

Varying understandings of social media and competency for social media in career services

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Introduction

- A growing number of career practitioners and career centers and integrating various social media tools into their professional practice (e.g. Dyson, 2012; Osborn & LoFrisco, 2012)
- Social media is fast becoming as much a necessity as an opportunity and competency to work in this new mode is an area of increasing importance.
- In order to consider the usefulness and potential of existing and emerging technologies, it is essential that career practitioners be appropriately trained in this area (e.g. Bimrose, Hughes, & Barnes, 2011; Osborn, Dikel, & Sampson, 2011; Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey 2013)



Introduction

- Considerable research has been conducted on identifying the skills and competencies required for using ICT in career services (e.g. Barnes & Watts, 2009; Bimrose, Barnes, & Atwell, 2010; Cogoi, 2005; Cedefop, 2009; Pyle 2000).
- Additionally and importantly, attention has also been given to ethical principles and guidelines career service delivery and usage (e.g. NBCC, NCDA, IAEVG).



Previous literature

**Kettunen, Vuorinen,
Sampson, 2013**

Successful integration social media in career services is not only dependent on the skills or technical facilities available, but also on practitioners' willingness to accept the changes that new technology may bring to service delivery.

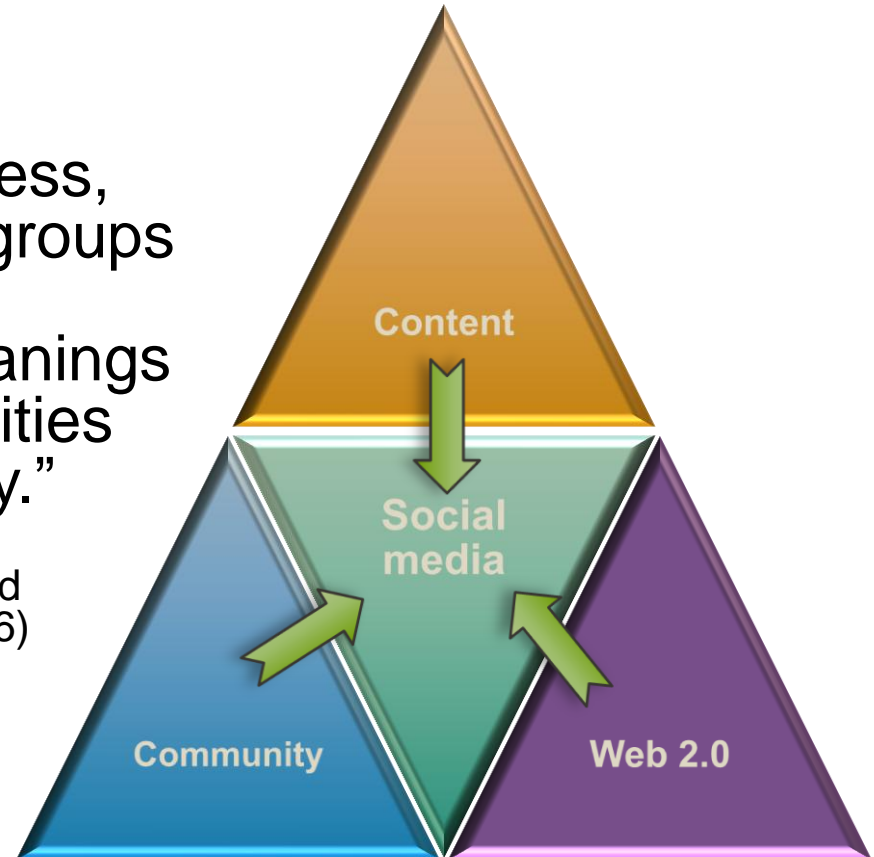
➔ **Gap:** *Due to the relatively recent use of social media in career services, a very limited amount of research has been conducted in this area, especially on the competencies required for effective use of this technology*



Defining social media

“Social media is a process, where individuals and groups build up a common understanding and meanings with contents, communities and web 2.0 technology.”

Sources: Ahlqvist et al., (2010) and Kolbwich & Maurer (2006)



Aim of the study

The main aim is to discover and describe the qualitatively different ways in which career practitioners understand competency for social media in career services.

- The key research questions are as follows:
 1. What are career practitioners' conceptions competency for social media in career service?
 2. What are the *critical aspects* that differentiate qualitatively *varying ways* of experiencing the phenomenon?



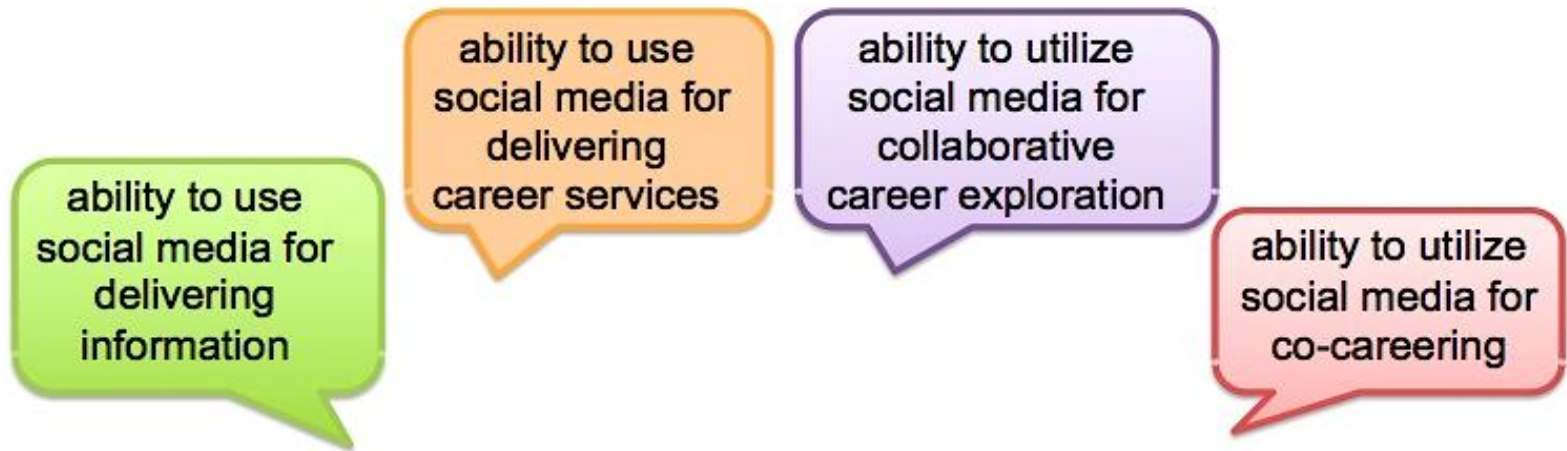
Data



- collected using focus group interview methodology
- 16 Danish and Finnish career practitioners with experience using social media in career services
 - 10 females, 6 males
 - age from 30 to 59
 - career services experience from 2 to 17 years
 - from variety of settings (comprehensive, secondary, higher education, as well as public employment services)
- analyzed using phenomenographical data analysis methods



Results



Kettunen, J., Sampson, J. P., Jr., & Vuorinen, R. (2015).
**Career Practitioners Conceptions of Competency for
Social Media in Career Services**



Career practitioners' conceptions of competency for social media in career services

DIMENSIONS OF VARIATION	CATEGORIES			
	Ability to use social media for delivering information	Ability to use social media for delivering career services	Ability to utilize social media for collaborative career exploration	Ability to utilize social media for co-careering
Approach to social media				
Function in career services				
Online skills				
Ethical reflections				
Personal characteristics				



Category 1: Ability to use social media for delivering information

Approach to social media

technology focused

Function in career services

means for delivering
information

Online skills

information literacy

Ethical reflections

accuracy, validity

Personal characteristics

motivated

*“...and as there are
so many social media
tools out there, so
which would then be
just right...”*



Category 2: Ability to use social media for delivering career services

Approach to social media

technology
focused

content focused

Function in career services

means for
delivering
information

medium for
one-to-one
communication

Online skills

information
literacy

online writing

Ethical reflections


accuracy,
validity

privacy

Personal characteristics

motivated

patient



*“You don’t feed facts,
you ask questions.
So actually we should
be very good at doing
social media.”*



Category 3: Ability to utilize social media for collaborative career explorations

Approach to social media

technology
focused

content
focused

pedagogically
focused

Function in career services

means for
delivering
information

medium for
one-to-one
communication

interactive
working
space

Online skills

information
literacy

online writing

online
discourse

Ethical reflections

accuracy,
validity

privacy

confidentiality

Personal characteristics

motivated

patient

confident

“At its best, the students begin to reflect on their own views and so become producers of information themselves..”



Category 4: Ability to utilize social media for co-careering

Approach to social media

technology focused

content focused

pedagogically focused

systemically focused

Function in career services

means for delivering information

medium for one-to-one communication

interactive working space

impetus for paradigm change and reform

Online skills

information literacy

online writing

online discourse

online presence

Ethical reflections

accuracy, validity

privacy

confidentiality

trust, professional proficiency

Personal characteristics

motivated

patient

confident

innovative

“When you go into social media you accept that it is social media, and social media works in social ways.”



DIMENSIONS OF VARIATION	CATEGORIES			
	Ability to use social media for delivering information	Ability to use social media for delivering career services	Ability to utilize social media for collaborative career exploration	Ability to utilize social media for co-careering
approach to social media	technology focused	content focused	pedagogically focused	systemically focused
function in career services	means for delivering information	medium for one-to-one communication	interactive working space	impetus for paradigm change and reform
online skills	information literacy	online writing	online discourse/	online presence
ethical reflections	accuracy, validity	privacy	confidentiality	trust, professional proficiency
personal characteristics	motivated	patient	confident	innovative

Kettunen, J., Sampson, J. P., Jr. Vuorinen, R. (2015)

Career Practitioners Conceptions of Competency for Social Media in Career Services



Discussion

- The findings showed similarities with earlier studies on competencies required by career practitioners to use ICT in career services but revealed an additional competency, *an ability to utilize social media for co-careering*, which has not been previously discussed.
- The findings further support the observations regarding ethical issues related to the use of technologies in career practice (e.g. Sampson & Makela, 2014)
- And Bimrose et al.'s notion that career practitioners' ICT skills and competencies, as well as their more generic guidance skills and competencies, need to be regarded as two separate but inter-related domains.



Discussion

- Competency for social media in career services is not only about a particular set of new skills.
- Success in developing competency for social media in career services is a dynamic combination of cognitive, social, emotional and ethical factors that are interwoven.



Discussion

If the career field is to develop career practitioners' understandings and competency for social media in a more complex direction

- it is important to develop pre-service and in-service training and support for the deepening of career practitioners' understanding of new technologies using the critical aspects that were identified
- there is an urgent need for training curricula to be updated to include this knowledge
- the hierarchical structure of the findings can serve as a pedagogical tool for trainers



Key questions for consideration

- What are the implications for training, research and policy development?



References

- Kettunen, J., Sampson, J.P., & Vuorinen, R. (2015). Career practitioners' conceptions of competency for social media in career services. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, 43, 43-56.
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Kiitos, thank you!

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