**School of Management**

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# Diversity is everywhere, inclusion isn't:

## An explorative study into the ethical and diversity outcomes of

## social media recruitment in New Zealand

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# Acknowledgements

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## Executive Summary

New Zealand is known to be a socially diverse and inclusive nation. It was the first country to give women the right to vote in 1893, and has had 30 years of sex discrimination legislation. There are 213 different ethnicities living in New Zealand, and the country ranks second in the global index of employee diversity. New Zealand's life expectancy is one of the highest among the OECD countries, and its migration balance is one of the most volatile.

There is no doubt that the future demographic of New Zealand is changing; so what does this mean for the New Zealand workplace? According to 'Rainbow Tick'; while diversity is everywhere, inclusion isn't; and it will soon become a matter of competitive sustainability for organisations to effectively manage 'inclusively' within this diverse environment.

While there is a growing trend to utilise social media and e-recruitment to attract new talent, and to address person-organisation fit; this study seeks to explore whether these tools actually enable 'inclusive recruitment', or in fact increase the likelihood of unethical practises and homogeneous organisations.

This review acknowledges the need for New Zealand organisations to stay commercially viable, and to increase awareness of the global marketplace in which they operate. It also provides recommendations for employers to take a critical look at their recruitment processes as they evolve from a purely Human Resources function to wider organisational responsibility, which integrates with Strategic Objectives, Communications and Brand Management strategies.

# Chapter 1: Introduction

## 1.1     Research background

New Zealand is known to be a socially diverse and inclusive nation. It was the first country to give women the right to vote in 1893 and has had 30 years of sex discrimination legislation, ranking seventh in the global composite gender diversity index out of fifty countries. Thanks to a recently published standard for gender and sexual diversity in employment: the NZS 8200:2015 for Rainbow-inclusive workplaces; New Zealand is again leading on the global stage in terms of its advances in promoting gender equity employment (PSA, 2015). There are 213 different ethnicities living in New Zealand, and the country ranks second in the global index of employee diversity (Chin, 2015). Auckland is considered more diverse than London or Sydney, with 40 per cent of its population made up of different ethnicities. A quarter of the population is overseas-born; and Māori make up 14.9 percent of the population. Only 65,973 people identified as 'New Zealander' on their census form, with Asian ethnic groups having almost doubled in size since 2001. There are three official languages: English, Māori and NZ Sign language, and Hindi is now the fourth most commonly spoken language in New Zealand (NZ Stats, 2013). It is in the top five countries in terms of sectoral diversity and has one of the most educationally diverse populations in the world (Forbes, 2012; EEO, n.d.). New Zealand's life expectancy is one of the highest among the OECD countries, indicating an aging workforce; and its 'migration balance' is one of the most volatile (Bascand, 2012).

So what does all this diversity mean for the New Zealand workplace?

According to Rainbow Tick; while diversity is everywhere, inclusion isn't.

From the literature research, there are two emerging themes: the changing demographic of New Zealand, creating a more diverse workforce; and the rapidly evolving trends in Human Resource Management to use social media for recruitment, selection and organisational fit. Research carried out by the Equal Employment Opportunities Trust (EEO), shows that a diverse and inclusive workplace is more likely to attract high quality applicants, retain staff, and boost productivity (Rainbow Tick, 2015). However, literature reviews on the subject, demonstrate that while there are extensive studies on the global perspective on diversity in the workforce, the advantages of online initiatives for recruitment and selection; and the ethics around the use of social media; there are a number of gaps around the actual effectiveness of social media recruitment initiatives which support the business case for inclusion; as well as a significant lack of research into the specific implications for New Zealand organisations.

Several points for discussion have emerged out of this research and it is worth noting that the narrative within New Zealand has moved on from 'managing diversity' to 'inclusive workplaces' (EEO, 2015). Inclusion in the workplace has been described as a journey that starts with discrimination and moves through tolerance, acceptance, respect, and finally to inclusion when diversity is valued and actively sought. The concept of 'inclusive workplaces' incorporates a broad range of people, but for the purposes of this paper, it will be defined as differences between employees, whether visible or invisible; and may relate to age, gender, ethnicity, culture, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, religion or personality. In New Zealand, the term "Rainbow" encompasses people who are LGBTTI or lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, takatāpui and intersex (also known as LGBTQ in the US)  (EEO, 2015; Kossek *et al*., 2005; Rainbow Tick, 2015; Shen *et al*., 2009).

## 1.2. Objectives

While EEO policies have seen an increase in the statistical monitoring of demographics of hired employees by New Zealand organisations; the notion of 'inclusion' for a job seeker actually commences well before they are employed; and is therefore potentially difficult to measure. This paper generates discussion around how equity principles are incorporated with person-organisation (P-O) fit objectives, and how businesses should best attract, recruit and engage with potential employees. Given the pace of globalisation, fuelled by ever-increasing innovations in technology; it is not surprising that the availability of research on this topic is limited, and that recruitment best practise is being established 'on the fly' without the breadth of empirical evidence to support it. Due to volatile economic conditions, organisations are under constant pressure to keep up with the recruitment demands of a fluctuating workforce, whilst searching for more efficient and cost effective methods of accommodating the shrinking human resources budget. On one hand there are obvious benefits for using e-recruitment systems to provide instant results and reduce the labour required to manage large scale campaigns and candidate applications; but on the other hand there are emerging concerns about the outcomes for the management of the candidate application experience, and the longer term implications for organisational diversity initiatives.

The objectives of this project are to explore the challenges and benefits for New Zealand organisations to recruit through social media.

## 1.3    Research questions

Mohamed *et al.,* (2002) highlights the potential discriminatory impacts on racial minorities as well as older applicants; and Smita & Sarika, (2015); Cappelli, (2001); and Kluemper &

Rosen, (2009) raise concerns about the implications for diversity and privacy of social media. Therefore this literature research brings to light the over-arching question of:

**What are some of the ethical or diversity outcomes of social media recruitment initiatives in New Zealand?**

This leads to the following discussion points and questions:

1. The literature shows that organisations are encouraged to adopt e-recruitment systems for cost efficiency reasons and to 'keep up with other organizations' (Parry & Wilson, 2009; Holm, 2013; Cappelli, 2001).

   **What are the drivers for New Zealand organisations in the adoption of social media initiatives to attract and select employees?**

2. Studies by Tews *et al.,* (2012) discovered that 'fun co-worker interactions' were the strongest predictors of job applicant attraction for the millennial generation; and popular websites such as 'Glassdoor' provide opportunities to rate employer brands based on personal employee experience.

   **Does the candidate experience of a New Zealand e-recruitment process result in an improved perception of the organisational brand of the employer?**

3. According to person-organisation (P-O) theories, values congruence and work environment congruence have more linkages to job satisfaction and commitment, than personality (Westerman & Cyr, 2004). PricewaterhouseCoopers (2014) reports that 82% of female millennials note that a policy on diversity, equality and workforce inclusion, is an important deciding factor when considering an organisation.

**How does e-recruitment ensure P-O and cultural fit; and what are the drivers for the millennial applicant?**

4. The argument by Betances *et al.,* (2012) is that a recruiter may learn a candidate's personal values and opinions through social media initiatives, which could then create a negative impression of their fit for the organisation. Recent research by Dery *et al.,* (2014), uncover the practises of 'gamification' whereby graduates 'play' the recruitment and selection process as a game in order to win the job.

**What are the inherent ethical and diversity implications of social media for job seekers?**

## 1.4    Report outline

This business research project is structured along the lines of a thematic analysis, where it starts with an introduction chapter to the broad topic of diversity in the New Zealand context and what it means for our future workforce. It presents the objective of the report which is to consider the implications for 'inclusion' when using e-recruitment tools, and introduces the research questions, and the outline of the report.

The Literature Review chapter explores the vast array of global research available on the topics of diversity and inclusion, recruitment and selection, person-organisation fit and the ethics around using social media and e-recruitment tools. The review discusses the rationale for recruiting for diversity and looks at the business case imperative for New Zealand organisations to adopt a higher 'Cultural-Intelligence Quotient' (CQ) awareness in order to successfully integrate to an 'inclusive' model, and remain commercially competitive in the global market. The aim of the literature research is to highlight the gaps around specific

literature on social media initiatives in New Zealand, and to explore potential models for future analysis of the research findings.

The chapter on methodology outlines the philosophy behind the qualitative investigation, and rationale for use of a specific empirical phenomenological case study in order to understand the experience of a recruiter and a job applicant in the current New Zealand market. This research approach allows for potential 'debunking of assumptions' rather than jumping to conclusions based on incomplete information.

The chapter on data results and analysis brings together the information gathered from the surveys, and thematises the discussions in order to identify common experiences, and form a basis for discussion.

The discussion chapter connects the investigative findings with the literature research in order to evaluate the gaps and come to conclusions around the phenomenon of how 'inclusion' is perceived in New Zealand. It interprets whether there are any significant ethical or diversity outcomes with social media recruitment initiatives currently being used.

The concluding chapter summarises the findings and highlights any potential limitations in the business research and makes recommendations around areas for future study.

# Chapter 2: Literature Review

## 2.1.    Why recruit for diversity?

Despite the country's unique demographics, recent studies show a disappointing pace of change in the New Zealand workforce; and it has not yet joined the U.S. and U.K. who track their employment data in regards to ethnicity. The country now lags behind internationally in gender equality, and there are currently no gender quotas for women on NZ boards; despite a continued underrepresentation by women in senior management positions (Global Women, n.d.). According to Human Rights Commissioner, Dr Judy McGregor, New Zealand's youth unemployment is now at a "critically embarrassing stage in terms of its economic wellbeing;" and the country has not increased its refugee quota intake since 1987 (Human Rights Commission, 2015). Whilst a third of New Zealanders are of Asian, Māori or Pacific descent, only a tenth of these ethnicities occupy senior public sector management jobs. In the private sector, only 13% of New Zealand's top 100 companies appear to have people of Asian descent in their management teams (Ernst & Young, 2013; EEO, n.d.). People with disabilities have high rates of unemployment and low rates of labour force participation. The over 65 age bracket will soon outnumber children under five, so policies to raise the age of eligibility for New Zealand Superannuation to 65, has meant that 50% of baby boomers do not feel confident that their savings will carry them through retirement (Davey & Cornwall, 2003). Bruce Hassall, CEO of PwC New Zealand warns that "our failure to address diversity will increasingly impact our future growth, competitive position and our prosperity as a country in a world that is rapidly changing" (Global Women, n.d.).

### 2.1.1. Diversity versus inclusion

'Cultural diversity' has been defined as the representation in one social system, of people with distinctly different group affiliations of cultural significance (Cox, 1993; Macky, 2009). However, 'workforce diversity' acknowledges the many differences between employees, whether visible or invisible; and may relate to age, gender, ethnicity, culture, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, religion or personality (Kossek *et al.,* 2005, Shen *et al.*, 2009).

Within the New Zealand Government sector, human resource diversity initiatives have focused primarily on fairness for legally protected populations, and have been driven by universal Human Rights, Affirmative Action (AA) and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) policies (NZ Police, 2008; Office of Ethnic Affairs, 2012; Ministry of Social Development, n.d.; EEO, n.d.). In contrast to the negative perspective of discrimination against staff; the EEO emphasis is on a positive perspective of differences among all individuals, and is about creating a versatile workplace where all employees have an equal chance to do their best (Macky, 2009; Maxwell *et al*., 2001, as cited by Shen *et al.,* 2009).

A prevailing theme in the literature is that 'diversity' should be defined by individual subjectivity, and personal identification or affiliation with a social or demographic group (Macky, 2009). This theme is developed by Houkamau & Boxall (2011) who discuss how 'managing diversity' is perceived within New Zealand. In one study, the concept is criticised by Māori EEO practitioners as being an Americanised term that treats all minorities equally and undermines the unique status of Māori in New Zealand. Alternatively, Pacific Island practitioners considered the language of 'diversity' as positive, and an improvement on the term 'biculturalism'.

While diversity concepts are now well recognised globally, one emerging theme is the fact that it is possible to have 'diversity without inclusion' (Harvard Business Press, 2014; PWC, 2015; EEO, 2014). Organisations, such as Rainbow Tick (2015) describe 'inclusion' as when an organisation allows its employees to bring the 'whole of themselves to work', which reflects the wider society, thus becoming better connected and aware of the full potential of its market. A report from the Harvard Business Press (2014) discusses the historic issues around a lack of inclusion in the workplace; and suggests that they stem from organisational failure to change social norms through gaining support among dominant group members. Essentially 'cloning' can occur when organisational leaders hire people like themselves and are drawn to people who share their same attitudes, behaviours, and traits. They insinuate that organisations unknowingly have "prototypes for success" that perpetuate a similarity bias and limit the pool of potential candidates for positions. Clearly, diversity management or inclusion may be understood in very different ways and is highly contingent on the observer and the cultural context (Farndale *et al.,* 2015).

### 2.1.2. Organisational competitive advantage

Aside from the equity perspective, there is a considerable amount of literature which promotes the wider benefits of workplace inclusion, as an essential approach to organisational competitive advantage in today's global context (Jackson *et al.,* 2003; Farndale *et al.,* 2015; Cox & Blake, 1991; Cox 1993; Dalton *et al.*, 2015; Avery & McKay 2008, 2011; Tipper, 2004; Shen *et al.,* 2009; Robinson, 2003; Houkamau & Boxall 2011; Lambert, 2012; Walker *et al*., 2012; Wilson, 2008). Forbes Insights (2012), attributes significant GDP growth with increasing migrant populations; and United Nations' studies have demonstrated that greater economic equality between men and women leads to a reduction in poverty rates and better governance (UNDP, 2014). Macky (2009) offers a specifically New Zealand perspective and

states that   increased workforce diversity has been associated with improved social and economic opportunities for business growth and trade. Given our geographical location and relational reliance on the Asia-Pacific region, New Zealand has significant advantages in being able to boost our talent pool through the migration of skilled workers, therefore supporting the argument for a greater strategic approach towards inclusion, as opposed to merely policy adoption (Chin, 2015).

The literature suggests that organisations which demonstrate favourable attitudes toward others, result in better performance ratings and wages; and those with higher levels of family-friendly and proactive EEO practices have more committed and satisfied employees who report to be more trusting of their employer (Farndale *et al.,* 2015; Kossek, 2005; Houkamau & Boxall, 2011; Deloitte, 2015; and Robinson *et al.,* 2003). Other writers argue that when differences such as gender, race, and disability are understood and respected in the workplace, there is a strong correlation with better operating performance and improved customer satisfaction (Cox, 1991, 1993; Shen *et al.,* 2009; Herring, 2009).

Furthermore, with the increasing need for organisations to build their reputation in corporate responsibility, recruiting from disadvantaged groups can demonstrate strong ethics and values to government, local communities, and media (Robinson, 2003; Boyle, 2013). For example, marketing experts claim that programmes aimed at people with disabilities can reach as many as four out of every 10 consumers; and if organisations are not equally as diverse as the communities they operate in, they risk alienating themselves from their customers (Tipper, 2004). In contrast to these claims, other empirical research has shown that diversity policies had no overall positive or negative effect on team processes or performance outcomes (Jackson *et al.,* 2003).

It is possible therefore, that merely the perception within the marketplace that an organisation is an 'employer of choice'[1] is enough to attract higher proportions of job applicants and allows the organisation to select higher calibre employees who are naturally more committed to the delivery of performance outcomes and are more satisfied with their careers.

### 2.1.3. Person–organization fit theory

In traditional recruitment practise, there has been an emphasis on matching people with positions 'person-position fit' and selecting an employee by assessment of their more 'visible' attributes of knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) and comparing them with specific job requirements and competencies (Macky, 2009). On the other hand (P–O) fit research examines the phenomenon of hiring 'people' (not just KSAs) for 'organisations,' not just jobs. According to 'person–organization fit theory' (P-O), individuals make job choice assessments based on the fit between their personal values and the values of an organisation – or the more 'hidden' beliefs and attitudes of the individual and their assumptions around those held by the organisation (Westerman & Cyr, 2004).

A comparison of two well-known models, the "Iceberg Model" and the "Culture Iceberg Model" demonstrate the differences between these two concepts of recruitment (Cheng, 2014). See Appendix 1 for further comparisons of recruitment models.

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1. A recognised understanding of 'employer of choice' refers to New Zealand's largest and longest running study of workplace climate and employee engagement; the annual Best Workplaces Survey and Awards; operated by IBM Kenexa (NYSE: IBM).

**Figure 1. Iceberg Model**
(Spencer & Spencer, 1993)
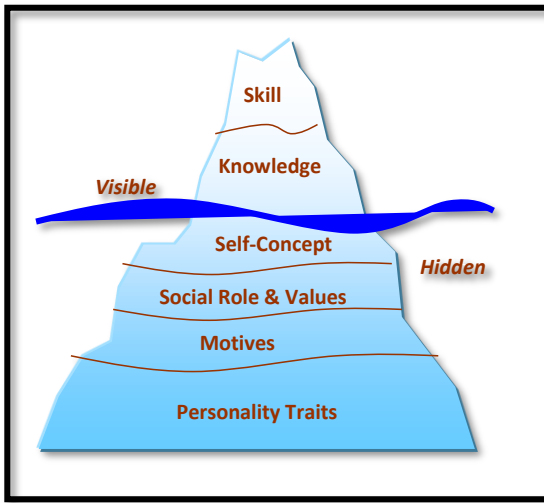


**Figure 2. Culture Iceberg Model**
(Schein, 2004)
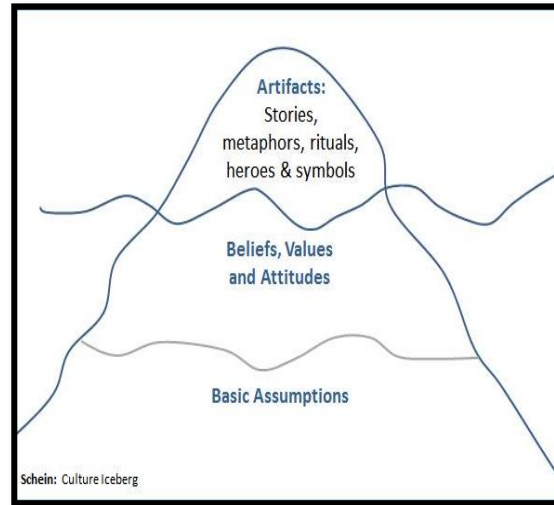


Westerman & Cyr (2004) introduce the theory of attraction–selection–attrition (ASA) which states that individuals select situations based on their personalities, which then may drive the formation of organisational cultures and work environments. The implications for person-organisation fit theory is that job applicants whose values are aligned with that of the organisation, as well as those of the position have a higher employee satisfaction, and are more likely to remain motivated and committed to the organisation for longer. They elaborate that organisations with P-O recruitment strategies tend to attract and select employees with similar characteristics; however these can increase the homogeneity of organisation in the long term and lead to limitations in terms of inclusion practises, and inhibit the innovation of enterprise and organisational performance.

Clearly there are a broad range of organisational models and practises of person–organization fit for recruitment purposes; however it is still a crucial area for ongoing research, particularly for its implications for sustainable diversity and inclusion in the workforce (Carless, 2014; Cheng, 2014; Deloitte, 2015; Westerman & Cyr, 2004).

### 2.1.4. Culture fit theory

This introduces the discussion of the frequently utilised term 'culture fit' and the appropriate research of Ng & Burke (2005) on whether diversity actually makes a difference in the 'war for talent'. Their survey of MBA job seekers concluded that women and ethnic minorities as well as high achievers and new immigrants rated organisations with diversity management as more attractive potential employers. However, despite universal belief in a 'global talent shortage', many New Zealand public and private organisations still receive large numbers of applications, but have a tendency to provide feedback of 'not the right culture fit' when declining candidates or excluding them from the selection process. Some research suggests that while many organisations claim to practice non-sexist and non-racist recruitment policies, in reality white males have unfair advantages, both at job interviews, and later during job evaluations, as a result of informal friendships or 'old boy networks'. This also connects with previous research around unconscious bias and the 'cloning' effect within the recruitment practises of homogeneous organisations (Human Resource Management International Digest, 2006; Ng & Burke, 2005; Harvard Business Review, 2014).

Culture-fit practise does therefore raise concerns for the validity and ethics of the selection criteria and shortlisting process; and begs the question: what kind of processes and practises ensure a non-subjective assessment of P-O or culture fit?

### 2.1.5. Organisation attraction

A New Zealand PwC (2014) report on the attitudes of the millennial generation discovered that those born after 1977 will tend to seek out employers with a strong record of equality and diversity. In particular, this relates to the female millennial, with 82% of them noting that a policy on diversity, equality and workforce inclusion, is an important deciding factor when considering an organisation. Further to this, recent studies by Tews *et al.,* (2012) looked into

the strongest predictors of applicant attraction to jobs; and discovered that 'fun co-worker interactions and fun job responsibilities' were in fact stronger predictors of applicant attraction than compensation and opportunities for advancement, particularly for the millennial generation. In a recent Deloitte report (2015) the increasing number of Millennials in the workforce has brought about a new conversation around wanting to be valued for the multiplicity of their identities; their 'whole self' as opposed to just the conventional delineations to which they belong. This is consistent with the Rainbow Tick (2015) mantra; and is a worldview which has evolved out of frustration around being 'labelled' as fitting into one box or another.

While millennials are more 'diverse' than ever before, they are less willing to use traditional categories of diversity to label themselves; and this poses new threats to traditional EEO practises and policies which seek to measure diversity in the work place.


## 2.2 E-Recruitment solutions

When a group of McKinsey consultants coined the term 'The War for Talent' in the 1990s, the Internet was fast becoming the driver behind a 'recruiting revolution'. Promises of increased business efficiencies and benefits transformed the way people looked for work, and brought about radical 'disruptive innovations' to traditional corporate recruitment models (Smita & Sarika, 2015; Parry & Wilson, 2009; Archana *et al.,* Barber, 2006; Kluemper & Rosen, 2009). According to Christensen (2012), an innovation that is 'disruptive' allows a whole new population of consumers at the bottom of a market to access a product or service that was historically only accessible to consumers with a lot of money or skill.

While the introduction of the Internet is known to be one of the most profound disruptive innovations within our lifetime; the dynamic effect that online recruitment has had on the

traditional job application process is perhaps one of the strongest examples of Christensen's theory that is still to be fully realized in broader ethical and economical terms.

### 2.2.1    Adoption of e-recruitment tools

E-recruitment boasts a vast array of process 'improvements,' from online application forms; to advertising vacancies on social media sites; and the use of candidate selection software programs to weed out suitable applicants; which have been a windfall for human resource professionals, who are tasked with sorting through numerous applications for large numbers of positions (McSherry Breslin, 2012). Parry & Wilson, (2009) and Holm, (2013) found that that recruiting managers were encouraged to adopt e-recruitment systems in order to 'keep up with other organizations' or to 'move with the times'. Businesses are under pressure to keep operating costs low, so the efficiencies of online job boards such as SEEK, TradeMe and other social media forums such as LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook; has meant that all employers can now compete on an even playing field, and it is no longer the organisations with the largest ads in the newspaper who attract the most job applicants (Doherty, 2010). One report by Cappelli (2001), estimates that it costs only about one-twentieth as much to hire someone online as it does to hire that same person through other offline means. However McSherry Breslin (2012) suggests that while using social media tools makes the task much quicker, it can lack the discriminatory power of human intuition, and might mean that the ideal candidate is the person who has been overlooked.

So while it may make economic sense in the short-term for organisations to invest in e-recruitment systems, it is important to assess the long term opportunity cost of such decisions.

### 2.2.2 Employer brand

CIPD, (2013) reports that jobseekers' decisions can be crucially influenced by employer brand as projected through social media; but as the employer usage of social media sites (SMS) becomes more competitive, there are increasing concerns around how a jobseeker can accurately assess whether the brand fairly represents the organisational values, thus allowing them to predict their fit for the role (Travagline, 2001; Nikolaou, 2014). Doherty, (2010) considers the applications for Web 2.0 technologies for human resources, and encourages the use of social networking to engage talent. He argues that the consumer marketing concepts of creating business value through 'getting social with your talent', 'creating a personal brand' and 'communicating the benefits', can also be applied to the corporate world when promoting an organisation as a desirable place to work. Newly established websites such as 'Glassdoor' provide opportunities to rate particular employer brands based on personal employee experience, and are becoming increasingly popular with job seekers. While these platforms are at risk of associated legal issues around defamation if a claim is made that may give an individual or company a negative image; it does imply a shift in branding from an external independent ranking of organisations (such as IBM's Employer of Choice Awards) to employee based branding (Elefant, 2011; Brill, 2012; Lumesse, 2011 as cited by Fisher *et al.,* 2014).

This also means significant implications for organisational e-recruitment processes, as these public forums provide previously unattainable opportunities for feedback around a candidate's experience of the job application process, thus potentially damaging an organisation's brand and reputation as an employer of choice (Thielsch *et al.,* 2012).

### 2.2.3   Social media engagement

'Social,' as defined by Merriam Webster, is 'the interaction of the individual and the group,' and 'tending to form cooperative and interdependent relationships'. Therefore 'social recruiting' is the use of social media and social networking sites to find, engage, communicate and build relationships with potential candidates with the intent to network and recruit (Cober *et al.,* 2000). However, while social media has the potential for social interaction, it is not necessarily 'social' nor is it 'interactive,' unless there is mutually or reciprocally active communication between the contributor and the consumer. Online conversations around the 'anti-social' side of current e-recruitment practises are increasing; and pose challenges to organisations who are "sitting on thousands of previously submitted applications from candidates, who have already expressed an interest in working for the company, to engage in social interactions with them and reap the benefits of their own database of potential candidates" (Boolean, n.d.). Bolton (2013) argues that most e-recruitment activity simply consists of loading an ad on an online job site and waiting for the responses, which is nothing more than marketing, and that recruiters or human resource personnel do not take the time to really engage in two-way communication or give any feedback.  McSherry Breslin's (2012) findings suggest that candidates rejected by software rather than by a human recruiter often feel bitter about the lack of constructive feedback to help them prepare for their next application. These negative experiences by potential employees can have long term effects on the reputation of the employer and only dissuade future applications. PWC (2014) suggests that one of the strongest millennial traits is that they welcome and expect regular feedback and their preference is for important feedback discussions to take place face-to-face.

This has serious implications for the use of e-recruitment technology in the future and will require employers to re-think their communication habits if they want to engage and maintain strong relationships with their future workforce.

### 2.2.4 E-recruitment and person-organisation fit

Despite the widespread adoption of online recruitment methods and the resulting opportunities for increased communication between employer and job applicant; there has been little empirical research to investigate whether the projected benefits to organisations have been realized (Smita & Sarika, 2015; Cappelli, 2001; Kluemper & Rosen, 2009). There is however a growing number of studies that question the predictive validity of social networking sites (SNS) in job search, recruitment, and selection; and raise concerns about the implications for diversity and privacy (Nikolaou, 2014; Yanisky-Ravid, 2014; Kluemper & Rosen, 2009; Betances et al., 2012; Brill, 2012). Further research weighs heavily on the dangers of employers using social media to effectively determine 'cultural fit' (Calvasina *et al.,* 2014; Henderson & Bowley, 2010; Elefant, 2011; Peters, 2014; Brown & Vaughn, 2011; Deloitte 2009 as cited by Davison *et al.,* 2011; Zhang, 2014; Boyd & Ellison, 2008). Concerns about how social media crosses the previously guarded boundaries between private and professional personas, have been investigated by Henderson & Bowley, (2010) who see a general trend of apathy towards privacy by social media users. With a whole generation of job seekers who have been conditioned to posting their private activities or attitudes on social media from childhood, they predict an increase in the potential for leaking of corporate information, which will only encourage organisations to "harvest" information from SNS and further expose users to risk.

'Uncertainty Reduction Theory' (see Appendix 2) is similar to 'confirmation bias' and is a contributing motivator for employers to search out online information about applicants in order to determine 'fit' for their organisation; therefore job applicants need to carefully consider how their personal profiles might be perceived by prospective employers (Carr & Walter, 2014). This is consistent with research from Betances *et al.,* (2012) who elaborate on the potential that a recruiter may learn a candidate's personal opinions or private thoughts on

religion, politics, and other areas; which could create a negative impression or an opportunity to illegally discriminate against them.

### 2.2.5   Gamification and recruitment

As developments in digital technologies become increasingly complex, so do the strategies undertaken by job applicants to ensure they are successful in a competitive market. 'Gamification' has been defined as the act of applying game theories - such as a goal, rules, a feedback system, and voluntary participation - in a traditionally non-game context; and often includes interactivity, graphics, narrative, rewards, competition, virtual environments and the idea of 'winning'. Recent research by Dery *et al.,* (2014) examines the graduate recruitment process of a large professional services firm, and applies actor-network theory to explore the way applicants engage with the technology as well as other participants, to position themselves more favourably in the quest for a graduate role. Their findings uncover the practises of 'gamification' whereby graduates 'play' the recruitment and selection process as a game in order to win the job. Their study raises relevant questions around the boundaries between rules and practice; and whether the graduates are cheating the system, or just crowd-sourcing a solution to a difficult puzzle.

**Figure 3. Social Media and the Graduate Recruitment & Selection Funnel at Consultex**

(Dery & Gaveston, 2013, as cited in Dery *et al.,* (2014)

**Candidate Driven Social Media Use**

Candidates share questions and experiences and give each other guidance relating to administrative and strategic aspects of each stage

Progress updates are shared, some descriptions of experience and detailed tips are given but briefer statements of encouragement (eg. 'good luck') appear more frequently

Candidates announce positive and negative outcomes, share disappointment and excitement

**Organisation Driven Social Media Use**

Used in Q&A capacity

Aimed at displaying/performing the 'culture' of the organisation to aid identification and to guide candidates' actions and decisions

Used to maintain connection with successful candidates and to organise events

Online Application (11,000 applicants)

Online Assessment Psychometric Testing

Online Assessment Phone Interview

Assessment Centre

Case Study (not all streams)

Partner Interview

Offer

Offer Acceptance

Time Before Start

Start Date (500 graduates)

In terms of the learnings for recruitment, Dery's model offers unique insights into the necessity for organisations to develop more sophisticated and improved selection processes and applications which cater to the technology savvy millennium generation.

### 2.2.6 Ethical and diversity implications

Research shows that recruiting using social media has many advantages and can be tailored to attract specific people in order to match organisational fit; but that we need to monitor our behaviour through more robust processes and establish clear guidelines in order to circumvent the complex ethical and legal consequences (Peters, 2014; Zhang, 2014). Mohamed *et al.,* (2002) highlights some relevant issues for the use of online recruitment and the potential discriminatory impacts on racial minorities as well as older applicants. Facebook for example,

has a feature that allows users to specify the demographics of the groups they seek to target, and ads can be placed on pages whose demographics match the selected criteria; but Facebook ratings in general tend to favour female and white applicants (Van Iddekinge, 2013; Bolton *et al.,* 2013). While LinkedIn has proven to be very popular as a recruitment tool, U.S. statistical data shows that persons of colour are underrepresented in comparison to the broader population: just 5% of LinkedIn members are African-Americans (compared with 12.8% of the overall population) while 2% are Hispanics (compared with 15.4% of overall population). Therefore a company relying primarily on LinkedIn for recruiting purposes might be accused of unlawfully attempting to keep job opportunities off limits to African Americans and Hispanics (Elefant, 2011). Evidence shows that Generation Y's social media usage in the USA differs from that of South Korea due to differences in culture and technological infrastructure; and that social media behaviours can be driven by differences in wealth distribution (Bolton *et al.,* 2013). While there is very little research specific to ethical recruitment practises in New Zealand; EEO (n.d.) discusses the importance of a more creative approach to recruiting Māori and the use of referral networks and community groups as opposed to an online approach.

Whilst traditional human resource methods have had clearly defined guidelines and EEO policies to adhere to, empirical evidence suggests that there is still systematic discrimination in New Zealand's current recruitment and selection practises. Furthermore, the challenges of e-recruitment are only now being discovered and there has not been enough time for empirical research to keep abreast of the issues in order to establish some universal regulations and guidelines around the ethical use of such advances in technology and process (Mohamed *et al.,* 2002; Sanders, 2013).

With the pace of global trends in SMS, and the changing nature of New Zealand's workforce, it will become increasingly critical for organisations to fully analyse their drivers for the adoption of social media initiatives to attract and select employees; and to define the ambiguities of ethics and diversity, so that they do not hinder their recruitment efforts.

## 2.3    The implications for the future workforce of New Zealand

The demographic changes in New Zealand's future workforce (See Appendix 3) poses questions around whether human resource functions are prepared for the resulting shift in organisational behaviour, and whether they are able to adapt their current recruitment practises to meet the new demands in a labour tight market (Wahyudi *et al*, 2014). With the current trend towards social media and e-technologies to aid recruitment and selection, and to determine organisational-fit; there are some researchers who are not buying into the 'group think' and who are questioning the lack of empirical evidence for the benefits of e-recruitment for workplace diversity (Plester & Bassi, 2011).

Prepared or otherwise, the future employee demographic coupled with complex technology innovations, promises to provide New Zealand organisations with new challenges for recruitment. While there may be benefits of increased inclusivity, the changes will certainly bring about a new 'diversity of thought' which is a natural phenomenon of heterogeneous organisations; and which will challenge traditional HR models and policies (Farndale, 2015; Pollitt, 2005). Diaz-Uda *et al.* (2013) argues that workplace diversity provides protection against 'groupthink' or decision overconfidence. Other studies have shown that organisations with a diverse range of employees have been found to be strong in creative problem solving and enable the connectivity of multiple tasks simultaneously in order to swiftly operationalise complex ideas and innovations. While some research suggests that homogeneity, or groups of

like-minded individuals, may lead to greater group cohesion; this can also be associated with less adaptability and innovation. A paradoxical view is that greater diversity is associated with more group conflict; which then results in better business performance - as the conflict forces the organisation to go beyond the easy solutions (Kossek *et al.,* 2005; Diaz-Uda *et al.,* 2013).

Perhaps then, the answers to the ethical and diversity challenges of e-recruitment lie within the dynamic capabilities and experiences of the employees themselves; and it is time for a new voice to be heard amongst the recruitment narrative - that of the feedback from the unsuccessful job applicant, the minority candidate who was deselected from the process, the receiver of the system generated "not the right culture fit" email?

## 2.4     Conclusions

The 2015 Deloitte Global Human Capital Trends report has highlighted 'recruiting for diversity' as one of the top three organisational prerequisites for survival, and discusses the need to develop innovative ways to attract, source, recruit, and access talent; and to move diversity and inclusion from compliance to a business strategy (Deloitte, 2015). While many human resource functions may see diversity management as having an equal opportunity for anyone to enter the organization; and are confident of their efforts to utilise social media and other e-recruitment tools for attraction of the right 'fit'; empirical evidence suggests that there is still systematic discrimination in New Zealand's current recruitment and selection practises and that a lack of inclusion is still an issue in the workplace (Robinson *et al.,* 2003; Tipper, 2004; Houkamau & Boxall, 2011; Shen *et al.*, 2009).

Kossek *et al*., (2005) and Cox, (1993) call for a critical analysis of the current recruitment and selection procedures; whilst others suggest that periodical audits, benchmarking and new frameworks for measuring and managing diversity and inclusion are necessary in the current 'war for talent' (Dery *et al.,* 2014; Dalton *et al,* 2015; and McKay & Avery 2005; Shen *et al*., 2009; Scullion & Collings, 2011).

Regardless of the view point, New Zealand organisations who hope to stay commercially viable will need to increase their awareness of the competitive marketplace in which they operate, and their human resources function may need to make a paradigm shift from an inwardly focused model to one with a greater connectivity to their external customers and an understanding around their future employees and their drivers to bring their 'whole selves to work' (Chaudhary *et al,* 2012; Cox & Blake, 1991; Dery *et al.,* 2014; Robinson *et al.,* 2003).

While the arguments around the use of social media for diversity management differ, they certainly form a basis for further study within the specific contextual environment of New Zealand, given the country's unique demographics and limited talent pool. This literature study has highlighted that ethical recruitment should be one of the most salient issues facing New Zealand organisations today; but demonstrates gaps in the conclusive evidence around the use of social media as an effective method for organisational-fit (Pollitt, 2005; Shen *et al.,* 2009, Macky, 2009). It raises questions around the ethical or diversity outcomes of current social media recruitment initiatives; and demands a new approach with fresh thinking into how to address the changing dynamic of 'inclusion' in a rapidly evolving technological future.

# Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter introduces the background and rationale for using a particular research philosophy as well as outlines the approach and methodology used in the research. It also discusses the researcher's position in relation to the case study of a social media recruitment initiative.

## 3.1    Research philosophy

The research philosophy of 'phenomenology' is centred on gaining an understanding of another person's experience as they live it, as opposed to forming a conclusion which may have been derived from incomplete information. A phenomenological approach refers to a particular group of perspectives and methodologies for carrying out qualitative investigation, and is about the subjective interconnection between the researcher and the researched. It involves paying attention to the researcher's experience, as well as others' experiences, as this determines the main source of data available (Finlay, 2009).

In the area of qualitative research, it is essential to remain an objective observer, but the specific term 'phenomenological reduction' is where the observer's viewpoint is suspended throughout the research in order to focus on central, dominant, or recurring themes which represent the participant's experience. In 'empirical' and 'hermeneutic' approaches to phenomenological research, the researcher characteristically examines descriptions written by the participant or 'subject' and 'thematises' key points after collecting the descriptions. This then forms the basis for completing an understanding of a situation and requires either 'closed attitudes' which narrow down or zone in on a phenomenon; or 'open attitudes' where gaps remain and there is 'openness' to what evolves. The researcher aims to go beyond the surface expressions or explicit meanings and proceeds by ideographically analysing the descriptions, and offering a synthesized account. This approach of 'reading between the lines' and

'researcher interpretation' has however, generated some uncertainty in the academic world of where to draw the line between the dualism of subjectivity and objectivity, but has become a preferred method for looking at observable behaviours (Finlay, 2009).

## 3.2    Research methodology

The research methodology is primarily a participative, qualitative inquiry into how a New Zealand organisation views the diversity argument and whether they are more influenced by ideas such as 'inclusion' or 'cultural fit' when recruiting staff. 'Weirdly', a New Zealand owned and operated recruitment technology firm was used as a case study. Weirdly's Co-founder participated in an in-depth interview and selected a small sample of clients who regularly recruit staff through their subscription of Weirdly software. These individual clients formed the basis for qualitative research and were interviewed. Then, an employee of these firms who had been recruited using the software, was selected to be interviewed. This provided a 360 degree feedback loop as to the over-all experience of the recruitment process. Based on the transcriptions of the discussions with the participants, the narrative draws out multiple realities based on the experiences of the individuals being surveyed. The key points were themed, which required the researcher to interpret the findings; and to be subjective in their collaboration towards the collection and analysis of data.

## 3.3    Case study of Weirdly

Weirdly recruitment software has been operating for over two years and has a growing corporate client base of reputable firms, who pay a monthly subscription fee to access the software in order to regularly source, screen and shortlist talent. Weirdly uses a customisable 'fun' quiz to rank candidates against an organisation's ideal 'fit,' and has a philosophy of recruiting people who share some of the fundamental characteristics, values and traits of the

organisation's best staff. They claim that "true diversity is about finding people who are different enough to contribute unique perspectives" not recruiting carbon copies of the best staff (Weirdly, 2015). Their process is intended to automatically turn a long list into a shortlist, by allowing clients to screen out applicants based on their potential 'cultural fit' for the organisation. It also manages CVs, video applications and applicant photos. Their online 'dashboard' (data visualisation) solution can act as a stand-alone selection process or can be integrated into another recruitment initiative or job application process. Weirdly as an organisation are actively engaged in social media and public fora to encourage the workplace diversity argument, and are keen to participate in this academic research.

## 3.4 Research approach limitations

The potential limitations of this form of data collection are the small number of participating individuals and the snowball approach to selection of participants to interview – firstly via the Co-founder and CEO of Weirdly; and secondly through the hiring managers of the selected companies. This leads to the potential for positive bias, as the CEO may be more inclined to select clients who are known to think highly of the Weirdly process, and similarly, when hiring managers select an employee to participate in the interview – they may tend to select someone who has had a positive experience of being recruited via the Weirdly system. Original discussions with the CEO around incentives for the clients and candidates to participate were not taken up due to the strong collaborative relationships and the mutual interest from all parties in participating in a study that could benefit their knowledge of an evolving process and validate their subscription in the software; however this close vendor/buyer relationship may in fact hinder the free and frank nature of the information provided. In an effort to counter inhibitions, the use of pseudonyms will protect those providing the information.

It is also essential to acknowledge the potential assumptions of the researcher and their experience as a recruitment consultant which gives a particular worldview, as well as significant experience with interviewing clients and candidates. The researcher's intentions are to act in a way that is highly ethical and which respects the integrity of the research through the use of the 'phenomenological reduction' approach and refraining from forming any conclusions too early in the process.

# Chapter 4:    Data Results and Analysis

## 4.1    Data collection

Through obtaining primary data, the initial discussion with the Weirdly CEO allows for full understanding of the business drivers, and the possibilities and limitations of the technology. The client questionnaire aims to discover whether Weirdly's system meets their organisational needs; and seeks to hear their thoughts around the effects on their recruitment endeavours. In order to gain a 360 degree feedback loop, a different questionnaire is used to investigate the candidate experience of the Weirdly system, with a view to understanding their motivational drivers for engaging in the process and their opinion of the outcome.

## 4.2 Questions

The interview discussions have been designed to explore the following key questions:

1. What are the drivers for New Zealand organisations in the adoption of social media initiatives to attract and select employees?

2**.** Does the candidate experience of a New Zealand e-recruitment process result in an

improved perception of the organisational brand of the employer?

3. How does e-recruitment ensure P-O and cultural fit and what are the drivers for the

millennial applicant?

4. What are the inherent ethical and diversity implications of social media for job seekers?

## 4.4  Overview of Weirdly's response

The following information is summarised from responses from the CEO of Weirdly in a

discussion with the Researcher; and can be found in more detail in Appendix 6.

### 4.4.4  Business drivers

Weirdly is essentially 'a matching tool' where applicants create profiles which 'tell a story'

about their values and purpose, and are subsequently aligned with companies. The Weirdly

platform allows organisations to engage with potential employees whilst offering a 'brand

experience' and an introduction into the organisation's culture and values. It also allows

candidates to deselect themselves from the recruitment process if they decide that the

organisation 'doesn't feel like the right place'.

### 4.3.2 Organisational brand

Weirdly promote their quiz to potential clients "as the entry point to [their] campaign", and

state that it will assist them to "stand out to the next generation of hot talent". Certainly for the

existing clients, the applicants "know what it feels like to work there" and clearly identify

with the employment brand. Weirdly discuss the obvious talent shortages, which create

pressure for organisations to think more broadly about who they need to employ in order to

gain competitive advantage. The next generation of millennials are influenced by their peers

and will listen to referrals. They are brand aware and will judge an organisation's brand and products based on their own job application experience. Weirdly's clients have the opportunity to infiltrate their brand values into the Weirdly quiz process, which allows them to show that they're a brand that is open to diversity, in order to get new people to apply.

### 4.3.3   Person-organisation fit criteria

Weirdly's clients are strongly focused on Person-Organisation Fit, and are eager to present themselves as organisations who place this criteria first when selecting their employees. These organisations believe that greater business outcomes can be achieved through aligning the values of the individual with those of their organisation; and seek methods which allow for the P-O fit to be measured objectively so as not to be susceptible to unconscious bias. Weirdly's clients are typically technologically 'savvy', high performance brand organisations, either with a high volume of applicants, or in rapid growth phase. For these organisations their 'culture' is well defined and they believe that getting the wrong 'fit' would have detrimental effects on their business.

### 4.3.4 Implications for diversity

Of significant importance is the fact that the Weirdly system does not have any questions about age or gender, and it does not collect the demographic data of the candidates. Their system allows for more creative methods of sharing information about values or interests but does not require an applicant to necessarily reveal any distinguishing details about themselves.

## 4.4 Overview of client responses

The following information summarises the responses from the researcher's discussions with three of Weirdly's clients; who were open to contributing to the narrative around e-recruitment and the best approach to select the right culture fit. Two out of the three organisations are New Zealand firms and one is an Australian owned organisation. All three are in the private sector and have well known reputable brands. They have all subscribed to the Weirdly software for their graduate or call centre recruitment campaigns. Further details of the interviews can be found in the Appendices.

### 4.4.1 Client objectives for using Weirdly

All three clients stated that culture and fit were important to them and felt that Weirdly provided a tool to assist them with their graduate screening or call centre recruitment processes. Client C stated that they "wanted a point of difference in terms of cultural fit" and were looking for a way to attract a lot of staff. Client B was still at the beginning stages of assessing the tool's accuracy to "give the right fit"; and Client A felt that it was "quite intuitive".

### 4.4.2 Client perspective on organisational brand

Client A stated that the Weirdly quiz fits well with their brand. They describe it as "a little less formal, quite creative, [with] high energy and impact". They said that Weirdly helps to sell their company and brand and promote what it's like to work there. Client B said that they were always looking for new and innovative ways to approach graduate recruitment. They also use Glassdoor and like to "push the boundaries to find out what people think". They state that the Weirdly process has generated attention for their brand. Client C's perception is that

"call centre environments should be about having fun", so saw alliances between their organisation's brand and the Weirdly brand, as they use 'fun quiz questions'.

### 4.4.3 Client perspective on person-organisation fit

All three clients agreed that Weirdly was useful in assisting with the P-O fit for their organisation. Client A believed that that culture they have as an organisation matched well with the applicants' perception after doing the Weirdly quiz, while Client B still had some reservations and wanted more data to validate the results, thus allowing them to predict a candidate's P-O fit more accurately. Client C discussed their values as being based on the diversity policies of LGBTTI and for people 'to be themselves at work'. They felt that the Weirdly quiz was well aligned with their vision to eliminate unconscious biases.

### 4.4.4 Client perspective on diversity

Out of the three clients, only Client C discussed at length their proactive diversity policy and promotion of the 'Rainbow Tick'. They had a solid understanding of the LGBTTI philosophy and 'bringing your whole self to work'. Client A claimed to have a naturally multi-cultural work force because of their employment of travellers with temporary work permits; and Client B had a focus on diverse thinking. They stated that they look for candidates 'who are pushing boundaries', so their perspective on the subject was about having 'diverse thought around the way [they] deliver services.'

### 4.5 Overview of candidate responses

The candidates selected to participate in the survey were each one of the successful applicants from their prospective recruitment rounds. The only information asked of them was their age, of which they were all of the millennial generation.

**Figure 4. Weirdly quiz applications across Clients A, B & C** (Weirdly, 2015)

| | Job Title | Date Opened | Date Closed | Total Applications | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Client A** | Customer Experience Manager | 9-Jun-15 | 15-Jun-15 | 4 | In this instance Client A only chose to test four applicants at the second stage of the process (after 1st interview) |
| **Client B** | Graduate - Various | 1-Mar-15 | Still Open | 729 | This is a 12 month long graduate recruitment campaign. It finishes next March. |
| **Client C** | Call Centre - Full time | 9-Jun-15 | 31-Jul-15 | 44 | |

### 4.5.1 Candidate experience of using social media for job searches

Candidates A, B and C discussed the process of using a range of social media sites as well as looking up organisations or 'Googling' for information when seeking out potential employers. Also they discussed the importance of tapping into their network of friends and hearing recommendations about employers. Candidate A preferred the Weirdly application processes as it 'was less formal and unstructured, without too many application forms or questions'. Candidate B felt that Weirdly set Client B apart from other companies, as most of the recruitment processes only focus on technical skills. Candidate C found it easier to describe their attributes in writing rather than face to face.

### 4.5.2 Candidate perspective on brand

Candidates discussed their impressions of 'brand recognition' in close relation to recommendations from their friends. They seemed to place less emphasis on whether the brand was well known in the marketplace, and more on the reputation of the brand as a 'good employer' from the perspective of their friends who worked there. One candidate specifically discussed their own 'professional brand' and how they represent themselves on social media

sites; but all were aware of how to align their responses to the organisational brand when applying for a job.

### 4.5.3   Candidate perspective on person-organisation fit

The candidate responses demonstrated that Weirdly appealed as it made them feel valued, allowed them to show their personality and was 'really different' and 'fun'. They liked the fact that it allowed for an insight into the organisational values, giving them a 'vibe' about the company and allowing for an alignment with their own values and personality. Candidate B stated that the process supported their desire 'to have fun and have a good team, [to] have opportunities to grow and [be] in a fun atmosphere, doing the work [they] enjoy'. They used words like 'freedom' to express themselves and 'engaging'. Candidate C stated that they would only want to work for organisations that had been referred to them by friends.

### 4.5.4   Candidate perspective on diversity

Candidate A had not encountered EEO policies and had not given 'diversity' much thought, however they acknowledged that the call centre environment was normally a very diverse workforce. Candidate B did discuss the negative effects of promoting scholarships for women in engineering and believed it "should be just the best person". Candidate C was inspired by the 'Rainbow Tick' and 'family values'. They believed that diversity in the workplace was important but to have 'questions about nationality, age etc. isn't good'. They said the fact that Weirdly doesn't have these demographic questions 'is a positive thing'.

**Figure 5. A portion of a Weirdly candidate profile as seen by a client** (Weirdly, 2015)
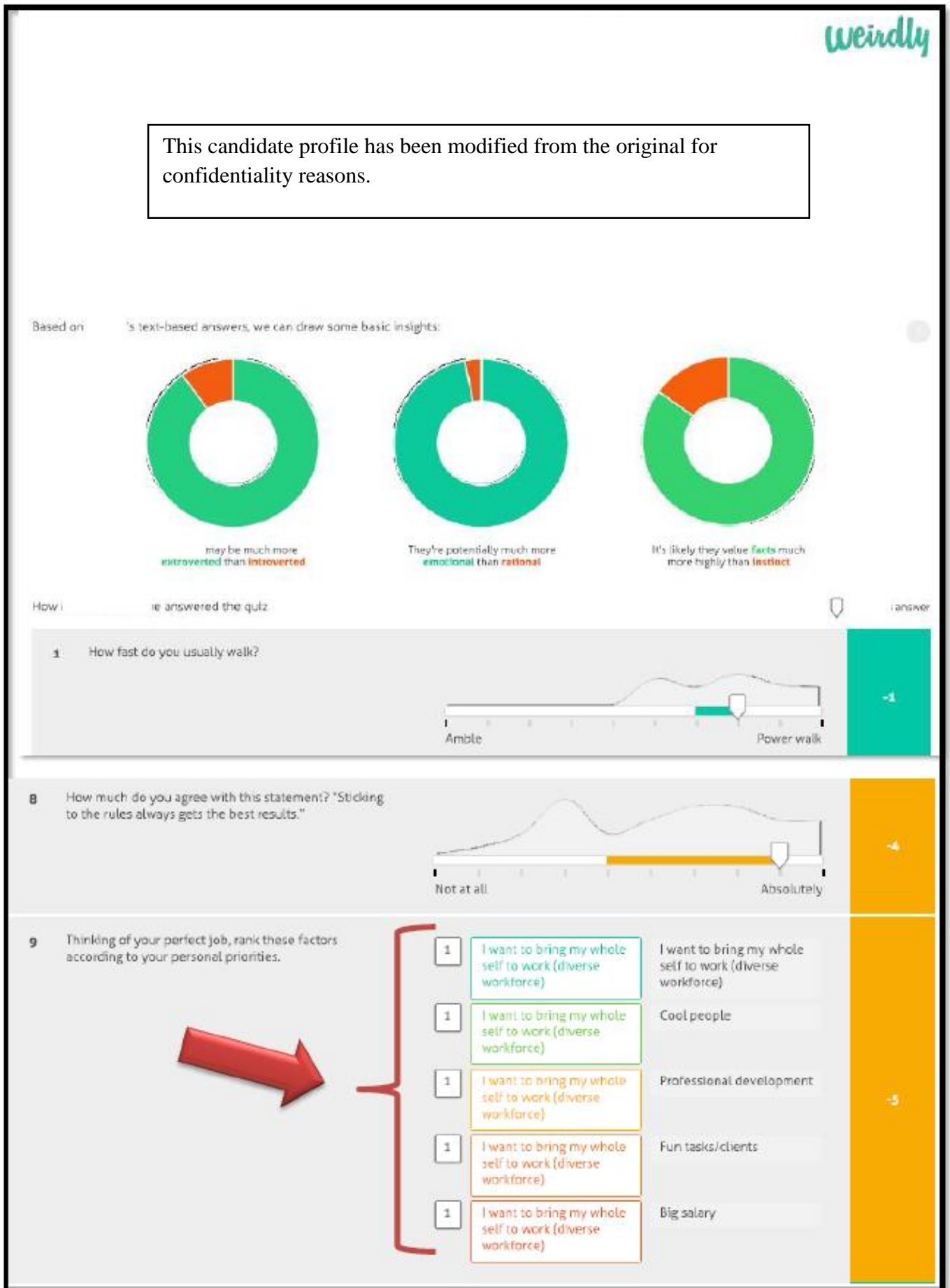
Figure 5 (above) is an example of a candidate who has selected the option of "I want to bring my whole self to work (diverse workplace)" as the number one ranking factor when choosing an employer against every other factor of "Cool people", "Professional development" "Fun tasks/clients" or "Big salary". This ties in with the statement made by Weirdly's CEO around the motivators for millennials when selecting an employer, and that it's not necessarily about the earning potential of a job, but depends on P-O fit.

## Chapter 5: Discussion

The discussion chapter contains interpretation and analysis of the themes from the Weirdly case study and interviews, according to a 'phenomenological reductive' approach; and answers the four research questions. An open attitude has been maintained in order to understand the emerging themes and recurring experiences of the participants. The key themes that emerged have been termed 'drivers' and are categorised into: 'social media' which includes technological capability from both a client and candidate perspective; 'brand drivers' which is about perception of the organisation in the marketplace; 'person-organisation fit' which includes narrative around values, personality and goals; and 'diversity drivers' which include demographics and the participant's own interpretation of what diversity means to them. What is evident is that the drivers for the Weirdly e-recruitment tool are in line with those of their clients and candidates; and reinforce the narrative coming through from the interviews, as well as that of the literature study.

**Figure 6. Matrix of resulting themes from interviews**

|  | Weirdly | Clients | Candidates |
|---|---|---|---|
| **SM Drivers** | • Matching tool; not psychometric assessment nor candidate attraction.<br>• Enhances candidate management. | • Aligns with orgs which are technologically savvy.<br>• Aids with bulk recruitment.<br>• The Weirdly innovation appeals to grads.<br>• Intuitive to use. | • Allows for referral from friends.<br>• Comfortable and easy process.<br>• Fun way to apply for a job, less formal, unstructured. |
| **Brand Drivers** | • Aids positive client brand experience.<br>• Platform for increased client brand recognition.<br>• Weirdly brand enhances perception of client's brand being fun and attractive to work for. | • Aids brand management.<br>• Increases reputation that brand 'cares' about P-O fit.<br>• Creates impression that brand is 'fun, creative, innovative, high energy'.<br>• Creates a point of difference from competitors in 'the war for talent'. | • Allows for affiliation with brand.<br>• Brand perception is shaped by referral from friend network.<br>• Candidates learn about employer brand through Googling and Co. website.<br>• Candidates expect org values to be visible and consistent with brand and actual org culture. |
| **P-O Drivers** | • Engagement between client & candidate.<br>• Provides platform for orgs to promote their values.<br>• Well aligned to millennials. | • P-O fit was a key driver for clients.<br>• Helps define organisational values.<br>• Allows for selection according to org values, goals, culture.<br>• Seek further stats for measurement purposes. | • Allows for deselection if wrong fit.<br>• Allows for engagement with org to determine fit.<br>• Opportunity to express personality.<br>• Opportunity to express creativity.<br>• Implies the workplace is fun.<br>• Makes them feel valued. |
| **Diversity Drivers** | • No measurement of demographics.<br>• Can be used to aid perception of unbiased recruitment. | • Aids perception of unbiased methodology.<br>• May create homogenous culture.<br>• Photo options could increase bias.<br>• Opportunity to promote EEO policies such as LGBTTI. | • Freedom to 'bring whole self' to workplace.<br>• Increased perception of 'inclusion'.<br>• More comfortable promoting attributes in writing than face to face.<br>• May not appeal to more mature or conservative candidates. |

**5.1 What are the drivers for New Zealand organisations in the adoption of social media initiatives to attract and select employees?**

In 2015, over 30,000 employees from 193 New Zealand organisations in the private and public sectors participated in the annual Best Workplaces Survey and Awards (Leading Edge Group, 2015). This indicates a strong desire for organisations to be acknowledged for their efforts in becoming an 'employer of choice', in order to attract the best candidates; as well as an eagerness for employees to have their opinions heard. Research collected in this study suggests that private sector organisations in New Zealand seek to be innovative with technology and are cognisant of how they are perceived in the marketplace. They look for new ways of promoting their organisation over and above their competitors; and utilising social media initiatives is no longer a question of 'should we?' as it is about 'how should we?' Organisations that seek to attract the next generation of millennial candidates recognise that they need to engage with their potential employees through social media fora; and that the traditional transactional 'request for a CV and cover letter' is rapidly becoming obsolete within a generation of users who have grown up in the inter-connected relational world of social media. While the organisations interviewed have already adapted to integrating popular job search platforms such as SEEK, TradeMe and Linked-In into their applicant attraction strategies; they are now realising that these are generally one-way transactional mediums. In a labour tight market, they have responded to the growing pressure to adapt their recruitment strategies to meet the expectations of the candidate – and these expectations include more informal two-way engagement and genuine feedback. They have discovered that these 'relationships' can be easily facilitated through innovative online platforms such as Weirdly; which appeals to the technologically savvy millennial applicant that they are trying to attract.

### 5.2 Does the candidate experience of a New Zealand e-recruitment process result in an improved perception of the organisational brand of the employer?

This particular research has demonstrated how one specific e-recruitment tool can create an improved perception of the organisational brand of the employer. All three candidates interviewed, viewed the brand in a positive light as a result of participating in the Weirdly job application process. However it is important to note that candidates would not respect an organisation that did not follow through consistently with the values displayed by the organisational brand through the Weirdly forum. That is, if their espoused values did not match up with the real under-lying attitudes that were evident in a face to face meeting on site with the employer.

### 5.3 How does e-recruitment ensure P-O and cultural fit and what are the drivers for the millennial applicant?

The Weirdly e-recruitment software provides one example of an approach which facilitates P-O and cultural fit through allowing candidates to position themselves in front of potential employers, according to their values and aspirations. It similarly allows organisations to represent their values to prospective applicants in an informal and fun forum, which might not otherwise be provided by more formal online channels. Traditional job boards which are focused on academic achievement, skills and work experience, may not allow for P-O and culture fit to be assessed. This is critical for the millennial applicant for two reasons: a) they may not yet have established a strong CV and b) they place a higher value on P-O and cultural fit than their generation X and baby-boomer predecessors.

**5.4 What are the inherent ethical and diversity implications of social media for job seekers?**

Only one out of the three clients interviewed had publicised specific policies relating to diversity (Rainbow Tick) and had entered into the EEO Trust Diversity Awards NZ. Similarly, only one out of the three candidates interviewed indicated that a diverse workforce was a key driver for them in terms of seeking a potential employer (see red arrow on Figure 5). While not a concern from the employer's perspective, all candidates discussed the concept of using their network of friends to learn how to master recruitment processes, and acknowledged the fact that being able to write their answers gave them a chance to adapt their responses according to 'what the quiz was looking for.' The findings of these discussions suggest that diversity and ethics are not topics high on the priority list for employers; but that there are possible signs of 'gamification' on the part of applicants that employers may need to be aware of when considering the validity of quiz responses (see Figure 5 and the findings of Dery & Gaveston, 2013). However, it is important to note that the organisations interviewed are in the private sector and may not reflect the views of the wider Government sector in New Zealand. Furthermore the applicants interviewed were all of the millennial generation who have their own unique characteristics, and are only a small subset of the diverse New Zealand job market.

# Chapter 6: Conclusions

This chapter concludes the Business Research Project by addressing the key research question and summarising the themes discovered through the Weirdly case study. It then highlights the gaps in the literature research and acknowledges the limitations of this study. Finally it offers advises on the implications for New Zealand organisations and suggests recommendations for future research.

## 6.1  Key research question: What are some of the ethical or diversity outcomes of social media recruitment initiatives in New Zealand?

As the obtained information indicates, an increasing number of private firms are participating and investing in new ways of social media interaction in order to meet the demands of the job seeker. While the key drivers are primarily to improve their organisational competitive advantage and to improve efficiencies around the management of recruitment processes; the resulting outcomes have implications for P-O fit, ethics and diversity. However, of the three themes, 'P-O fit' appears to play a bigger part in the organisational recruitment strategy. Organisational drivers are primarily centred on:

a) Positioning their brand as an 'employer of choice' in order to attract larger numbers of quality applicants; and

b)  Selection of candidates who are the 'right culture fit' in order to reduce staff turn-over and improve the long term performance of the organisation.

Although a growing number of New Zealand organisations are adopting ethical and diversity initiatives, and strive for EEO Awards; it would appear to be in pursuit of the above two drivers.

So what does this really mean for the business case on 'inclusion'?

## 6.2    Implications for New Zealand

The 'Rainbow clock is ticking' and with the profound shift in personal values driving the next generation of millennial job seekers, New Zealand is on the verge of a new wave of organisational behaviour. The advantage of innovative social media recruitment is that it provides a platform for two-way feedback – not only from employers to applicants, but vice versa. If information sharing and 'gamification' is the new 'norm' for the millennial job applicant, then perhaps traditional measures of EEO statistical data and monitoring of demographic details will no longer hold validity as key metrics for organisations of the future?   Furthermore, in a society that is becoming more and more integrated, the future employee of New Zealand may be so diverse in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, culture, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, religion and personality; that it will become impossible to define individuals into specific categories. It is likely that the employment marketplace will see an increasing number of social media solutions such as 'Weirdly' that are matching the demands of the values-driven applicant with those of the competitive organisation; and not succumbing to traditional models of seeking demographic metrics in order to satisfy political 'quotas'.

### 6.2.1 Policy

It could be argued that the 'business case for diversity' has been widely accepted within New Zealand, with all Government organisations as well as a growing number of private sector organisations, having a recognised EEO policy. The 'business case for inclusion' however is less defined, and is only recently coming into the public arena through the efforts of global movements such as LGBT. The fact that New Zealand has established an equivalent: 'LGBTTI' by including the Māori term 'takatāpui' in the Rainbow Tick policy of 2015, indicates advances towards a broader, more 'inclusive' meaning of 'bringing your whole self

to work'; and through increased adoption by leading-edge organisations, may provide the vehicle for a new approach towards workplace inclusion.

Perhaps the measurement of workplace demographic data for 'quota' purposes and EEO policies, will in fact become irrelevant in organisations of the future, which will simply cease to exist if they do not subscribe to the 'business imperative' of operating an inclusive environment. The possibility remains that a time will come when all organisations will automatically recruit inclusively in order to remain viable in the competitive marketplace.

### 6.2.2 Practise

If inclusion in the workplace is a journey to where diversity is valued and actively sought; it would appear that New Zealand organisations are commencing on that expedition (EEO, 2015). However at this stage, the organisational drivers for diversity may not necessarily be steeped in Human Rights ethics or underlying moral value for equity; rather they are likely to be driven by commercial factors and organisational competitive advantage. So while the recruitment narrative may be shifting away from the visible 'skills and knowledge' aspect of Spencer & Spencer's Iceberg, (see Figure 1); towards a place 'underneath the waterline', which is about 'hidden values and motives'; the question remains as to how long the future job seeker will be satisfied with e-recruitment processes that promote the stories, metaphors and symbols of 'inclusion', when the real beliefs, values and assumptions of an organisation remain hidden? (See Figure 2. Shein's Culture Iceberg Model).

### 6.2.3 Individuals

The implications for the individual job applicant are complex, and in a world dominated by social media innovations and rapidly evolving e-recruitment trends, of which New Zealand organisations seem determined to chase; there will be many groups of people – whether by

preference, discrimination or lack of accessibility, that will be missing out on job opportunities. However, every social movement begins with a 'voice' and all progress relating to diversity and equity comes from the momentum gained by thousands of voices. For those who are engaged in social media, it may mean a new role awaits; and a 'bottom up' approach of candidate driven changes to organisational inclusion practises, will carve out a clear path for less fortunate others. As long as individuals are 'playing to win' and push the organisational boundaries away from traditional rules and processes which are open to discrimination; organisations will be forced to adapt and evolve to meet the demands and match the values of the future workforce.

**6.3 Limitations of the research**

This Business Research Project of "Diversity is everywhere, inclusion isn't" has been an explorative study into a complex topic, which remains steeped in historical precedent, controversy, and un-chartered territory. The findings of which, cannot compare with those of a more in-depth study, with a far broader selection of participants from across public and privates sectors, and from more diverse backgrounds. The conclusions are based primarily on a phenomenological approach and are therefore prone to the potential unconscious bias of the Researcher. They are also drawn out of a small pool of participants who are predominantly from the millennial generation, within private sector firms, which naturally creates a narrow perspective. This case study is also only one example of an organisation in the business of social media recruitment, so provides a very limited insight into the subject of e-recruitment.

## 6.4 Recommendations for future research

As discussed, the combined subjects of diversity, social media and recruitment are all very broad, and cannot be completely explored in any great detail in this study; however it lays the foundation for further research. The fact that e-technology is changing so rapidly means that empirical research is required to assist organisations in their development of more inclusive recruitment practises. Amongst other areas, the gaps in the literature research would suggest further study is required into the practises of 'gamification' of e-recruitment processes as well as what organisations can do to validate P-O fit measures. It also highlights a specific need for further investigation into the recruitment experiences of Māori and Pasifika, as this would provide a lens which would be of particular relevance to New Zealand organisations.

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# Appendices

## Appendix 1 - Comparative research into P-O recruitment models

Cheng, (2014) completes a comparative research into various P-O recruitment models and introduces a model that incorporates a variety of assessments including organisational analysis and personal values, in order to aid in the evaluation and prediction of individual job performance.

**Figure 7.  Person-Organization Fit Recruitment Model** (Cheng, 2014)

| Process | Person-position fit | Person-organization fit |
|---|---|---|
| **Work environment evaluation** | Job analysis | Job analysis<br>Organizational analysis |
| **Personnel type inference** | Knowledge<br>Skills<br>Ability | Social skills<br>Personal interest demand values<br>Personality traits |
| **Screening technology design** | Interview | CV analysis<br>Cognition, motivation, and interpersonal skills test<br>Interviewing by potential colleagues<br>Personality test<br>Real work preview |

The work of Westerman & Cyr, (2004) also explores P-O models for recruitment and draws conclusions through empirical research into the differences between Values Congruence, Personality Congruence and Work Environment Congruence in terms of predicting employee satisfaction and commitment. While Personality has been considered to be a more stable measure; and there has been widespread use of the "big five" as a means of assessing 'fit'; their findings suggest that Values Congruence was a direct and significant predictor of employee satisfaction, commitment, and intention to remain with an organization. The

evidence is contrary to popular belief as personality is trait-based and genetic, whereas values change as they are susceptible to a variety of learned influences.

**Figure 8.  A Revised Model Of Person-Organisation Fit** (Westerman & Cyr, 2004)
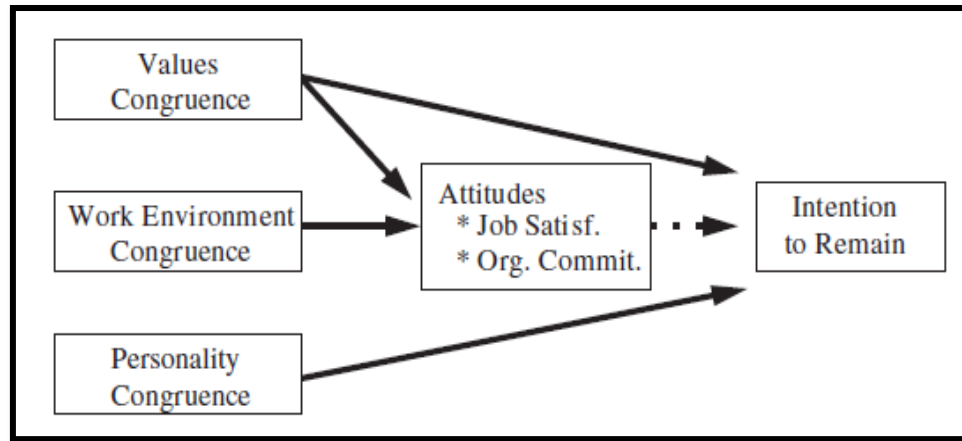


Westerman & Cyr, (2004) recommend that for more effective employee selection processes, organisations might include a values congruence screening prior to the final decision. They do suggest however, that there could be adverse effects if certain value sets (or fit measures) were linked to demographic or protected-class characteristics, thus resulting in potential discrimination.

The implications for person-organisation fit theory is that job applicants whose values are aligned with that of the organisation, as well as those of the position have a higher employee satisfaction, and are more likely to remain motivated and committed to the organisation for longer. It is suggested that this is an alternative for organisations that typically attract employees with similar characteristics, and select them into the organization. The potential adverse effects of this are that with the passing of time, the staff whose characteristics conflict with the organization will tend to leave, so the homogeneity of organisation gradually increases, and heterogeneity gradually decreases. While there may be short term benefits of homogenous thinking, it has real implications for the diversity argument, and can inhibit the innovation of enterprise and reduce the adaptability of the organization in the long term.

**Appendix 2 - Uncertainty Reduction Theory**

Uncertainty Reduction Theory states that people often feel uncertainty about others they don't know and are motivated to communicate in order to reduce that uncertainty. Carr & Walter (2014) completed an Uncertainty Reduction Theory examination where they tested their hypothesis against 127 participants to understand the effect of online information on perceptions of job applicants. Findings of their research concluded that positively valenced online information of an applicant enhanced perceptions of their person-job (P-J) fit, just as negative online information lead to perceptions of the applicant being less employable and having a lower P-J fit. Their paper raises an interesting point about confirmation bias, whereby recruiters find online positive information more credible than negative information, as it is easier and less-risky to assign positive attributions to a job candidate than errantly assign negative attributes that maybe inaccurate. Their recommendation was that job seekers may be more successful if they attempt to reduce the uncertainty factors, by strategically ensuring that positive information about themselves is highlighted online, and by participating in socially desirable interpersonal exchanges, rather than obfuscating their online presence from potential employers.

**Appendix 3 – Changing demographics of the New Zealand workforce**

During the last 20 years, New Zealand's population has grown steadily, and while there were 4.4 million people in 2012, the population is projected to exceed 5 million by the mid-2020s. The aging population is going to significantly change the composition of the employee market in the years to come (OAG, 2013; Statistics NZ, 2013). Older workers are considered to be more experienced, have more institutional knowledge, and often seen to embody positive work ethics of reliability, loyalty, and commitment (Glass, 2007). However, older workers are also subject to discrimination in New Zealand and are often considered to be more expensive

to employ due to perceived problems with technology, adaptability to change, and a lack of innovation and creativity (Bascand, 2012). Further trends in New Zealand's workforce are that there is a declining male and rising female employee participation in the age groups 40-plus (Department of Labour, 2003) and Statistics NZ (2013) reports that an increasing share of young entrants into the future labour force will have Māori, Pacific, and Asian ethnicities. Given that Māori and Pacific peoples are under-represented in tertiary education, there is also the potential for a shortage of advanced skills in the future and implications for a different approach towards cultural needs, language, training, and recruitment (Ministry of Economic Development, 2003; Davey, 2007; Bascand, 2012).