

Attitude Of University Academics Towards Use Of Academic Social Networking Sites And Databases: A Study

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Abstract

Investigation analyses the popular academic social networking sites and databases used by teaching staff and researchers of Tumkur University and Bangalore University in Karnataka state. The focal point of the research contribution is to know the awareness, frequency of use, know the methods of learning and the purpose of use of Academic Social Networking Sites and Databases. It also attempted to explore the reasons to create profile, percentage of academics who created profiles in various ASNS. A total of 1356 sample are drawn from the population. The 399 questionnaires were diffused over the teaching faculty members and researchers of the Arts, Science and Commerce disciplines in these two universities. It can be collected 184 filled questionnaires from the respondents. It aggregates 46.11 percentage participants' responses. This study tested the research objectives through SPSS (Windows version 22). The large number of respondents are aware of 'ResearchGate' (75.54%) in Academic social networking sites and 'Science Direct' (60.8%) in academic databases. It also observed that comparatively a greater number of respondents also created profiles in 'LinkedIn (48.91%)'. The present has chosen the research scholars and faculty members working in several Post Graduation branches of Tumkur University and Bangalore University only.

Keywords: Academic social networking sites, Academic databases, ResearchGate, Mendeley, Academia.edu,

Introduction

"The Sharing of knowledge and collaboration with others keep on continues to attract attention in latest years as a supreme learning and investigating technique" (Koranteng & Wiafe, 2019). Social media has given a new dimension to scholarly communication. "Social media is currently more widespread, and the way academics and researchers diffusion their research is in transition" (Ovadia, 2013). "Social media has currently scattered now become more useful among academicians and researchers in higher education" (Williams, & Woodacre, 2016). "They have achieved huge significance in scholarly communication" (Sheikh, 2016).

For the past decade, Academic social networking sites (ASNS) have been emerging and academics and research have witnessed significant changes traced by ASNS and Databases. "Academic social networking sites are major platforms for Academic fraternity and Researchers to share their published and working research ideas" (Bankar, & Lihitkar, 2021). "ASNS has been enhanced witnesses as the most familiarity to research communications, along with its advantages for supporting sharing of knowledge and communicates within academic audiences" (Manca, 2018). "ASNS are particularly to academicians and researchers exchange research contributions and their activities, specializations, publications, and measuring another influence of research fruitfulness" (Mohammad, M., Lazim, & Rosle, 2018). "ASNS sites facilitate unlimited networking and joint participation opportunities for academics and researchers to extend their research field and widen their influences" (Chaudhuri, & Baker, 2018). Further, it has been noticed that with the transition environment of information-searching patterns of research scholars, Academic social networking sites give a new platform to exchange research findings, share thoughts and communicate, collaborate and gather knowledge in terms of connecting with other research scholars and scientists

over the globe. In addition to joining interactive platforms, reading practical case studies, various researchers adopted research methodologies for updating scholars connect with research guide and experts, as hosting platforms, examined to betterment and control of bibliographical tool” (Stephen, & Pramanathan, 2020). “Many scholars use social networks as a communication channel for free and open scientific outputs” (Ortega, 2017). “Many scholars more frequently were engaging in online scholarly member of groups.” (Jeng, W., DesAutels, He, & Li, L, 2017).

The goals of the study are to address the purpose behind the usage of Academic Social networking sites at universities, and then pinpoint the activities that academics practice on ASNSs to support Teaching, Learning and Research. Researchers can use them to recognize the identical familiar ASNSs, including Mendeley.com, and Zotero.org. Academia.edu, ResearchGate.net, Google Scholar etc. “Researchers adopted online culture in academia, these practices impact scholarly investigated and occupational desires in the forthcoming days” (Williams, & Woodacre, 2016).

“ASNS sites for instance Academia.edu and ResearchGate facilitate opportunities for scholars to issue, find for and get back scholarly publications” (Laakso, Lindman, Shen, Nyman, & Björk, 2017). “Academic social networks are known and utilized by the main users in a specific area of research: those who are dealing with didactic and educational research” (Bonaiuti, 2015). “The researcher has a profile on the platform; it will support uploading metadata or publications of full text and scholarly contents of academic assets” (Francke, & Hammarfelt, 2022).

2. Review of literature

Remarkable literature already exists in the scholarly community using ASNS and databases for pedagogical and scholastic work. Several authors have looked at awareness, usage, purpose, altmetric features, and problems in the use of academic social networking sites are discussed. The different authors conducted studies in respect of the benefits of academic social networking sites Thelwall, et.al (2014) has studied various academic network but focuses on particularly academia.edu. They are comparing between users and faculty in respect of visiting the profile and viewing the document and comparing the usage of gender ratio. Students are more interested than faculty but faculty are more used to books. The study had revealed what has been more viewed either profile and content or document. The number of time profiles and content viewed by users and faculty has been compared. They found females and users are more popular than males.

El-Berry, Doaa (2015) conducted a study on how much is well-known and the use of ASNS by the staff of academics at the University of South Valley in Egypt. The purpose of the study was to know the SVU staff of academic, frequency of visits; preference for the academic social networking site, time spent during visits to the ASNS

The staff members of the profile page at SVU on academic staff. The Google form was used as a web based online questionnaire for this study. The mean and percentage represent various categorizations of data. The findings of the research reveal that the source of knowledge of academic staff commonly cited source was guidance from friends. Many of the participants select the Research Gate to be the most used site because they were aware of the variations in the often visiting the studied Academic social networking site. The academics of SVU visited these sites weekly (35%). More than 35% of all respondents reported visiting time to their preferable site for less than one hour. Research Gate is the first position for the SVU academic staff as 81.7% of respondents indicated that they had an account or profile page on this site.

Sheikh, Arslan (2016) examined the level of awareness and use of academic social networking sites by the faculty. The main objectives of the study are most popular sites used by the most number of users for what purpose they are using and studied the ways to increase awareness and usage. The concluding remarks of this research are that many of the respondents are well-known and used sites more than one site. They frequently visited twice a week. The most popular site is LinkedIn. All the faculty members are used more than one academic social network to discuss with academic excellence in their interested topic, solve research problems, and promote their publications, to get knowledge and updates about the latest trends in their area of research. The faculty were suggested seminars and training sessions are tools to increase awareness and usage and encourage professional colleagues to use the sites and share, and access their publications, view the citation, and downloads, ranking of authors based on the number of publications. To give the best user reward from academic social networking sites and databases.

Greifender, et.al (2017) examined the research behaviors of researchers regarding the use of social networking sites. They are built for various reasons to create a profile on various academic social networking sites such as, to identify the field of investigations and academic excellence. The various activities of research are research collaborators for international research projects, to follow, interact and discuss with experts' group. In addition to that exchange of knowledge, research findings, and expertise's search answers to research questions, share our publications with others and also access other publications, to get altmetrics features like views, followers, following, downloads and citations of research articles, to share information on academic events. The authors revealed the aim of using academic social networking sites.

Jordan, et, al (2019) Conducted a study on ASNS publishing platforms connect with history and scholarship. The study reveals the history and definition scholarship of ASNS and how they are related to the metrics of open access publishing and discuss with another platform. To know what they will do and the limitation of ASNS and recognize the gap in the literature and find in future research.

Stephen and Pramanathan (2020) investigated the research on the consciousness and benefits of ASNS among the LIS fraternity in the Northern part of India. The study aimed to explore the nature and the perceived usefulness of ASNS sites among the Library and Information fraternity in the northeastern part of India. It also aimed to know the awareness, usage, and perception among professionals of Library and Information Science in the northeastern part of India about Academic social networking sites.

A total of 205 sample populations were selected. Out of it LIS fraternity, 159 responded to they sent a questionnaire by mail. The reports of the study exhibit that most of the participants (89.9%) preferred Google Scholar. Most of the respondents knew about Academic social networking sites through professional friends (36.5%). Only 44 (27.7%) respondents out of 159 respondents have multiple accounts on Academic social networking sites. One of the main reasons is participants get citations when they upload their research publications (77.9%). 77.5% of the participants showed their choices for uploading the full text of their research papers and publications. They accessed the scholarly contributions respective various Academic social networking sites at once daily through Laptops.

Baquee, Abdul, Rahaman, safiqur md and Sevukan R (2023) inveatigated bibilometric study about ASNS. The study explore present state of proclaimed sources on ASNS in the period between 2007 to 2020 and also received 751 publications from 381 journals. The main objectives of the study to find the highest published author, countries and universities, which are the keywords used by top authors in ASNS of scholarly communications. It is also attempted citation impact and growth year-by-year, then, international collaboration in scholarly communication. The findings of the study are United States is the most productive country, the highest number of research published by Wuhan University in china.

The literature review presents clearly during since last the decade, many studies conducted about the use of academic sites and databases in various dimensions. Few of them focused on the faculty use of ASNS and databases. Although, A very limited number of exhaustive and deep studies in India focused on academic social networking sites. Thus, for this purpose, this research has been examined in this way to make fill the gap of research.

3.Objectives

The following research objectives are formulated for the study.

1. To know the awareness of ASNS and Databases among faculty members and research scholars.
2. To find how many faculty members and research scholars have created profiles in ASNS?
3. To find the reasons to create profiles in various ASNS by faculty members and research scholars.
4. To study purpose of use of ASNS and Databases among faculty member and research scholars.
5. To understand preferred devices used to access ASNS and Databases by faculty members and research scholars.

5.Methodology.

The present study considers only the research scholars and faculty members working at Tumkur University and Bangalore University were selected. The purpose of the present study is to investigate the Academic Social Networking Sites for Scholarly Communication: A Study of Awareness and Use among University Academics.

The study has selected 399 respondents form two Universities. Methodology adopted for the selection of university and faculty members &research Scholars

Selection of Survey tool

This research has adopted the survey method. The scholarly articles collected from different journals have reviewed and based on the stated objectives a well-designed questionnaire was prepared. The various pre-coded questionnaire helped to generate the quantitative data immediately. Thus, the questionnaire was an effective research tool for the investigation. The questionnaire consisted of four sections; the first section covered the personal data of respondents. The second section includes questions on the awareness of academic social networking sites and the method of learning to make use of ASNS. The third section focus on awareness of academic database. The fourth section includes and purpose of use of ASNS and academic database, The fourth section covers on Services and features of ASNS and academic databases

Selection of sample population

The teaching fraternity and research scholars working in the various post-graduation departments of Bangalore and Tumkur University are considered for the study. There are 1356 faculty members and research scholars working in various PG departments of Tumkur University and Bangalore University.

In order to select the sample size, the Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) formula has been used. A total of 1356 sample are drawn from the population. The 399 questionnaires were diffused over the teaching faculty members and researchers of the Arts, Science and Commerce disciplines in these two universities. It can be collected 184 filled questionnaires from the respondents. It aggregates 46.11 percentage participants' responses. This study tested the research objectives through SPSS (Windows version 22).

6. Scope & Limitations of the study

The scope of the study is confined to only the faculty members and research Scholars of Tumkur and Bangalore University were selected. The PG students, visiting professors, guest faculty and honorary professors are not included in the study.

7. Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by Subject, University, Academic Position and Gender.

Articles	Frequency (N=184)	Percentage
University		
Tumkur University	70	38.04
Bangalore University	114	61.95
Subject		
Social Science (13)	73	39.67
Science (12)	87	47.28
Commerce and Management (4)	24	13.04
Academic position		
Professor	39	21.19
Associate Professor	15	8.15
Asst.Professor	20	10.86
Ph.D. Research Scholar	105	57.06

Asst.Librarian	05	2.74
Gender		
Male	104	56.52
Female	80	45.65

Table -1 indicates the subject-wise distribution of respondents. It can be seen from the table that the majority of respondents are from Science (47.28%) followed by Social Science (39.67%) and Commerce & Management (12.65%). It can also be seen from the table that Bangalore University (61.95%) has the highest number of respondents, followed by Tumkur University (38.04%). The sample population consisted of more Ph.D. Research Scholars (57.06%) followed by Professor (21.19%), Asst.Professor (10.86), Associate Professor (8.15) Asst.Librarian (2.74). The highest respondents (56.52%) male were used ASNS than female (45.65).

Table 2 Educational Qualification

Name of University	Post-Graduate	Doctoral Philosophy (Ph.D.)	of Post- (Ph.D.)	Doctoral others	Total
Bangalore	35 (30.70)	75 (65.78)	3 (2.63)	1(0.87)	114 (61.95)
Tumkur	41 (58.57)	29 (41.42)	0 (0)	0(0)	70 (38.04)
Total	76 (41.30)	104 (56.52)	3 (1.63)	1(0.54)	184 (100)

Table-2 shows as who have educational qualifications of respondents of this research, majority of respondents have Postgraduation (63.04%), followed by Ph.D. (34.78), Comparatively, smaller respondents have Post Doctoral (1.63) and others (0.87).

Table 3: Awareness about ASNS

Awareness	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	155	84.23
No	29	15.76
Total	184	100

Table -3 depicts that 84.23 % of respondents are well known about ASNS. A small number of respondents (15.76%) are unaware.

Table 4: Awareness about various types of ASNS.

Various ASNS	Responses on awareness
Research Gate	139(75.54)
Google Scholar	136(73.91)
LinkedIn	110(59.78)
Academia.edu	93(50.54)

Mendeley	74(40.21)
Zotero	37(20.10)
Publon	24(13.04)

Table -4 summarizes the awareness of various academic social networking sites among the faculty and research scholars. It is clear from the table that the majority of respondents (75.54%) are aware of ResearchGate followed by Google Scholar (73.91%), LinkedIn (59.78%), academia.edu (50.54%), Mendeley (40.21%), Zotero (20.10%). It is also observed that only 13.04 % of respondents are aware of Publon.

Table 5 : The number of faculty who created profiles in ASNS

Profiles in ASNS	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	117	63.58
No	67	36.41
Total	184	100

The respondents were asked to indicate whether they created profiles in ASNS or not. Interestingly, it is found that majority of the respondents created profiles in ASNS (63.58%). Uninterestingly, only 36.41% of respondents are not created profiles.

Table -6 : Percentage of academics who created profiles in various types of ASNS

Various ASNS	Percentage of academics created profiles
LinkedIn	90(48.91)
Research Gate	78(42.39)
Google Scholar	69(37.5)
Academia.edu	51(27.71)
Mendeley	36(19.56)
Zotero	13(7.06)
Publon	10(5.43)

Table-6 presents the number of respondents who created profiles in various ASNS. It is noticed that most of the respondents created their profiles in LinkedIn (48.91%) followed by Research Gate (42.39%), and Google Scholar (37.5%). Comparatively, less percentage of faculty member and research scholars have created their profiles in Academia.edu (27.71%), Mendeley (19.56%), Zotero (7.06%), and Publon (5.43%). This clearly indicates that the faculty and research scholars are not aware of most of the ASNS.

Table- 7: Reasons for creating profile in ASNS

Reasons	Yes	No
Get in touch with other researchers	102(55.43)	82(44.56)
Disseminate research output, (papers, conference presentations)	96(52.17)	88(47.82)
Fallow other researchers' activities	96(52.17)	88(47.82)
Find collaborators for research projects	66(35.86)	118(64.13)
Disseminate teaching material (notes, class Slides, etc.)	46(25)	138(75)
To search for jobs	29(15.76)	155(84.23)
Others	5(2.7)	179(97.28)

The table -7 depicts the various reasons for creating a profile in multiple ASNS. 55.43% of respondents created Profiles in ASNS for "Get in touch with other researchers" for academic work. The second most reason was to "disseminate research output through research papers and conference presentations". It is also noticed that respondents created profiles in ASNS to follow other researchers' to update and share research activities. Further, it is observed that the respondent created profiles to find collaborators for research projects and Disseminate teaching materials (notes, class slides, etc.). The meager percentage of respondents created profiles to search for jobs.

Table-8: Awareness of academic databases

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	145	87.4
No	21	12.6
Total	166	100

The table-8 presents the awareness of academic databases among the faculty members and research scholar of universities. It can be seen that most of respondents are aware of the academic database (87.4%) while very few respondents are unaware of the academic database (12.7%).

Table 9: Awareness of various academic databases

Academic Database	No of respondents
Science Direct	101(60.8)
JSTOR	72(43.4)

DOAJ	68(41.0)
PubMed	65(39.2)
ERIC	34(20.5)

A question was also asked to the respondents to mention their awareness about the various academic databases and the data is presented in the Table - 9. The most of respondents are aware of Science Direct (60.8%), and JSTOR (43.4%). Some of them have less awareness about DOAJ (41.0%), PUBMED (39.2%), and ERIC (20.5%).

Table 10: Preferred devices used to access ASNS and databases

Devices used to access ASNS	No of respondents
Laptop	131(71.19)
Desktop Computer	105 (57.06)
Smartphone	61 (33.15)
Tablet	13(7.06)

The devices used to access ASNS and databases by the research scholars and faculty members of universities are presented in Table – 10. The above table clearly shows that 71.19% of participants used Laptops for using ASNS and academic databases. 57.06% of respondents used ASNS and academic databases through Desktop computers. It is also observed that 33.15% of respondents used ASNS and academic databases through their Smartphones. However, very few of them used ASNS and Academic databases using tabs (7.06%).

Table 11: Methods of knowing about ASNS and databases

By attending Conferences	74 (44.6)
With the help of professionals' friends and colleagues	73(44)
With the help of library staff	69(41.6)
Social media influences	54(32.5)
Through library brochure	30(18.1)

The table present the participants were included to indicate the methods of knowing about ASNS and Databases and the collected facts are furnished in table -11. It is evident from the table that 44.6% of participants learnt by attending conference and 44% of respondents learnt “with the help of professional friends and colleagues” followed by with the help of library staff (41.6%), Social media influences (32.5%), Through library brochure (18.1%).

Table 12. Years of experience

Not response	1-5	6-10	11-16	More than 17
38(20.65%)	101(54.89)	38(20.65%)	5(2.71)	2(1.08)

The data present in the table-12 shows participants have experience of use of ASNS, majority of respondents are used ASNS 1 to 5 years (54.89%), it indicates recently last five years usage of ASNS is most number of users, followed by 6-10 and Not response (20.65%), 11-16(2.71%), comparatively, A very less respondents used ASNS

more than 17 years (1.08). When we compare to present to previous, recent years using ASNS increasing in number of users.

Table-13: Years of teaching and research

Group	Not response	Below 10	11-20	21-30	Above30
Teaching	44 (23.91)	68 (36.95)	34(18.47)	32(17.39)	6(3.26)
Research	25(13.58)	113(61.41)	24(13.04)	30(16.30)	11(5.97)

The data presents in table 13 and also indicate majority of respondents participated below 10 years have experience of teaching and research group, followed by 21-30 (16.30%) Not response (13.58%), 11-20(13.04%) above 30(5.97%). Research group has greatest number of respondents (61.41%) than teaching group (36.95%).

Table 14: Purposes of use of ASNS

Purpose of use	No of respondents
To connect and collaborate with others	96(52.17)
To ask and replay to questions	56(30.43)
To follow and discuss different topics	84(45.65)
To start a new project	54(29.34)
To showcase profiles	56(30.43)
To share information on academic events (Conferences/Seminars/Workshops)	89(48.36.)
To connect to other researchers	93(50.54)
To share and access scientific output, knowledge and research	106(57.60)
To find solutions to research problem	96(52.17)
To share publications, access other researches	85(46.19)
To request full-text articles	86(46.73)
To bookmark articles	52(28.26)
To get stats about downloads, views and citations of the research	66(35.86))
To interact with experts in the area of Research	74(40.21)
To view the published research by peers	80(43.47)
To get free access to publications	79(42.93))

Fifteen reasons were listed in the questionnaires to mention the purpose of use of ASNS (table-14). Most of the participants used ASNS “to share and access scientific output, knowledge and research” ((57.60%), followed by “To connect and collaborate with others, and To find solutions to research problem (52.17%), To connect to other researchers (50.54%), To share information on academic events (Conferences/Seminars/Workshops) (48.36.%), To request full-text articles (46.73%), To share publications, access other researches (46.19)%, To follow and discuss different topics (45.65%), To view the published research by peers (43.47%), To get free access to publications

Table 15: Purpose of use of Academic databases

Purpose of use	No of respondents
To explore a review of the literature	131(71.19)
To get knowledge about the recent research trends	122(60.30)
To download full-text articles	94(51.08)
To know research metrics	72(39.13)
To know the ranking of other researchers	54(29.34)

The respondents were asked to mention the purpose of the use of academic databases (table-15). A large number of respondents (71.19%) used academic databases "to explore a review of the literature." Further it also noticed that 60.30% of respondents used academic databases to "get knowledge about the recent research trends" followed by 51.08% of participants use it "to download full-text articles," To know research metrics (39.13), To know the ranking of other researchers (29.34).

9.Findings.

The study investigates the frequency, awareness, and purpose of use of ASNS and Academic databases. The large number of respondents are aware of 'ResearchGate' (75.54%) in Academic social networking sites and 'Science Direct' (60.8%) in academic databases. It also observed that comparatively a greater number of respondents also created profiles in 'LinkedIn (48.91%) and Publon (5.43%) have the smaller number of respondents. The study has also found that academic social networking sites are more popular than academic databases among the respondents.

The maximum number of respondents access ASNS and Databases through Laptops (71.19%). The major reasons for creating profiles in ASNS is to Get in touch with other researchers and meager percentage of respondents created profiles to search for jobs. The majority of the respondents used ASNS for the purpose of share and access scientific output, knowledge and research (57.60%) and also least priority has given to purpose of use of ASNS is to bookmark articles.

Databases were used main purpose of explore review of the literature (71.19%) Comparatively, a smaller number of respondents used databases for to know the ranking of other researchers (29.34%). The participants learnt to know the academic social networking sites and databases by attending conferences followed by with the help of library staff. Research group has greatest number of respondents (61.41%) than teaching group (36.95%).

Another notable observation is that most of the users are well aware of ASNS but few respondents created profiles in ASNS. Thus, the authorities of the university need to provide more opportunities to use ASNS and Academic databases for research scholars and faculty members and conduct varies training programs for them.

Conclusion.

ASNS and databases much needed for the pedagogical and research community. These are the measure of the quality of research productivity. In this context, authorities of the university need to know the demands and needs of the university academics. It will not only helps the university academics to learn ASNS and databases but also assist to manipulate improvement in the field of Academic and Research. It bridge the level of awareness and create a profile, accessing ASNS and databases among university academics. ASNS fully scholarly writings and academic social network structure that can be considered important data sources and investigates the direction of scholarly communication. ASNS is boon for us in all aspects like economical, no specific time, and no limited boundary and help in academic and research learning, searching a familiar topic, the platform of resources, and collaborative with experts and learning among groups. It can be suggest for further research and needed study of individual academic social networking sites and databases. Design and Develop the modules of networking system in advance features.

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