations (i.e. Martin 2005, Glass 2007, Shaw & Fairhurst 2008) and the attributes setting Millennial generation apart from previous generations are discussed in the next subchapter. Before that, it is however important to note that there are also critics to this generational perspective. For example Giancola (2006) challenges the assumption of generational differences or a generation gap that would set different generations apart from each other. Giancola (2006) argues that the generational perspective does not have much research to support its premises, but that it is rather popular culture than social science. However, the generational issues have remained in research as an HR issue to be looked at. This research also adds to the discussion of Millennial generation's specific attributes but the results are considered keeping in mind the critique of the generational approach.

4.2 Millennial generation's distinct qualities

The attribute that research has most commonly associated with the Millennial generation is their relationship with technology. Research has characterized Millennials as techno-savvy, more technically literate and educated as well as more diverse than previous generations (Eisner 2005). Eisner (2005) describes Millennials as predisposed to new technologies, accustomed to using several media simultaneously and being constantly online, while Martin (2005) argues that the

close relationship with technology has even changed the way Millennials learn and process information, and that they seek not only to use technology but also to use it to create their own content. In the workplace, Glass (2007) argues that the Millennial generation might favour instant messaging and emails over face-to-face conversations or phone calls. Being the first digital natives in the workplace, Glass (2007) suggests Millennials differ from the older generations in being unafraid of new technologies and usually being the first adapters of new technologies. The relationship with technology setting Millennials apart from previous generation also presents an interesting basis for this study. Dery et al. (2014) suggest that due to Millennials' connection to technology, online recruitment processes are especially characteristic to graduate recruitment.

Research has shown other attributes related to Millennial generation that are somewhat contradictory. Martin (2005) describes the Millennial generation as high maintenance when it comes to managing them in the workplace. According to Martin (2005) Millennials expect a lot of feedback and clear directions for their work, but at the same time expect freedom to do the job on their own terms. In addition, Millennials wish to be rewarded and valued for their contributions, wish to take part in decision making and expect a high-level of social consciousness from their organization (Luscombe, Lewis & Biggs 2012). Millennials also aim to pursue both career and personal life (Martin 2005) and expect flexible working hours to maintain work-life balance (Luscombe et al. 2012). On the other hand, Millennials are also found to be collaborative (Glass 2007) and willing to take on challenging work (Luscombe et al. 2012). Eisner (2005) suggests Millennials constantly seek opportunities to learn and grow professionally and also Terjesen, Winnicombe and Freeman's (2007) findings suggest Millennials value opportunities for personal development and continuous learning.

To summarise, one could state that Millennials expect their managers to put effort into guidance, giving feedback and rewards for their contributions and to allow them participate in decision making but on the same time they expect to have the freedom to do the job how, when and where they themselves best see fit. However, research also suggests Millennials are collaborative and driven to learn and take on challenges. Glass (2007) suggests that understanding each generation's distinctive

attributes and their influence on work preferences and motivation is important to recruitment, retention and reward strategies. Glass (2007) and Eisner (2005) introduce three generations in the workplace in addition to the Millennials, the Traditionalists or Veterans born before 1940, the Baby Boomers born between 1941 and 1960 and the Generations X or Xers born between 1961 and 1976. The before discussed qualities of the Millennial generation make them differ from these other generations. For example, Glass (2007) suggests baby boomers are idealistic and driven, as well as accepting of work and personal sacrifice for financial success. Eisner (2005) also points out baby boomers's willingness to work long hours and be loyal to their organization, while Millennials on the other hand value work-life balance to an extent that makes them more independent and less loyal to employers. Glass (2007) argues that the generations also differ in their communicational preferences, as baby boomer value face-to-face conversations while Xers and Millennials use whatever communication form is most efficient. Also, baby boomers do not expect feedback to perform well while Millennials require it on a regular basis.

All in all, research has suggested that generations differ in their work attitudes and expectations in the workplace, but the current research focuses on recruitment related phenomena. The generational differences have not been studied to a great extent in recruitment context, and the next subchapter will discuss the limited research that has addressed Millennial's in recruitment context.

4.3 Millennials in recruitment research

The few studies that the literature review conducted for this thesis revealed focus on the attraction phase of the recruitment process, like most of applicant related recruitment research. Warmerdam, Lewis and Banks (2015) argue that research on applicant attraction is important, as without success in the attraction phase the later phases in the recruitment process are not possible. The authors study factors that influence Millennials' intentions to join their ideal organization, and find that perceptions of own capability and control as well as pressure from important referents has most impact on Millennials intentions to apply to their ideal organization. To ensure applicants can evaluate their capability to apply for a given

job, organizations should include detailed descriptions of work requirements in their job advertisements. To enable a feeling of control, Warmerdam et al. (2015) suggest organizations' promote a message that individual has control over one's destiny in their recruitment adverts. In addition, Warmerdam et al. (2015) findings suggest that Millennials also want to feel in control of the recruitment process, and suggest organizations provide information like salary range on their recruitment adverts to make applicants feel informed and in control. These findings suggest Millennials expect to receive relevant information of the job they are applying to and about the progress of the recruitment process. To control for the impact of important referents opinions, Warmerdam et al. (2015) suggest companies consider and develop their organizational image and branding.

Terjesen et al. (2007) also study applicant attraction, and criticize extant research on the area of its atheoretical nature. Their empirical research identifies organizational attributes that affect Millennials decisions to submit or not to submit an application. The five most preferred attributes are investments in training and development, opportunities for long-term career progression, caring of employees as individuals, variety in daily work and dynamic and forward-looking approach to business. These findings are in line with the attributes presented in the previous chapter indicating that Millennials expect challenging work, flexible work arrangements and seek for opportunities to grow and learn. Another attribute presented earlier, Millennials' desire for work-life balance, is studied in recruitment context by Ehrhart, Mayer and Ziegert (2012). They find that work-life balance related content on recruitment website as well as the website's usability predict Millennials' organizational attraction. Ehrhart et al. (2012) suggest these features might serve as cues of unseen organizational characteristics; website usability might be interpreted to indicate the organization is innovative, invests in recruitment and is concerned for viewers of the website that have different technological skills.

Last, Soulez and Guillot-Soulez (2011) study recruiting Millennials from recruitment marketing perspective. They asked whether recruitment marketing should be adapted as the new generation of Millennials enters the job market. Their findings however question the generational approach as such, because in their sample Millennials showed differing attitudes concerning future employer and had varied preferences

concerning employer brand. The results also show that against common assumption that Millennials use only Internet in their job search, they use all media, both traditional sources and the Internet to find information or a job. In addition to Internet, especially personal connections were important to Millennials seeking employment. (Soulez & Guillot-Soulez 2011.)

It could be stated that recruitment research on Millennials is still in its infancy. While research has found some organizational attributes (Terjesen et al. 2007) and other factors (Warmerdam et al. 2014) influencing Millennials attraction and intention to apply, Soulez and Guillot-Soulez's (2011) research of Millennials varied preferences calls into question these findings. What is more, later phases of the recruitment process have not been significantly covered in Millennial or other applicant related recruitment research, which this thesis aims to do.

4.4 Hypotheses for the empirical research

As explained in chapter 3, the empirical focus areas of this thesis are recruitment communication, especially timing, content and media of communication, and online assessment, especially online testing, digital interviews and gamification. In light of the Millennial research presented previously in this chapter, some hypotheses of Millennials' preferences concerning the focus areas can be made.

Research suggests that Millennials prefer instant messaging and email over face-to-face conversations and phone calls in a work setting (Glass 2007). Concerning also recruitment communication media this could imply that Millennials prefer to communicate via email or other electronic message. Concerning recruitment communication content, research suggests that Millennials expect feedback on their performance (Martin 2005) as they are found to constantly seek for opportunities to learn and grow professionally (Eisner 2005). This could also imply that they expect feedback on their performance to be communicated already during the recruitment process.

Millennial research can also provide some insight into Millennials' preferences concerning online assessment methods. Because of their close relationship with

technology (Eisner 2005, Martin 2005) one could expect them to prefer online tests to traditional paper-based tests in recruitment assessment. This could hold true also to digital interviews compared to face-to-face interviews. Concerning recruitment gamification, Dery's et al. (2014) findings suggest graduates behave competitively and "gamify" their own behaviour in recruitment context, which could suggest Millennials hold favourable attitudes towards gamification in recruitment.

These empirical focus areas and hypotheses are studied through interviews with Millennials. The next chapter will discuss the methodology of the research.

5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter looks into the methodology used in this research. First, qualitative research in general, the factist approach and the abductive logic in analysis are discussed. Then the method used for gathering the data, thematic interview, the selection criteria of the interviewees and the practical arrangements of the interviews are explained. Lastly, content analysis as a data analysis method is explained.

5.1 Qualitative research, the factist perspective and abductive logic

Qualitative research is a research paradigm used to study the human being and the world in which people live in. Research is interested in the individual, the society, social interaction, values and relationships between people in general. (Varto 1992: 23–24.) Because qualitative research is conducted in interaction between the researcher and the research participant, the researcher is involved in creating the research topic (Varto 1992: 24, Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2000: 23). This emphasizes the researcher's need to remain as objective as possible. In also this study objectivity has been the aim in every research phase, to ensure gaining information about the topic as close to reality as possible.

The methodological orientation more precisely in this research is a factist perspective. Using this approach the interview data is understood as a source with which the interviewees inform the researcher about the object of the study, in this case Millennials' preferences related to recruitment communication and online assessment. The interactive situation of the interview is not of interest but only the content, the information about the object of study received from the interviewees. The orientation demands the researcher to assess the trustworthiness of the statements made by the interviewees, and source-criticism is crucial. (Alasuutari 1995:47–48.)

When it comes to analysis, qualitative research commonly uses an inductive approach, in which hypotheses are developed gradually when gathering and analysing the research data (Koskinen, Alasuutari & Peltonen 2005: 31). Inductive approach in other words aims at creating new theories from the research data instead

of testing existing theories. In contrast, deductive approach, which develops hypothesis from existing theories and tests them, is usually connected to quantitative research, but Saaranen-Kauppinen and Puusniekka (2006) argue that separating inductive and deductive approaches is over simplifying. They argue that qualitative research is never solely inductive and that research does not need to be solely qualitative or quantitative, as qualitative research has quantitative elements and vice versa. However, it can be stated that inductive approach is characteristic to qualitative research where emphasis is placed on the research data and deductive approach to quantitative, where emphasis is on existing theory.

In this study however, existing research on recruitment and Millennials provides relevant knowledge to guide the gathering of empirical data. This way the analysis is not only dependent on the research data, but abductive logic can be applied. Abductive logic is suitable when the researcher can derive some theoretical basis and ideas from existing research that she/he then aims to develop with the empirical data (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2000: 136). In this research, the theoretical framework presented in chapter 3.6 is developed from existing research and is used to guide the gathering and analysis of the interview data. Abductive logic leaves also room for the theory to change on the basis of the results of the analysis.

5.2 Gathering of data: thematic interviews

This chapter explains the methods used for gathering the research data. First, different kinds of research interviews are examined and the choice for a semi-structured thematic interview explained. Then, criteria for selection of the interviewees and the practical arrangements of the interviews are discussed.

Research interviews can be defined according to their level of structure. On the one end of the continuum is a structured interview, in which all the interview questions as well as answer possibilities are predetermined and the interview is conducted following a specific interview form. A structured interview is used when the aim is to test hypotheses and to produce easily quantifiable data. On the other end of the continuum are unstructured interviews, in which questions are open and the interviewer presents more detailed questions according to the answers the

interviewee gives. An unstructured interview resembles more a conversation than an interview, and is used to gain a profound understanding of the research topic. In between these two types of interviews are semi-structured interviews. Typical for these types of interviews is that some aspects of the interview are predetermined, but not all. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2000: 43–47, Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2002: 76–77.)

The research topic in this thesis is quite new and understudied, which makes it difficult to form specific hypotheses that could be tested with structured interviews. However, there exists some research that can help in guiding the interview, so completely unstructured interviews are not applicable either. Therefore in this study the chosen interview type is a thematic interview, which is a semi-structured interview method. A thematic interview is targeted to specific themes that are based on the research framework compiled of previous research. Dependent on the level of structure of the interview, the defining questions in each theme can vary from concentrating precisely on the research framework to including also researchers intuitive and experience based questions. The predetermined themes are the same to all interviewees, but the method gives space for individual experiences, thoughts and feelings of the topic. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2000: 47–48, Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2002: 76–77.)

The interviewees were selected from the author's own professional and academic contact network. According to Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2002: 87–88) qualitative research is not aimed at providing statistical generalisations but rather at understanding the phenomenon. Therefore more important than the number of research participants is that the participants know and have experience of the topic of the research. In this research, the interviewees were selected considering their recent job search and recruitment process experience as well as their willingness and ability to express their thoughts about the topic. Four possible interviewees, who all belonged to the Millennial generation, were identified and contacted by email, phone or face-to-face. All the interviewees were university graduates or about to graduate business students who had recently (less than one year ago) or were currently applying for full-time jobs in their field. All of the applicants were known to have experience of some online recruitment practices. The interviewees are presented in a table in the next page.

Interviewee 1	Age: 29 Sex: Female Occupation: HR coordinator Field: Business / Human resources Recruitment experience: Involved in over 10 recruitment processes in the human resources field over the last 18 months
Interviewee 2	Age: 26 Sex: Female Occupation: Digital planner Field: Business / Marketing Recruitment experience: Involved in 4 recruitment processes in marketing field over the last 12 months
Interviewee 3	Age: 27 Sex: Male Occupation: University student Field: Business / Management Recruitment experience: Involved in 5 recruitment processes in management and consulting field over the last 12 months.
Interviewee 4	Age: 26 Sex: Male Occupation: Sales and Marketing Trainee Field: Business / Sales Recruitment experience: Involved in 3 recruitment processes in sales and marketing field over the last 12 months

Figure 6. The research participants

After agreeing to an interview, all interviewees were sent an introductory interview scheme in which the themes of the interview were presented approximately one week before the interview. This was done to able the interviewee to familiarize themselves with the interview themes and think about the topic before hand. No detailed questions were included in the scheme so that the interviewees could not plan specific answers to questions. The themes of the interviews were:

Recruitment experience and use of recruitment channels

The interviews started with discussion of the interviewee's recruitment experience during the last twelve months and the channels they most commonly used in their job search. This section of the interview was not entirely aimed at answering the research questions, but more to gain an understanding of the interviewee's recruitment behaviour in general and their attitude towards different online and traditional recruitment channels.

Recruitment communication with the organization during recruitment process

The next topic of the interviews centred on the first research question. Questions were made about preferences and expectations concerning timing, content and media of communication during the recruitment process.

Online personality and suitability assessment tests

The last three topics of the interviews addressed the second research question and discussion centred on online assessment. First, the interviewee's experience and preferences of online personality and suitability assessment tests were discussed.

Video and videoconference interviews

The next topic aimed to examine interviewee's experience and preferences concerning video and videoconference interviews. The difference between the two was made clear in the interview, so that the interviewee could address specifically either one.

Gamification and games as part of recruitment process

The last topic of the interview addressed experience and attitudes towards gamification in recruitment. As none of the interviewees had experience of the topic, the last part of the interview was more of a preliminary examination of attitudes than specifically preferences or thoughts about the topic.

The interview agenda with more detailed questions can be found as Appendix (1). All the interviews were conducted in Finnish, as it was the mother tongue of all interviewees and the interviewer. This was done to ensure the participants felt comfortable to share their thoughts and ideas and to avoid information not being shared because of lack of language skills. The interviews were translated to English when they were transcribed. The interviews were conducted at a neutral place in Helsinki. The interviews lasted from 30 to 45 minutes.

Transcription was done shortly after each interview and focused on the content of the speech of the interviewees. Therefore, the transcription was not done word-to-word and irrelevant sounds or expletive words that did not affect the meaning of the speech were left out.

5.3 Content analysis as data analysis method

Research data presents the phenomenon that is being studied and analysis aims at creating a clear, verbal description of the phenomenon. Content analysis as a method aims to organize the data into a concise form without losing any of the information it entails. Content analysis begins with reduction of the data with help of the research question. This means all content that is irrelevant to the research question is discarded. Expressions that are relevant to the research question are searched from the transcribed data and marked with different colours on a word-editing program. The next step in the process is clustering, in which the previously coded expressions are examined and the data is searched for similarities and/or differences. Expressions with a similar meaning are grouped in to a class. The data becomes more concise as individual expressions are included into more general concepts. The classes formed can be further classified by joining several classes. The last step of the content analysis is abstraction, in which the most essential information is separated from the data and theoretical concepts are formed. Using abductive logic, the information already known of the phenomenon influences the formation of theoretical concepts. The theoretical concepts arising from the analysis are combined with the pre-understanding of the topic and comparisons are made. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2002: 110–116.)

In the reduction phase of the analysis process all irrelevant content was separated from the interview data. The decision as to which data was relevant and which irrelevant was based on the research questions. However, data about interviewees' recruitment behaviour and general ideas about recruitment communication, which did not directly address research questions, were not reduced. This decision was made because this data was thought to enrich the analysis and help in forming an understanding of the topic. In the next phase the relevant impressions were first grouped together according to the interview theme they addressed. Then, expressions

within each theme were clustered to classes according to similarity. The formed classes were then further analysed in the abstraction phase and more profound concepts were formed. The next chapter presents the results of the analysis, by discussing the research findings.

6 MILLENNIALS' PREFERENCES IN RECRUITMENT COMMUNICATION AND ONLINE ASSESSMENT

This chapter introduces the research findings. The first subchapter presents the results of the clustering phase of the data analysis by reviewing the empirical data in a concise form and presenting the key issues in each theme. Interviewee expressions are included to enrich the discussion. Some of the citations have been clarified with added comments in brackets by the author to ensure the comment is understood in its right context. The second subchapter presents the results of the abstraction phase of the data analysis and discusses the reasons behind Millennials' preferences. Answering of research questions and discussing the findings in relation to previous research will in turn be done in chapter seven.

6.1 Reviewing the preferences

In this chapter, Millennials' preferences concerning the different research themes are introduced. Recruitment channels are discussed first, then recruitment communication and lastly online assessment methods.

6.1.1 Recruitment channel preferences

When it comes to recruitment channels, all the interviewees mentioned LinkedIn as one of their most important channels for job search. Reasons for LinkedIn's popularity were named to be its relevance in their field and a good amount of available positions. Online job boards such as monster.com, mol.fi and oikotie also all came up in each interview, but they clearly were not perceived as efficient as LinkedIn. One of the interviewees described online job boards as less relevant and "old-fashioned" compared to LinkedIn.

"Of course I keep one eye on those, like monster.com and oikotie, but less so. It's because in those there's everything, every position and every candidate, it's kind of old-fashioned and LinkedIn is maybe newer. LinkedIn is more relevant in our field and there you don't get all those irrelevant positions like cooks and stuff you get on those (job boards)." (Interviewee 2)

Companies' own career websites were also mentioned by two of the interviewees. They both explained a keen interest in some companies, which is why they visited regularly those companies' websites to look for career possibilities.

“Especially international companies, you don't see those positions elsewhere if you want to work abroad for example, those positions don't come up if I scroll monster.com, that's why I use career websites.” (Interviewee 3)

In addition to LinkedIn, only one of the interviewees said she considered all social medias as potential for finding a job opening. All the other interviewees considered mainly LinkedIn, and had slightly negative stand towards Facebook as a recruitment or job search channel. Facebook is not considered professional enough, or a reliable source of employment information.

“I feel like I don't have a professional enough presence in Facebook. As a channel it's like it has content from one end to the other, crap and then sometimes some quality stuff.” (Interviewee 3)

When it comes to traditional recruitment channels, none of the interviewees considered newspapers let alone radio as a potential recruitment channel. The reason for this was that the interviewees did not believe newspapers had a comprehensive set of openings or relevant positions for exactly them. All of the interviewees actively searched for employment only online.

6.1.2 Recruitment communication preferences

Recruitment communication was discussed in the interviews according to different points in time in the recruitment process, communication content and media. This chapter presents the interview data related to these areas beginning with communication after sending an application and ending with communication after the selection and general expectations about recruitment communication.

After sending an application, all of the applicants expected at least a verification that the sent material has been received, to avoid uncertainty about the recruitment process. One of the interviewees mentioned this was enough information, but other

interviewees had expectations of further content in the initial communication with the recruiting company. Especially the schedule for the recruitment process is expected to be communicated precisely and early on, to enable the applicant to prepare for next steps of the process. One of the interviewees also wished for further information about the company and the available position.

“I would hope for the company to tell a bit more about the role or about the team I would be part of, or something about the company culture or current news or something like this, just out of interest.” (Interviewee 3)

All of the interviewees preferred email as a channel for the initial recruitment communication. Email was mentioned to be most convenient in delivering specific schedule or other practical information and a phone call was not considered to add value to communication in this point of the recruitment process.

All of the interviewees considered it positive to have a contact person in the hiring organization and all except one were willing to be in contact themselves. Also, all the interviewees were more likely to contact the organization before sending an application rather than after, if the job announcement had contact information.

The reasons for contacting the organization were making clarifying questions about the job at hand but also to better one's position in the recruitment process.

“Well I would ask some further information that would come to mind – And well of course let them know that the best candidate is on his way.” (Interviewee 4)

However, one of the candidates differed in this matter and would not contact the company before having progressed in the process.

“I don't normally contact them unless I know that I'm already quite far in the process – Well if I really had a relevant question that would somehow add value then maybe I would call.” (Interviewee 1)

As a channel for the communication initiated by the candidates themselves, all interviewees preferred phone to email. A phone call is considered more efficient than email in actually getting a contact and also as a way to influence the recruiter.

After the assessment phase the interviewees expected both information about the selection schedule and feedback on their performance. This was however not necessary if the schedule was already made clear before the assessment, and if feedback was expected to be given after the selection. The reasons for expecting feedback on one's performance were twofold; on the one hand the interviewees felt the company was entitled to give feedback as they had been involved and put effort on the recruitment process on the first place, and on the other to develop one's skills for future recruitment processes.

“If I were already so far in the process that you are assessed then yeah, I'd gladly receive feedback so that there's actually some value in all that effort to make the assessment, and to know why I am maybe not suitable for the position according to that assessment.” (Interviewee 1)

“I think during the whole process the point is that I myself get better in that whole thing, and once I've made them the favour of going there and doing the assessment in the first place then yeah, I expect they value it enough to give me at least some feedback.” (Interviewee 3)

After the selection all but one of the interviewees expected the company to give reasoning for the selection and why they had not been selected, if this was the case. The reasons for expecting this information again was to develop and get better in job search as such.

“If you're not selected, then I think it's good to tell why not, and if you want some comments on your application for example so give them then. And somebody could just directly tell why I wasn't chosen; it helps in the future and leaves a positive image (of the company).” (Interviewee 2)

“Maybe I'm not the kind of person who expects some reasoning why I wasn't selected and someone else was, like why not me and why the other one was better.” (Interviewee 1)

In the communication after the selection, the channel for delivering the message did not seem to be most important for the interviewees, but more so the content of communication. A phone call was mentioned to be better than email, but in the end it did not matter whether the information came by phone or email.

“Well, it’s nice to get a phone call but I don’t mind if it’s an email. As long as I get the message is what’s important.” (Interviewee 1)

When it comes to other communication channels than phone and email, the interviewees had some conflicting ideas about using social media for recruitment communication. On the one hand for example LinkedIn messages were considered more personal and enabling a dialog better than email, but on the other hand email was considered more official and therefore the preferred channel for recruitment communication.

“Then they have kind of directly contacted me (through LinkedIn message), it’s more like a conversation, email is more informational – if you get a message on LinkedIn it’s easier to continue from there.” (Interviewee 4)

“LinkedIn can be the initial contact, but I’d rather move the communication to phone or email than continue in any social media.” (Interviewee 1)

“Email is more official – you remember those messages better.” (Interviewee 3)

All in all, the commonly most important issues in recruitment communication according to the interviewees are that the communication continues throughout the process and the applicant is informed about the progress in a continuous manner. The recruiter is also expected to act fairly and not make empty promises, as it affects the image of the company the candidate has.

“If the recruiter doesn’t stand by his words or makes empty promises, it makes me feel like I’m not sure if I want the job in the first place – You kind of think like do I even want to work there if this process goes like this.” (Interviewee 1)

6.1.3 Online assessment method preferences

This chapter presents the key findings regarding Millennials' preferences in online assessment methods. First, online suitability and personality tests are discussed, then virtual interviews and lastly gamification in recruitment.

The interviewees had both negative and positive attitudes towards online suitability and personality testing. Those interviewees who had taken part in such tests mainly described them as positive experiences. However, all of the interviewees questioned the actual value and benefit of online testing in recruitment. The interviewees questioned both the necessity of online tests in assessment as well as their ability to predict one's suitability. What is more, feedback was considered important in order to find the testing to add value to the recruitment process. All but one of the interviewees would definitely select a computer-based test over a paper-and-pen test if given the possibility to choose, and the one exception was not sure.

“I think the system worked pretty well and it was interesting, I hadn't previously had one (online test). It was fun, I had a positive feeling after it.” (Interviewee 2)

“I think it's good that they (companies) make those but sometimes I have questioned the meaning of those – If you're looking for one of your first jobs, is there really a need to make some deep analyses?” (Interviewee 1)

“I don't think you can get anything out of a person (with an online test) if you for example have never met the interviewer and it's a completely unknown person, and then you make a test, so what can it actually tell about you: You can completely mess up the test or the test can be completely unrealistic, it doesn't tell anything about you. “ (Interviewee 4)

The interviewees' attitudes towards video interviews were both positive and negative. The ones who viewed them positively talked about using video interviews more from the recruiter's perspective than from applicant perspective, and mentioned the benefits of video interview when there are a lot of candidates to be evaluated. Also, they expressed the benefit of being able to present themselves better with a video interview than with a mere application and resume, and perceived benefits in

being able to do the interview where and when they pleased. The interviewees who had more negative feelings for a video interview described not being able to present themselves as naturally and truthfully in a video interview as in a face-to-face meeting.

“I think the platform (for the video interview) worked really well, and maybe I’m used to being in front of a camera because I’ve made some videos previously, so for me it’s not somehow distressing. In recruitment perspective it’s of course better that just an application that you actually see the person.” (Interviewee 2)

“I think you can’t completely present yourself as you are, if you record a video and send it to them, I don’t feel like I’m completely myself in front of a camera compared to face-to-face.” (Interviewee 3)

All of the interviewees expressed a positive stand towards videoconferencing and in particular Skype interviews, as all of them expressed the benefit of being able to make the interview even if the company was located far away. On the other hand, the interviewees also expressed concern for technical difficulties in Skype interviews, and if those could affect the interview outcome. When the interviewees were asked whether they would select a Skype or face-to-face interview, all had a strong preference to face-to-face interviews if the company was located so that a face-to-face interview was conveniently organized. Reason for this was because all the interviewees felt they could better impress the recruiter and influence the interview outcome if they met the recruiter face-to-face than through Skype.

“Of course it’s nice if the only aim is to get a overall picture of the person that you don’t necessarily have to drive twenty minutes to get there, then talk for ten minutes and drive back, then it’s more convenient.” (Interviewee 1)

“It also plays a role how you behave before the interview, how you shake their hand, do you look them in the eyes, what’s your vibe, how you sit, what kind of a feeling you get. In Skype you could be there without your pants on because you don’t see the whole person. So yeah it’s easier to make an impression face-to-face.” (Interviewee 2)

None of the interviewees had experience of job simulating games or gamification in recruitment context, but all of them expressed interest to the topic and expressed

willingness to play a job simulating game if the opportunity was given. Especially if the content of the game would be relevant in their minds, the interviewees expressed they could view a game as a possible assessment method. All of the interviewees however also expressed reserved thoughts towards gamification in recruitment context. Reasons for this were a belief that a game could not predict suitability and performance in a given position and that a game should therefore not be given too much importance in recruitment decisions.

“It could be fun, depending on what the game was like. But it could have some kind of problem solving or project tasks, so how you would solve those, it could be a good way (to assess candidates).” (Interviewee 4)

“But in the position, there’s going to be a person and not a machine that executes something systemically. I think a game would be a positive thing if it’s not given too much value in the assessment, but if it is given a lot of value then I don’t see how a game can show how you take responsibility or take risks for example – So maybe if it’s more informative of the job itself and doesn’t have a strong influence in assessment then yeah, it could be a good thing.” (Interviewee 3)

6.2 Key issues in defining Millennials’ preferences

This chapter will further explain the reasons behind Millennials’ preferences by introducing the results of the abstraction phase of data analysis. In the abstraction phase, the previously formed classes were further analysed to separate the most essential information and to form more profound concepts. These concepts explain the reasons for Millennials’ preferences concerning the different recruitment channels and recruitment communication related issues as well as different online assessment methods. Some of the concepts are overlapping and explain both communication related preferences as well as preferences in assessment methods. The next subchapters discuss each of the identified concepts and how they explain the interviewees’ preferences.

6.2.1 Relevance and coverage of recruitment channels

Firstly, in addition to recruitment communication and online assessment, the interviews focused on recruitment behaviour and especially use of different recruitment channels. Based on the data analysis, it can be stated that relevance and coverage of different recruitment channels were key issues in defining Millennials' preferences concerning different channels.

The reasons for using LinkedIn was named to be its relevance in the interviewees' own field and the adequate amount of suitable available positions. In contrast, the reasons for not using other specific channels, for example printed media, were also related to relevance and coverage related issues. It can be stated that the Millennial applicant has to perceive the channel as both relevant in his/her own field of work and that the channel provides the applicant an appropriate amount of relevant job postings in order for the applicant to perceive the channel as useful.

6.2.2 Avoiding uncertainty in recruitment communication

The second theme of the interviews was recruitment communication. Avoiding uncertainty relates to the interviewees' preferences concerning both the content of the recruitment communication as well as the timing of communication.

Concerning communication content, the interviewees expected a verifying email that preferably includes a schedule for the recruitment process after sending and application. In addition, the empirical data suggests Millennials wish to be informed of state of the recruitment process continuously throughout the process. The reasons behind these preferences relate to avoiding situations, where the applicant is uncertain or completely unaware of his or her current status in the recruitment process. Recruitment communication should therefore include content that informs the Millennial applicant of his/her current situation and happen more or less continuously, to keep the applicant up-to-date.

6.2.3 Feeling respected and valued in recruitment communication

Feeling respected and valued relates to Millennials' preferences concerning recruitment communication content as well as preferences concerning recruiter's behaviour. The empirical data suggests Millennials expect feedback on their performance, and all but one interviewee also expected reasoning for recruitment decisions in case they were not selected. Interviewees also expressed hopes that the recruiter acts fairly and honestly and does not give empty promises. The analysis revealed that the reasons behind these preferences were expectations that the hiring organization values the Millennial applicant's efforts put into the recruitment process and that they are treated respectfully.

Another commonly mentioned reason behind expecting feedback was self-development and getting better in the job search. Interviewees expressed the importance of developing their skills in the job search and found that the feedback given by the recruiter was essential for their learning.

6.2.4 Having influence in recruitment communication and online assessment

Having influence arose in analysis as a concept that explains Millennials' preferences in recruitment communication when initiated by the candidate his/herself and also their preferences towards different online assessment methods. All the interviewees' apart from one expressed willingness to be in contact with the hiring organization themselves if there was a possibility. In this case, all of the interviewees would choose a phone call over email. The reasons behind this preference reveal that the Millennials perceived they have more influence over the recruitment process and recruiter's decisions by calling instead of email.

Having influence also relates to Millennials' preferences concerning different online assessment methods. Others perceived video interviews positively and others negatively. The perceptions relate to interviewees' experience of being able or unable to express oneself and impress the interviewer in a video. Therefore, the degree to which the interviewee feels she/he has influence over recruitment outcomes in a video interview determines his/her perception of the method. Having influence

was also evident in Millennials' preference of face-to-face interviews over Skype or other videoconferencing interview; face-to-face interview was considered to give more possibilities to impress the interviewer and therefore have influence over the interview outcome.

6.2.5 Efficiency and convenience of recruitment communication and online assessment

Perceptions of efficiency and convenience explain Millennials' preferences in both recruitment communication media and different online assessment methods. Efficiency and convenience explain Millennials' preference of email over phone in recruitment communication. Email was considered a convenient and quick medium of communication and a phone call would add value to the communication only when selection decisions were communicated at the end of the recruitment process. Formality of communication media was also important for the interviewees, which is visible in the reluctance to use social media channels for recruitment communication.

Efficiency and convenience also explain to both video and videoconferencing interview preferences. The benefits of video interview in a situation when there is a significant amount of applicants, the benefits of being able to do the video interview where and when the applicant pleases and the benefits of a Skype interview when the organization is located far away were expressed in the interviews. Therefore it can be stated that in addition to perceptions of having influence, the level to which the Millennials perceive digital interviews as efficient and convenient determine their preferences concerning these methods.

6.2.6 Validity and relevance of online tests and gamification in recruitment

The analysis revealed perceptions of validity and relevance to explain Millennials' preferences concerning online personality and suitability tests and gamification in recruitment. The analysis revealed that the somewhat sceptical attitudes the interviewees expressed towards online tests and gamification as assessment methods are connected to concerns about the validity of such assessments and the relevance of especially online tests in assessing suitability in specific recruitment process's.

Although the interviewees expressed generally positive attitudes towards online tests and interest towards gamification, in order for the interviewees' to perceive these methods positively, they would have to perceive them as valid ways to assess suitability and perceive a clear need for the assessment method in the specific recruitment process.

7 CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this thesis is to examine Millennials' preferences concerning recruitment communication and online assessment methods in recruitment processes taking place online. In this chapter the research questions are answered in the first subchapter and the theoretical contribution of the research examined in the second subchapter. Chapter 7.1 collects the already discussed research findings to concisely answer the research questions. Chapter 7.2 discusses research findings in relation to previous research and revises the theoretical framework presented in chapter 3.6. The managerial implications, limitations of the research and future research suggestions are then discussed in the subsequent chapters.

7.1 Answering the research questions

As mentioned, the goal of the research is to shed light to Millennials' preferences of recruitment communication and assessment methods in online recruitment processes. To reach this goal, the research questions are formulated as follows:

RQ 1: What kind of preferences do Millennials have concerning recruitment communication between the organization and the applicant related to timing, content and media?

RQ 2: What are Millennials preferences concerning online assessment through online tests, digital interviews and gamification?

The first research question aimed to investigate preferences concerning three elements of the recruitment communication. The research revealed the following issues related to preferences concerning timing of communication. First, Millennials expect communication in the form of a verification email right after sending an application. Second, Millennials prefer communication in the form of feedback after an assessment activity, but not necessarily if feedback is expected after the selection decisions have been made. Third, Millennials, quite obviously, expect communication after the selection decision. Overall, the results suggest Millennials expect communication to happen in a continuous manner so that the applicant is

constantly aware of his/her own situation in the process and the state of the recruitment process. More important than a specific time or phase of the recruitment process when communication should happen is that the communication happens in a timely manner, as promised in a recruitment schedule, and the applicant remains informed throughout the process. The reasons behind the timing related preferences relate to Millennials' wish to avoid uncertainty.

Preferences related to recruitment communication content are multiple. Firstly, right after sending an application, Millennials' prefer to receive verification that their application has been received. Second, Millennials also expect to be informed of the schedule of the recruitment process. Third, Millennials expect feedback on their performance either after the assessment or after the selection decisions are made. Fourth, Millennials expect reasoning for the selection decision in case they are not selected. Reasons behind preferences concerning communication content also relate to avoiding uncertainty and also to Millennials' expectation to be respected and their efforts valued by the hiring organization as well their desire to develop themselves in the process.

Regarding preferences of recruitment communication media, this research suggests Millennials prefer email to any other media. In the last phase of the recruitment process, when selection decisions are communicated, Millennials appreciate a phone call but more important than the media of communication is the content. Reason for Millennials' preference of email over phone as a communication media is that email is considered efficient and convenient. In addition, the results suggest Millennials also prefer email to any social media channels as a communication media in recruitment context due to perceiving email as more formal and therefore suitable for the context.

The second research question aimed to investigate Millennials' preferences concerning three types of online assessment methods; online tests, digital interviews and gamification. The research revealed Millennials hold generally positive attitudes towards online personality and suitability tests, but the perceptions of online tests are moderated by Millennials' perceptions of validity and relevance of the test in a given recruitment process. Regarding gamification the results are similar. Millennials

generally express interest and motivation to play a job simulating game as part of assessment, but the positive attitude is also moderated by perceptions of the game's validity as an assessment method. According to this research, Millennials' preferences concerning online personality and suitability tests and gamification in recruitment depends on the level to which they perceive the method as a valid way to assess suitability and the method's relevance and necessity in a given recruitment process.

Lastly, research revealed Millennials preferences concerning digital interviews. This research had mixed findings on the preferences concerning video interviews. The results suggest Millennials' preferences concerning video interviews depend on the level to which they feel they have influence over the recruitment outcome through a video interview as well as on the level to which they perceive efficiency and convenience benefits in a video interview. In case the applicant perceives she/he can influence the recruitment outcome in a video interview and perceives the video interview as an efficient and convenient assessment method, the more positive attitude she/he has towards the method. Regarding videoconferencing interviews and especially Skype interviews, the results suggest Millennials perceive efficiency and convenience benefits in Skype in interviews in the case that the hiring organization is located far away. However, results also suggest Millennials' still prefer face-to-face interviews to videoconferencing interviews when both options are equally possible. This preference is also due to Millennials' perception of having more influence in a face-to-face interview than in a videoconferencing interview.

7.2 Theoretical contribution

This chapter will first discuss research findings in relation to previous research and the hypotheses in chapter 4.4. The theoretical model presented in chapter 3.6 is then revised according to the research findings.

Previous research on organization-applicant recruitment communication from the applicant perspective has been scarce. Concerning communication's timing, research has suggested that the initial correspondence after the applicant has sent an application to be a critical contact affecting applicants perception of the hiring

organization and its interest in the applicant (Walker et al. 2015). Also, a prompt follow-up after an interview has been identified to impact applicant perception of the organization (Boswell et al. 2003). These findings are supported by this research, that found a verification email to be important for the Millennials and that they expect to be informed about the progress of the recruitment in a continuous manner, which relates to the prompt-follow up suggested by Boswell et al. (2003). This research also adds knowledge about recruitment communication's timing. The results revealed that in Millennials' case it does not matter whether communication happens right after assessment or only after the recruitment decision, as long as the applicant is aware that the expected information will be provided in a given time. What is probably even more important is that the content of the communication includes feedback, which brings us to content of recruitment communication.

Previous research has also been scarce concerning recruitment communication content. Walker et al. (2015) suggest in their research of initial correspondence that communication should include acknowledgment of reception of application, a time frame for the recruitment and organizational representatives contact information. This research supports these findings, as Millennials were found to expect a verification email containing the schedule for the recruitment as well as to appreciate contact information of the person responsible for the recruitment. Previous research has also addressed communication about hiring decisions. Bauer et al. (2001) and Ployhart et al. (1999) suggest selection decisions should be communicated in a sensitive manner, but do not specifically address the content of that communication. The results of this research add to the discussion by revealing that Millennials expect reasoning for the selection decisions in case they are not selected. In addition, millennial research has found Millennials to expect feedback on their performance in work settings (Martin 2005) and this was hypothesized to apply also in a recruitment context. The research findings support this hypothesis.

Recruitment communication media on the other has not been covered significantly previously and this research therefore adds knowledge to this area. However, as millennial research has found Millennials to prefer email and instant messaging in work settings (Glass 2007) this was hypothesized to apply also in recruitment settings. The findings support this hypothesis, as email was the preferred

communication media. What is also notable is that this research suggests Millennials are not willing to use social media as a platform for recruitment communication. Ladkin and Buhalis (2016) discuss social media as enabling a multi-way dialog between the organization and its current and prospective employees while Dery et al. (2014) also point out a dialog-approach suggesting social media should not be used to broadcast conventional messages to applicants but as a platform for engaging with them. The findings of this research are somewhat in conflict with these suggestions, but this can relate to Ladkin and Buhalis's (2016) and Dery's (2014) concentration on the attraction phase of the recruitment process. It can be stated that more research from applicant perspective is needed to gain a reliable image of their attitudes towards social media as a recruitment communication platform.

The second aim of this research was to investigate millennial preferences concerning online assessment methods. Previous research about online assessment tests has centered on the validity of the tests (Meade et al. 2007) and applicant groups' differences' effect on test results and reactions to online tests (Johnson & Gueutal 2013, 2014). Literature on online testing from the applicant's perspective is scarce, and this research adds to this knowledge by revealing that validation is also on issue on Millennials' perspective. Even if the online test has been validated, the results of this research suggest the Millennial applicant can still doubt the test's actual ability to predict suitability for a given position. In addition, because of Millennials' close relationship with technology (Martin 2005) it was hypothesized that Millennials would prefer taking a personality or suitability test online rather than as a pen-and-paper test. The results did not completely support this hypothesis, as one of the interviewees expressed uncertainty in choosing either option. It can most probably be concluded, however, that the majority of Millennials would choose a computer based test.

Previous research on applicant reactions to videoconferencing interviews on the other hand has found applicants to prefer face-to-face interviews (Chapman et al. 2003, Johnson & Gueutal 2013) and to perceive videoconferencing technology to hinder their performance (Sears et al. 2013). The results of this research support these findings, as face-to-face interviews were preferred to videoconferencing interviews and the technical difficulties were also mentioned in the interviews.

However, according to Millennial research suggestion of Millennials' close relationship with technology (Martin 2005, Eisner 2005) it was hypothesized that Millennial could prefer digital interviews to traditional ones. This hypothesis was not supported, although the results revealed also positive attitudes towards both video and videoconferencing interviews. Video interviews have not been covered significantly in previous research, and the only research identified by the author suggested applicants generally hold favorable attitudes towards video interviews (Toldi 2011). This research partly supports these findings and adds knowledge on the topic by providing insight into the kind of issues that affect Millennials' perception of video interviews.

Gamification in recruitment is probably the less researched of all the topics of this research. Laumer et al. (2012) suggest applicant's willingness to play job-simulating games as part of assessment is influenced by perceptions of usefulness, ease of use, selection fairness and enjoyment. The results of this research are in line with previous knowledge, as the Millennials' concerns about validity and relevance of the recruitment related games might relate to Laumer's et al. (2012) findings. Millennials' concern about the validity of a recruitment game can relate to a concern of how much the game will affect the applicant's assessment, and therefore to Laumer's (2012) suggestion of selection fairness. Concern about the relevance of a game in a recruitment process on the other hand relates to Laumer's (2012) suggestion of perceived usefulness. It can be stated however that much more research is required on this area to gain a reliable image of applicant perceptions to gamification in recruitment contexts.

The theoretical framework presented in chapter 3.6 (see p. 38) was developed according to recruitment research to aid in gathering and analyzing the empirical data of the research. After analyzing the data and gathering the results of this research, the framework is revised to better address Millennial perspective in online recruitment processes and especially recruitment communication and the assessment phase of the process. The revised framework is presented in the next page as figure 6.

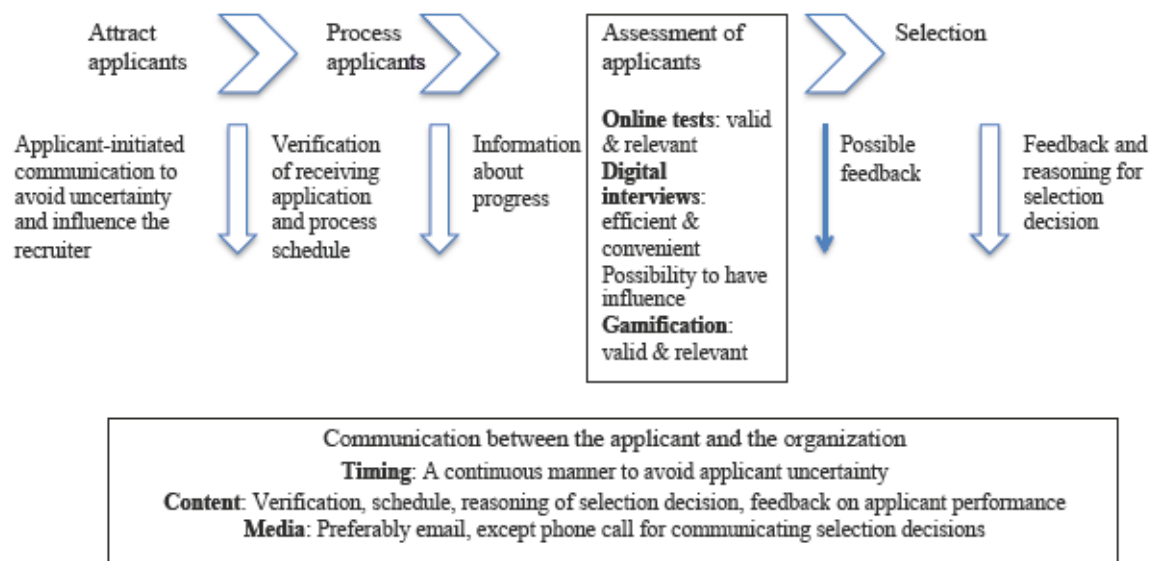


Figure 7. Online recruitment process with Millennial applicants

The framework has been advanced to include Millennial preferences concerning recruitment communication and online assessment methods. Concerning recruitment communication, Millennials' preferences regarding communication content are added to each phase of the recruitment process. The first notion reflects Millennials' willingness to be in contact with the hiring organization on own initiative before sending an application. Therefore applicant-initiated communication is added to the process before and during the attraction phase of the process, before the applicant has sent an application. The downwards pointing arrows represent the different phases of the process when communication can happen and the explanations to their right present the preferred content of communication in those phases. The downwards pointing arrow after the assessment phase is marked narrower than the other ones, as the research results suggest this point in time was not critical for communication in case the applicant can expect communication after the selection decision. The box on the bottom of the framework summarizes Millennials' preferences concerning recruitment communication's timing, content and media.

The framework has been advanced to include also Millennials' preferences concerning online assessment methods. This is done in the box representing the assessment phase of the process. The box includes all the assessment methods that are of interest in this research and the concepts the analysis revealed to influence Millennials' perceptions of each method. Perceptions of validity and relevance were

found to influence preferences concerning online tests and gamification and these concepts are added to the new framework. Perceived efficiency and convenience in addition to possibility to influence the recruitment outcome in turn determined preferences concerning digital interviews, and these are added to the revised framework as well.

7.3 Managerial implications

This research has also managerial implications for organizations aiming to create recruitment processes that are attractive to the Millennial generation. As one of the interviewees expressed (see citation p. 59), a bad recruitment process experience can make the applicant reconsider his or her motivation to work for the company altogether.

The research findings have several implications for recruitment communication. First, recruiting organizations should include already in the job announcement the contact information of a person responsible for the recruitment. The Millennial applicant may wish to ask clarifying questions about the position and the applicant-initiated contact also gives the applicant a sense of influence on the recruitment process. Second, the recruiting organization should make a schedule for the recruitment process including specific dates and times for each phase of the process, communicate this with its applicants and also stick to this schedule. The Millennials' expectation of a continuous manner of communication evident in the research findings does not imply organizations should communicate during and after every phase of the recruitment process. More so, organizations should keep the applicant informed about the process in a way that the applicant at all times knows the points in time when communication will happen. Third, the recruiting organization should prepare to give feedback to the Millennial applicant on his or her performance on the recruitment process and different assessment methods, even if the candidate is not selected. In the Millennial applicant's perspective, feedback is a signal of respect and valuation from the company that helps create a positive employer image. In addition, Millennials value feedback for their own development purposes. Fourth, this research suggests organizations should use email in communication with its applicants, expect when communicating the selection decisions, as a phone call is better at that time.

This research also has implications concerning use of online assessment methods in recruitment. The findings suggest recruiting organizations should carefully consider the necessity of online personality and suitability tests when recruiting Millennial applicants. Online personality and suitability tests should be used only when they are truly considered necessary in finding the right applicant for the position. What is more, the organization should make sure the test is valid in assessing suitability for a given position, and be able to communicate both the necessity and the validity of the test to the Millennial applicant. If the Millennial applicant does not perceive the test relevant for filling the position or valid in assessing his or her suitability for the position, and worse still does not receive feedback on his/her performance, the company image will suffer.

In case the organization wishes to incorporate a job-simulating game to its recruitment process, this research's implications are similar as in the case of online tests. Although the Millennial applicant might express interest and willingness to play a job-simulating game, validity and relevance concerns should be taken into account. The game should be carefully designed to include content the applicant finds relevant to the open positions and the amount of influence the game has on the overall assessment of the applicant should be considered. As gamification is still a rather new and understudied phenomenon and the research results suggest Millennial applicants have hesitant attitudes about using games as assessment method, a career-simulating game might best add value if its importance in the overall assessment is kept low.

The Millennial applicant generally views digital interviews positively, but recruiting organizations should consider the limitations to the positive attitude this research revealed. If the organization decides to use video interview as part of assessment, the completion of such an interview should be made as convenient as possible for the Millennial applicant, who might experience discomfort in front of a camera. According to this research, the experienced discomfort also relates applicant's perception of being able to have influence through a video interview. If the completion of a video interview is made as convenient as possible for the applicant, his/her perception of influence might also be affected and the assessment method perceived more positively. Providing the applicant with enough time to complete the

interview and making sure the platform for recording the interview functions properly might make the interview more convenient, but more research is needed on the topic to provide better suggestions.

This research suggests Millennials generally perceive videoconferencing and especially Skype interviews to be efficient and convenient in cases when the hiring organization is located at a distance. For recruiting organizations this implies that providing a possibility for a Skype interview for applicants located far away is considered a plus by the applicants. However, organizations should consider using Skype interviews from the perspective that Millennials still prefer face-to-face interviews. Providing the applicant possibility for either type of interview possibly produces the most positive applicant reactions. In case only Skype interview is possible to arrange, organizations should make sure technical issues do not hinder the interview process and the applicant's performance.

7.4 Research reliability and limitations

According to Saaranen-Kauppinen and Puusniikka (2006) critical and evaluative manner of the researcher can enhance research reliability and validity. A critical manner has been adopted throughout this research by first critically reviewing existing literature and then in gathering and analyzing the empirical data. However, Saaranen-Kauppinen and Puusniikka (2006) suggest that suitability of the terms reliability and validity in evaluating qualitative research is not unanimously accepted in research. Therefore to evaluate this research, the author turns to Yin's (2011: 19–20) suggestion of transparency, methodic-ness and adherence to evidence in evaluating qualitative research's trust-worthiness and credibility.

The first objective in doing trustworthy and credible qualitative research, transparency, demands the researcher to continuously describe and document the chosen research procedures, as well as having all research data available for inspection (Yin 2011: 19). In this research, the chosen methods are explained in the introductory and the methodology chapters, to enable the reader to follow and evaluate the research process. All the material of the literature review is published, peer-reviewed academic work that is available for inspection. Also, the interview

data is available upon request in transcribed and recorded form from the author. This way the research can be repeated.

The second objective in qualitative research is methodic-ness, which means that the research is carried out following an orderly set of research procedures and biases and distortion are avoided (Yin 2011: 19–20). Before starting the research, the research process was carefully planned and the author familiarized herself with a significant amount of literature of the research topic. Extensive reviewing of the literature made it possible to accurately identify the research problem and formulate research questions, which were then investigated with the empirical data. Also, all methodological decisions were made according to methodology literature to ensure research questions could be answered with the chosen methods. Data was gathered and analyzed according to methodological literature and research participants were carefully selected.

Adherence to evidence is the third objective in ensuring qualitative research's trustworthiness and credibility. Adherence to evidence basically means that qualitative research is based on an explicit set of evidence and that conclusions are drawn in reference to that evidence, the research data. (Yin 2011: 20.) This research developed a theoretical framework according to existing research that was first examined and reported to the reader, and then revised this framework according to the gathered empirical data. Using abductive logic, all conclusions drawn are based on the joint analysis of the empirical data and the pre-understanding of the topic from the existing research.

Despite the efforts described above to better research trustworthiness and credibility, this research is naturally not without limitations. The biggest limitation of the research is the number of research participants. Because of the limited resources related to the extent of thesis as a research, the number of conducted interviews remained low. However, despite the low number of interviews, the interviews revealed multiple themes that were common to all interviewees so conclusions could be made. In addition, qualitative research in its nature does not aim for statistical generalizations but rather understanding of the phenomenon (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2002: 87–88).

Another limitations could be that all of the interviewees were business graduates or soon-to-be graduates, which could have affected the results. Although all of the research participants worked in different fields within organizations, interviewees from different educational backgrounds could have provided different perspectives to the topic and enriched the empirical data. Having a business study background could have made the research participants more sensitive and aware of issues like candidate experience and employer branding that are relevant in recruitment contexts, than participants from other fields, as these kind of phenomena might be covered in business education. This could result in them having higher expectations than some other groups towards hiring organizations and therefore also affect their preferences concerning the different topics of this research. It is worth noting that the Millennial generation is a far more more diverse group than what the interviewees in this research present.

The researcher's role in qualitative research as being involved in creating the research topic in interaction with the research participants (Varto 1992: 24, Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2000: 23) can also be seen as a limitation, despite the author's commitment to objectivity. As Saaranen-Kauppinen and Puusniekka (2006) suggest, both qualitative and quantitative research always present only one version of the phenomenon under study, and never offer truly objective information. Although conclusions can be drawn, they are always related to their context, time, place and the researcher him/herself.

7.5 Future research suggestions

As mentioned already in the introductory chapter most of recruitment research has focused on the first phase of the recruitment process, attracting applicants. The later phases of the recruitment process have not been covered extensively and this research aimed to fill this gap by examining both recruitment communication and assessment phases of the process. In the future recruitment research would benefit from further investigation of the later phases of the recruitment process from both applicant and organization perspective.

In addition, this research has multiple focus areas as the two main topics of the research, recruitment communication and online assessment, were further divided to three subtopics each. Each of these subtopics, recruitment communication's timing, content and media as well as online assessment's online tests, digital interviews and gamification, should be studied independently to gain a deeper insight into each topic. The literature review conducted for this thesis revealed lack of research in each of these topics.

This research approached recruitment communication from a rather simple perspective, in which communication is understood to happen mainly from sender, the hiring organization, to the receiver, the applicant. Future research could approach the topic from a two-way-interaction perspective and examine the applicant's role as an active participant in recruitment communication also.

Lastly, this research focused on Millennials as a distinct applicant group. Research on has found different generations, the Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Xers and Millennials to differ in their work-related attitudes and behaviour (i.e. Eisner 2005, Glass 2007). The differences have however not been researched in the recruitment context to a great extent. Chapter four introduced also research that has criticized the generational school of academics and questioned the assumption of generational differences as such. Therefore in recruitment research also the assumed generational differences are worth of further examination. An efficient way to examine true generational differences would be to address and compare research of each generation's recruitment related preferences and perceptions as young adults, at the same age that the Millennial generation is currently. Such research that would be comparable with the Millennial research conducted today is naturally limited. This presents a challenge for the generational school in verifying the actual differences between generations and future research should aim to overcome this challenge.

REFERENCES

- Aboul-Ela, G. (2014). Development of a scale to measure the perceived benefits of e-recruitment from the viewpoint of the recruiter. *Journal of Business & Retail Management Research* 9(1), 40–51.
- Alasuutari, P. (1995). *Researching culture. Qualitative method and cultural studies*. UK: Sage.
- Allen, D. G., Van Scotter, J. R. & Otondo, R. F. (2004). Recruitment communication media: Impact on prehire outcomes. *Personnel Psychology* 57(1), 143–171.
- Armstrong, M. (2014). *Human resource management practice*. London, UK: Kogan Page.
- Barber, A. (1998). *Recruiting Employees*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.
- Bauer, T. N., Truxillo, D. M., Sanchez, R. J., Craig, J. M., Ferrara, P. & Campion, M. A. (2001). Applicant reactions to selection: Development of the selection procedural justice scale (spjs). *Personnel Psychology* 54(2), 387–419.
- Birgelen, M. J. H., Wetzels, M. G. M. & van Dolen, W. M. (2008). Effectiveness of corporate employment web sites: How content and form influence intentions to apply. *International Journal of Manpower* 29(8), 731–751.
- Borstorff, P. C., Marker, M. B. & Bennett, D. S. (2005). Online recruitment: Attitudes and behaviors of job seekers. *Journal of Strategic E-commerce* 5(1), 1–23.
- Boswell, W. R., Roehling, M. V., LePine, M. A. & Moynihan, L. M. (2003). Individual job-choice decisions and the impact of job attribute and recruitment practices: A longitudinal field study. *Human resource management* 42(1), 23–37.
- Cappelli, P. (2001). Making the most of on-line recruiting. *Harvard business review* 79(3), 139–146.
- Chapman, D. S., Uggerslev, K. L. & Webster, J. (2003). Applicant reactions to face-to-face and technology-mediated interviews: A field investigation. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 88(5), 944–953.
- Cober, R. T., Brown, D. J., Levy, P. E., Cober, A. B. & Keeping, L. M. (2003). Organizational web sites: Web site content and style as determinants of organizational attraction. *International Journal of Selection and Assessment* 11(2), 158–169.
- Dery, K., Tansley, C. & Hafermalz, E. (2014). Hiring in the age of social media. *University of Auckland Business Review* 17(1), 44–51.

- Doherty, R. (2010). Getting social with recruitment. *Strategic HR Review* 9(6), 11–15.
- Dutta, D. (2014). Tweet your tune - social media, the new pied piper in talent acquisition. *Vikalpa: The Journal for Decision Makers* 39(3), 93-104.
- Ehrhart, K. H., Mayer, D. M. & Ziegert, J. C. (2012). Web-based recruitment in the millennial generation: Work–life balance, website usability, and organizational attraction. *European Journal of Work & Organizational Psychology* 21(6), 850–874.
- Eisner, S. P. (2005). Managing generation Y. (cover story). *SAM Advanced Management Journal* 70(4), 4–15.
- Galanaki, E. (2002). The decision to recruit online: A descriptive study. *Career Development International* 7(4), 243–251.
- Giancola, F. (2006). The generation gap: More myth than reality. *Human Resource Planning* 29(4), 32–37.
- Girard, A. & Fallery, B. (2010). Human resource management on Internet: New perspectives. *Contemporary Management Research* 4(2), 3–14.
- Glass, A. (2007). Understanding generational differences for competitive success. *Industrial & Commercial Training* 39(2), 98–103.
- Hirsjärvi, S. & Hurme, H. (2000). *Tutkimushaastattelu. Teemahaastattelun teoria ja käytäntö*. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press.
- Holm, A. B. (2012). E-recruitment: Towards an ubiquitous recruitment process and candidate relationship management. *Zeitschrift für Personalforschung* 26(3), 241–259.
- Heery, E., & Noon, M. (Eds.). (2001). *Dictionary of human resource management*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Helsilä, M. (2009). *Henkilöstöasioita esimiehille*. Keuruu: Otava.
- Johnson, R. & Gueutal, H. (2013). Research based tips for increasing the effectiveness of e-selection: Part 1. *Workforce Solutions review*, 4–7.
- Johnson, R. & Gueutal, H. (2014). Research based tips for increasing the effectiveness of e-selection: Part 2. *Workforce Solutions review*, 39–41.
- Koivisto, K. (2004). *Oikea valinta*. Jyväskylä: Gummerus.
- Koskinen, I., Alasuutari, P. & Peltonen, T. (2005). *Laadulliset menetelmät kauppatieteissä*. Tampere: Vastapaino.

- Ladkin, A. & Buhalis, D. (2016). Online and social media recruitment. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* 28(2), 327–345.
- Laumer, S., Eckhardt, A. & Weitzel, T. (2012). Online gaming to find a new job -- examining job seekers' intention to use serious games as a self-assessment tool. *Zeitschrift für Personalforschung* 26(3), 218–240.
- Lievens, F. & Harris, M. (2003). Research on Internet recruiting and testing: Current status and future directions. *International Review of Industrial and Organizational Psychology* 18, 131–166.
- Luscombe, J., Lewis, I. & Biggs, H. C. (2013). Essential elements for recruitment and retention: Generation Y. *Education & Training* 55(3), 272–290.
- Martin, C. (2005). From high maintenance to high productivity – What managers need to know about Generation Y. *Industrial and Commercial Training* 37(1), 39–44.
- Meade, A. W., Michels, L. C. & Lautenschlager, G. J. (2007). Are internet and paper-and-pencil personality tests truly comparable? An experimental design measurement invariance study. *Organizational Research Methods* 10(2), 322–345.
- Melanthiou, Y., Pavlou, F. & Constantinou, E. (2015). The use of social network sites as an E-recruitment tool. *Journal of Transnational Management* 20(1), 31–49.
- O'Leary, B. S., Lindholm, M. L., Whitford, R. A. & Freeman, S. E. (2002). Selecting the best and brightest: Leveraging human capital. *Human resource management* 41(3), 325–340.
- Ollington, N., Gibb, J. & Harcourt, M. (2013). Online social networks: An emergent recruiter tool for attracting and screening. *Personnel Review* 42(3), 248–265.
- Oxford English Dictionary (2016a). Generation, n. Oxford University Press. Available <http://www.oed.com.pc124152.oulu.fi:8080/view/Entry/77521?redirectedFrom=generation#eid>. Retrieved 27.9.2016.
- Oxford English Dictionary (2016b). Digital divide, n. Oxford University Press. Available <http://www.oed.com.pc124152.oulu.fi:8080/view/Entry/52611?redirectedFrom=digital+divide#eid6776543> Retrieved 24.11.2016.
- Parry, E. & Tyson, S. (2008). An analysis of the use and success of online recruitment methods in the UK. *Human Resource Management Journal* 18(3), 257–274.
- Parry, E. & Wilson, H. (2009). Factors influencing the adoption of online recruitment. *Personnel Review* 38(6), 655–673.

- Ployhart, R. E., Ryan, A. M. & Bennett, M. (1999). Explanations for selection decisions: Applicants' reactions to informational and sensitivity features of explanations. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 84(1), 87–106.
- Purhonen, S. (2007). Sukupolven ongelma: Tutkielmia sukupolven käsitteestä, sukupolvitietoisuudesta ja suurista ikäluokista. Väitöskirjatutkimus. Research Reports No. 251, Department of Sociology. University of Helsinki, Helsinki.
- Ralston, S. M. & Brady, R. (1994). The relative influence of interview communication satisfaction on applicants' recruitment interview decisions. *Journal of Business Communication* 31(1), 61–77.
- Rantala, J. (1999). *Toimipaikkjen rekrytointikäyttäytyminen*. Työpoliittinen tutkimus Helsinki, Työministeriö.
- Russo, G. (1996). Firms' recruitment behaviour. *Tinbergen Institute Research Series*, 129.
- Rynes, S. L., Bretz, R. D. & Gerhart, B. (1991). The importance of recruitment in job choice: A different way of looking. *Personnel Psychology* 44(3), 487–521.
- Saaranen-Kauppinen, A. & Puusniekka, A. (2006). KvaliMOTV – Menetelmäopetuksen tietojulkaisu. Tampere: Yhteiskuntatieteellinen tietoarkisto. Available <http://www.fsd.uta.fi/menetelmaopetus/kvali/L1:2.html>. Retrieved 27.9.2016.
- Sears, G. J., Zhang, H., Wiesner, W. H., Hackett, R. D. & Yuan, Y. (2013). A comparative assessment of videoconference and face-to-face employment interviews. *Management Decision* 51(8), 1733–1752.
- Shaw, S. & Fairhurst, D. (2008). Engaging a new generation of graduates. *Education and Training* 50(5), 366–378.
- Singh, P. & Finn, D. (2003). The effects of information technology on recruitment. *Journal of labor research* 24(3), 395–408.
- Soulez, S. & Guillot-Soulez, C. (2011). Recruitment marketing and generational segmentation: A critical analysis based on a sub-segment of generation Y. *Recherche et Applications en Marketing (English Edition)* 26(1), 39–55.
- Spitzer, B. (2014). HR in the digital age. *Workforce Solutions Review* 5(1), 15–17.
- Strauss, S., Miles, J. & Levesque, L. (2001). The effects of videoconference, telephone, and face-to-face media on interviewer and applicant judgments in employment interviews. *Journal of Management* 27, 363–381.
- Sylva, H. & Mol, S. T. (2009). E-recruitment: A study into applicant perceptions of an online application system. *International Journal of Selection & Assessment* 17(3), 311–323.

- Teoh, W., Tan, S.-C. & Siong, C. C. (2013). Factors influencing perceptions of university students towards internet recruitment. *Asian Academy of Management Journal* 18(1), 123–142.
- Terjesen, S., Vinnicombe, S. & Freeman, C. (2007). Attracting generation Y graduates. *Career Development International* 12(6), 504–522.
- Toldi, N. L. (2011). Job applicants favor video interviewing in the candidate-selection process. *Employment Relations Today* 38(3), 19–27.
- Tuomi, J. & Sarajärvi, A. (2002). Laadullinen tutkimus ja sisällönanalyysi. Helsinki: Tammi.
- Ugbah, S. D. & Majors, R. E. (1992). Influential communication factors in employment interviews. *Journal of Business Communication* 29(2), 145–159.
- Vaahio, E.-L. (2005). *Rekrytointi menestystekijänä*. Edita Publishing Oy.
- Varto, J. (1992). *Laadullisen tutkimuksen metodologia*. Helsinki: Kirjayhtymä Oy.
- Warmerdam, A., Lewis, I. & Banks, T. (2015). Gen Y recruitment. *Education & Training* 57(5), 560–574.
- Walker, H., Bauer, T., Bernherth, J., Feild, H. & Short, J. (2013). Is this how I will be treated? Reducing uncertainty through recruitment interactions. *Academy of Management Journal* 58(5), 1325–1347.
- Walker, H., Helmuth, C., Field, H. & Bauer, T. (2015). Watch what you say: Job applicants' justice perceptions form initial organizational correspondence. *Human resource management* 57(6), 999–1011
- Williamson, I. O., Lepak, D. P. & King, J. (2003). The effect of company recruitment web site orientation on individuals' perceptions of organizational attractiveness. *Journal of vocational behavior* 63(2), 242–263.
- Winsborough, D. & Chamorro-Premuzic, T. (2016). Talent identification in the digital world: New talent signals and the future of HR assessment. *People & Strategy* 39(2), 28–31.
- Wozniak, J. (2015). The use of gamification at different levels of E-recruitment. *Management Dynamics in the Knowledge Economy* 3(2), 257–278.
- Ziesemer, T. (2003). Information and communication technology as technical change in matching and production. *Journal of Economics* 79(3), 263–287.

APPENDIX 1**OUTLINE OF A SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW**

The interview questions are in Finnish. English version available upon request from the author.

1. Yleiset asiat

- Ikä, sukupuoli, ala, koulutus
- Miten kuvailisit omaa rekrytointikokemustasi (viimeisin rekrytointi kokemus), haetko töitä parhaillaan?

1. Rekrytointikanavat

- Miten kuvailisit omaa työnhakukäyttäytymistäsi?
- Mistä yleisimmin etsit töitä? Miksi?
- Mikä on tärkein kanava työnhaussasi? Miksi?
- Käytätkö sosiaalista mediaa töiden etsimisessä, mitä kanavia? Miksi?
- Näetkö Facebookkia/Twitteriä työnhakukanavana?
- Etsitkö työpaikkoja lehdistä, tv/radio? Miksi/Miksi ei? Miten hyödyllisiksi koet perinteiset kanavat?

2. Rekrytointi kommunikaatio

- Hakemuksen jättämisen jälkeen, odotatko kommunikaatiota yritykseltä? Miksi? Missä kanavassa?
- Mitä sisältöä odotat kommunikaatiossa hakemuksen jättämisen jälkeen? Miksi? Missä kanavassa, miksi?
- Haluaisitko/koetko tärkeäksi, että rekrytoinnissa on joku yhteyshenkilö, jonka yhteystiedot annetaan hakijalle?
- Viestisitkö itse yritykseen, missä vaiheissa rekrytointiprosessia?
- Mitä sisältöä viestisit, missä kanavassa?
- Arvioinnin/haastattelun jälkeinen kommunikaatio ennen valintaa, odotatko kommunikaatiota yrityksen kanssa, mitä sisältöä, miksi? Missä kanavassa, miksi?
- Rekrytointipäätöksen jälkeinen kommunikaatio, mitä sisältöä odotat, miksi? Missä kanavassa?
- Voisitko käyttää sosiaalista mediaa viestintäkanavana, esimerkiksi LinkedIn/Facebook/muu rekrytointiprosessin aikana? Mitä ajatuksia se herättää?

3. Hakijoiden arviointi online-ympäristössä

- Oletko tehnyt persoonallisuus- tai soveltuvuustestejä rekrytoinnin yhteydessä? Entä elektronisesti?

- Mitä mieltä yleensä olet persoonallisuus/soveltuvuustestauksessa rekrytoinnissa?
 - Tekisikö mieluummin testin elektronisesti vai paperilla, miksi?
 - Koetko elektroniset soveltuvuus/persoonallisuustestit hyväksi tavoiksi arvioida hakijoita? Miksi/Miksi et?
4. Virtuaaliset haastattelut
- Oletko osallistunut virtuaalisiin (video/videokonferenssi) haastatteluihin? kumpaan, kerro kokemuksesta. Mitä positiivista, mitä negatiivista, miksi?
 - Osallistuisitko mieluummin face-to-face vai videokonferenssi (esim. Skype) haastatteluun, miksi?
 - Yleinen mielipiteesi videokonferenssi haastattelusta, hyödyt/haitat?
 - Mikä tekee videohaastattelusta/videokonferenssihaastattelusta toimivan/mikä haittaa toimivuutta?
5. Pelillistäminen ja pelit rekrytoinnissa
- Onko sinulla kokemusta peleistä rekrytoinnin yhteydessä?
 - Jos rekrytointi sivulla olisi urapeli, joka simuloi haettavaa tehtävää, pelaisitko peliä? Minkälainen pelin pitäisi olla, jotta haluaisit pelata sitä?
 - Mitä elementtejä urapelissä voisi olla?
 - Koetko tietokonepelillä voivan saada tietoa työhön soveltuvuudesta, voisiko sitä käyttää arvioinnin välineenä, miksi/miksi ei?
 - Suhtaudutko positiivisesti/negatiivisesti peleihin ja pelillisiin elementteihin rekrytoinnissa, miksi?