The Changing Role of University Career Centers in Turkey

How can the effectiveness of the centers be increased via self-guidance?

**Prof. Dr. İlkay Savcı, Ankara University**

Quality of youth career guidance and nowadays media literacy

Date: 15th July 2016 Sofia

Social media and career issues

•Social media carries our social relationships from private sphere to public sphere, and changes the nature of all kinds of relationship. So, it emerges from face to face relationship, to visual to visual and voice to voice relationship.

• For this reason career issues and seeking for employment are gaining much more importance any longer.

• In this presentation, university career centers (UCCs) in Turkey are examined related to career issues on social media. In this point social media usage and profiles of youngsters as job searchers, employers and career professionals are studied. Are they successful users? Do they know the challenges and benefits of social media usage? Perhaps all of them need social media literacy for self-guidance!?

Social media user profiles
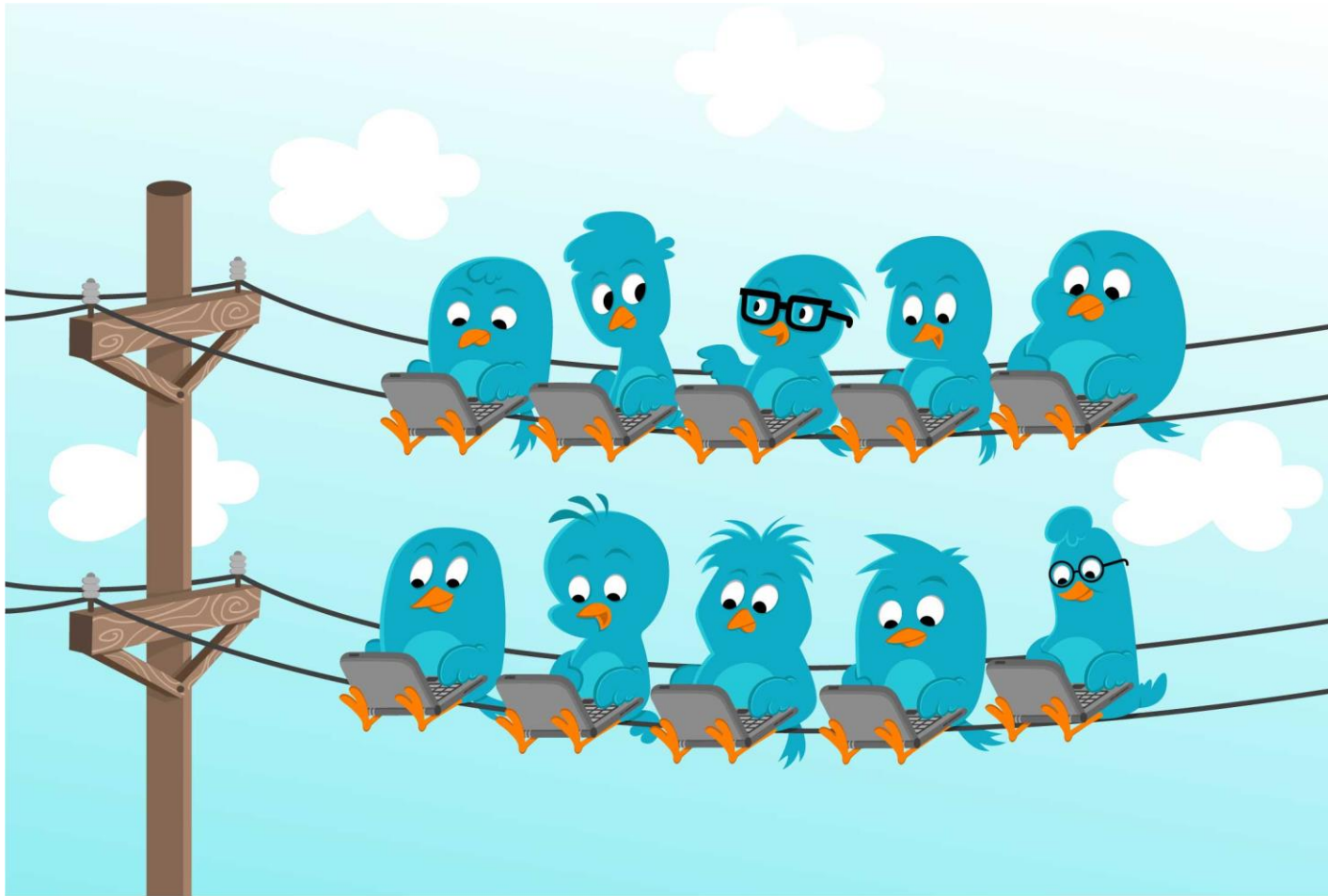
Profiles of social media users

- **Youngsters as 17-35 aged group:** Students and graduates as job searchers or potential candidates of employers. Their social media usage styles and competencies are changing according to social positions in the society (Bolton, et al, 2012).

- **Employers or recruiters:** they are highly motivated for using social media for various reasons but their competency on social media literacy is considerably low and need social media experts for HR dept. They are also stranger to the new generation who is searching job.

- **Career professionals in UCCs:** We are interested in their roles as counselors, facilitators and medaitors for career guidance.

Importance of profiles of youngsters on social media

- **They are important from four aspects: Firstly it is important from standpoint of user: users should shape and maintain their profiles by keeping them official and updating for self-guidance (gaining self-confidence and competency)**

- **Secondly, these profiles may provide job offers via social media.**

- **Thirdly, career professionals demand well established profiles to do their jobs properly. Profiles provide feedback about ways of social media usage of youngsters.**

- **Lastly, employers and recruiters need profiles for employing right person.**

- **Social media usage of youngsters can be examined a. before employment and b. during job seeking**

Before employment

- **If youngsters have career awareness**;
- **Surfing internet and being on social media provide discovering career sites, training programs, conferences, personal development programs: raising of career awareness and gaining experience.**

- ✓ **They may search for dream jobs and potential employers on the web site of companies and professional career sites. They may have information about Internship opportunities, company departments, and who works there.**

- ✓ **They may examine the profiles of current staff in the company and compare their characteristics with themselves.**

- ✓ **Youngsters can have much more information about career issues if they have larger social network and capital.**

- ✓ **Those activities raise self-guidance capacity and competency**

During job application

- **Candidates want to show "know-how" they have educationally and intutionally.**

- **While youngsters are seeking job and examining job ads, ask to employers those questions:**

- **1. why should I work with you?**

   2. Is the right job for me? or what is the right job for me?

   3. what does the job you offer look like?

   (candidates are questioning employers no longer instead of employer's questioning the candidates)

   (OTaC Talent Communication Research 2014, Potential Park.) |

- **In Interview with employer, employers are able to ask the password of candidate's Facebook account for learning much more about him/her** (Joyce, 2016; Delaney, 2013).

Social media usage of employers/recruiters

- **Employers use social media for two purposes.**

- 1. **Employers want to learn much more information about youngsters as job candidates. They do not know about (18-35 aged generations) adequately. They want to learn the answers of those quests:**

- **what do job seekers think about potential employers? Which talents do prefer themselves? How much amount of salary do they expect? What about their work habits and performance levels? How many job seekers prefer themselves? So, employers waste huge amounts of money for youth career surveys and employer branding surveys. Answers are also important for competitive advantage.**

- **2. Employers hesitate that this generation will be well-adjusted with current workers in the workplace. So they want to learn much more information about job candidates.**

- **3. Therefore, they ask the passwords of their Facebook accounts although it is not ethical behavior (job hunting versus job haunting) (Delaney, 2013) .**

Social media usage of career professionals in UCCs

- **Surveys point out some important issues:**
- **While some of them see social media as an unnecessary tool, the others are consisted of those seeing as possibility, and dispensible.**

- **Generally counselors tend to keep traditional ways for career service such as resumes, internships, individual and group counseling, employment of part time students , and career fairs.**

- **They have hesitations related to privacy issues, low competency levels of themselves and complaints about student's low awareness. Moreover workload is not decreasing.**

- **However, they are prone to help students by strongly advising to use "Career counselor's guide to Facebook, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Twitter etc.**

- **Generally career professionals focus on "how social media impacts career development".**

- (Vourinen et al., 2012; NACE, 2013; Grubb, Conklin and Wolleben, 2016)

Benefits and challenges of social media usage in career issues

- **Benefits:** easy t o use; decreasing bureaucracy; offering real-time communication; creating more transperancy (voice-to voice); bringing counselor and counselee closer to each other; savings of time and cost reduction for all sides.

- **Challenges:** building barriers such as copyright issues; privacy and security of information; needing time management; new kind skills in a web-based environment (once written will stay on internet); creating inclusion but also exclusion (bullying); quality assurance issues; challenges in adapting new applications etc.

**CAREER GUIDANCE and SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE
in TURKEY: University career centers**

Social media usage in Turkey

• Usage of internet and social media is highly popular in Turkey. 80,9 percent of users are on social media for creating profile (TurkStat, 2015)

•Turkey was ranked sixth in top ten countries according to the penetration rates were announced by Facebook (2015) (40 million users per month)

LinkedIn: Users are more than 4 million and 13 percent of them are decision-makers from companies.

Surveys on youth show different findings about social media usage. Generally youngsters do not prefer social media for career issues. But after graduation young people may use social media for employment extensively.

Youth Profile in Turkey

- When various surveys about profiles of youth are reviewed, three groups of youngsters may be observed in terms of career awareness, tendency to self-guidance and social media usage (Intel, 2015, Adecco, 2014; gençmemur-Sen, 2013; KIGEM, 2016):

- **First group** is highly concerned with internet and social media. They are well-educated students or graduates from well-known universities and high social class and income families. Their career awareness is quite high and they may have ability to manage self-guidance.

- **Second group** are students or graduates from other universities and also well-educated. They use internet and social media for personal communication and getting information. They come from middle-lower class and income families. They have low career awareness and rather adhere to the traditional ways.

Youth Profile in Turkey

- **Third group** has no career awareness and chance for reaching opportunities. They are less educated, from low social class and income families. They mostly use mobile but internet if it is accessible.

- **Second group is important for UCCs. The environment they live may be turn into advantage by UCCs. Especially well-trained career professionals in UCCs may provide them to learn about self-guidance.**

- **Adecco Survey (2014) points the effective usage of social media for job seeking (possibly data taken from first group)**

Adecco Social Media Survey, 2014

Rank	Job serching activity	% Value N=369
1	Job searching	85,3
2	Job Application	78,7
3	Searching web pages of potential employer	72,0
4	Professional network	68,4
5	Checking information about potential employers	65,7
6	CV spreading	65,5
7	Personal branding	51,4

Reasons in Establishment of Career Centers:

- Turkey generally transfers economic, technological and cultural models from Western countries and follows the same way in career issues (Watts and Sultana, 2004). Therefore it is considered that there is relatively less developed career guidance system.

- UCCs were established quite late (first UCC was established in 1996; 3 UCCs between 2003-5 and 18 UCCs between 2012-2014)

- **Factors which effect establishment of UCCs may be listed as following:**

- Motivation of pioneer attempts of universities based on American model,

- Increasing numbers of universities and students (competition among universities)

- Increasing number of private universities and their branding attempts,

- Increasing high skilled unemployed (risk of precarious labor)

- EU Bologna process and accreditation criteria such as career centers and alumni for Turkish universities.

- The Higher Education Council's motivation on establishment of UCCs at one time.

- Changing demands of employers and labor market,

- Restructuration of Turkish Employment Agency; ICT usage and establishment of private employment agencies.

- Increasing of social media usage.

University Career Centers

Universities	Status of career centers	number
Public universities	legislations+career center (as a research and Application center)	12
	No legislation but career center is actively established	8
	No legislation and no career center but career activities are implemented	89
	University established but no students	5
Total		114
Private universities (foundation universities)	17 universities have career centers . 15 of them are in establishment phase, Number of students is under 300 in 10 of them.	76
General total		180

Problematic areas in UCCs : Necessity or Show-off?

- **1. problems stem from senior management of Universities:**
  "Perception fault" of university senior management as a approach of "UCC should be" instead of "it is a necessity".

- Status of UCCs are named as "Research and Application Center" and staffed with academics instead of career counselors.

- Most of them do not have web site and data base (Özden, 2015). They are not able to connect with students..

- Moreover lack of career professionals is an important problem in UCCs.

- Unsatisfactory financial resources (budget problem)

- They use social media for announcements effectively, but usage for career issues is limited.

- UCCs are activated as student clubs in some universities.

Problematic areas in UCCs : Necessity or Show-off?

- **2. Challenges stem from students:**
- Low career awareness and a strong belief as "career begins after graduate".
- "career days" is accepted as a holiday and participation of students stays low.
- Insufficient knowledge of foreign language decrease motivation.
- **3. Problems from academics:**
- Academics are mostly far from business world and they can not be aware of the career issue as a part of university education. So they are not concerned in students' training on-the-job. In "career days" students are forced to class attendance.
- **4. problems from employers:**
- They seem keen on collaboration, but they behave selective . For instance brand universities are preferred . They are closed to internship application
- **5. Settlement problems:**
- Some universities are not settled as a campus. For this reason, participation to collective meeting is getting hard. This problem may be solved by using social media.
- Offices of Public Employment Agency (İŞKUR) and UCCs together in campuses create "diffusion of responsibility".

UCCs in Private Universities

- They have sufficient financial resources and staff.

- Career activities are important in terms of three aspects:

-    1. Job placement of students empowering their images,

   2. this means that being preferred by most of students.

   3. Enlarging employer pool and network provides them new opportunities for increasing new social capital.

- CV and resumes of students as imprinted or via Internet have been presented to the employers (KIGEM, 2015).

- They collaborate social media platforms: for instance they provide training programs titled "how should LinkedIn profile be created?" by inviting experts from LinkedIn

- Koç Holding which is owner of Koç University established a career web site as titled "Koç Kariyer" to catch talents out of Koç University.

Potentials of UCCs about self-guidance and social media usage

- UCCs may enlarge their career service field as following:
- First of all they must solve the structural hardships as stated before.
- Then; two kinds of activities should be implemented by UCCs:

- A. They continue traditional career activities according to students' expectations and demands.

- B. They try to increase their capacity and ability on ICT and social media literacy (this is also self-guidance for UCCs). Gaining competency in self-guidance may be built on this ground.

- After that, they may focus on raising awareness of students about new career issues: it may be provided in three phases a. Training of self-guidance b. Creating competency on social media literacy and c. self-guidance practices via social media.

In this process those issues should be taken into account:

- Creating awareness on self confidence; rational expectancy about real jobs instead of dream jobs (knowing and evaluate oneself), professional thinking, consideration on ethical rules, analytical and exploratory approaches for self-presentation should be provided for students.

- Creating of personal branding is a way to explore self- marketing and presentation for students (Manai ve Holmlund, 2015).

- UCCs may provide to create more official profile which moves beyond CV by collaborating with LinkedIn! Transforming of social media accounts into more professional and updating should be reminded to the students. Stay as professional continuously!

- UCCs may warn students about "write your name on Google bar; What comes?" It means everyone who write your name, will see it firstly. and so propose them to correct it if it is possible and to be more careful.

- Training students about privacy (ethical) issues they will meet on social media.

In this process those issues should be taken into account

- Classification of social capital of students and graduates as professional and non-professional on social media is another important issue. UCCs motivate them to connect professional ones.

- UCCs may cooperate to techno-parks for training on multi-media, videos, visual designs. These tools develop competencies of social media literacy and self-guidance.

- Career counselors should provide efective online communication. Posts from students should be replied as soon as possible.

- Counselors should learn to separate their virtual identities from real identitites.

Conclusion

- **Firstly,** all social media users (job seekers, employers and career professionals) who are in charge of career issues need much more knowledge about social media literacy to do own work.

- **Secondly,** concerns and interests of them show us that they need raising career awareness (including employers; they are highly concerned to social media, but they have less knowledge about it and so need social media experts).

- **Thirdly,** self-guidance competency will help them manage their careers in work life.

Thank you..