

Researchers in Social Media Platform across Disciplines – A Qualitative Study

M. Sasikala¹, Dr.A. Veliappan²

¹ Ph.D Research Scholar, Manonmanium Sundranar University, Abishekapatti

² Asst. Professor of Education, Manonmanium Sundranar University, Abishekapatti

Article Info

Volume 83

Page Number: 7836 - 7839

Publication Issue:

March - April 2020

Abstract

The advent of Internet paved new methods to disseminate knowledge and information. The Internet has evolved in a way that new web-based technological innovations constantly grow and one such great invention is social media. Social media networks help students and researchers to process, store and share knowledge in a common platform. Researchers share their articles on different social media such as ResearchGate, Twitter, Facebook etc. Social Media plays a pivotal role for students and researchers. It has changed the way of study. It has proved to be effective in research purposes. This article attempts to explore different social media platforms research scholars use to disseminate their research output. Data was collected from WoS and altmetric.com and they are analyzed. Analytical results show that research scholars use Research Gate platform. Mendeley and Twitter platforms are widely used by scholars than Facebook. As regards discipline-wise variation, Science discipline has wider coverage than other disciplines.

Article History

Article Received: 24 July 2019

Revised: 12 September 2019

Accepted: 15 February 2020

Publication: 09 April 2020

Keywords: Social media, Research Coverage, Discipline of study, Scholarly articles, Research Output.

INTRODUCTION

The advent of Internet paved new methods to disseminate knowledge and information. The Internet has evolved in a way that new web-based technological innovations constantly grow and one such great invention is social media. Social media networks help students and researchers to process, store and share knowledge in a common platform. Researchers share their articles on different social media platforms such as ResearchGate, Twitter, Facebook etc. Students and researchers find social media very useful to share their scholarly articles. It has changed the way of study. It has proved to be effective in research purposes.

According to Kaplan & Haenlein social media is a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and that allow the creation and exchange of user generated content (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010).

People create, share and exchange information and ideas through a media called social media (Ahlqvist et al., 2008). The rapid growth of Internet and social media has not only transformed businesses, organizations and society, but has also changed the entire process of scholarly information processing, including article storage, access and dissemination (Banshal et al., 2019). Scholars share their research findings on different social media such as ResearchGate, Twitter, Facebook, Academia and Mendeley. Social media coverage and transactions regarding scholarly articles have become so popular that a new range of metrics has been developed, called altmetrics (for alternative metric) to measure and characterize social media coverage and transaction patterns (Priem 2014) ; Priem & Hemminger (2010). Altmetrics is now an interesting area of study, where researchers analyse the social media coverage and consumption of scholarly articles, and sometimes even use them to cite their

7836

scholarly articles (Banshal et al., 2019). This article attempts to explore different social media platforms research scholars use to disseminate their research output.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A study on the previous research show research scholars across disciplines use various web 2.0 technologies for various purposes in research. 74% of adults are using social networking sites for their research (Pew Internet Project Research, 2014). The studies of Prem(2014), Haustein et al., (2014); Thelwall et al., (2014); Sugimoto et al., (2017); Banshal et al., (2018); Shema et al., (2014) reveal that scholars use social media to publish their research.

Several researchers use social media to cite their publication (Shema et al., 2014; Peters et al; 2016; Costas et al; Thelwall et al., 2016). Research on citations on several other social platforms such as Mendeley, ResearchGate and Google Scholar, altmetric.com, CiteULike bookmarks was discussed by Sotudeh et al., 2015). Some studies projected the Twitter and Mendeley are widely used by Chinese researchers (Shu et al., 2018; Liu et al., 2018). Bhanshal made a detailed and systematic analysis of altmetric attention of scholarly articles from India in several popular social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, Mendely, News, etc (Bhanshal et al., 2019). Since the author came across only one such study that was conducted in India, the researcher made a study on the critical review of research findings of using social media for research purposes by researchers across disciplines.

III. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The research tries to answer the following questions

1. What is the social media penetration across the world?
2. What is the status of epublishing in India?

3. Which social media platform is widely used by researchers and to find the discipline-wise variations in using social media by Indian researchers.

The data for the study was obtained from WoS and altmetric.com, Global Digital Report 2019 and Statista.com.

IV. RESULTS

The Global Digital Report 2019 presents a report which shows that there is a increase in Social media usage since Jan 2018. There is global increase in Social media usage as 9% and Saudi Arabia has the largest Social media penetration in 2019 at 99%. This is well above the global coverage of 45%. Other countries with the largest social media penetration include Taiwan, South Korea and Singapore. Ghana, Kenya and Nigeria have the lowest levels of Social media penetration. And shows lowest level of penetration (23%) and ranks 4th from the lowest social media penetration.

According to a statistical report the number of internet users worldwide in 2019 is 4.388 billion, up 9.1% year-on year. The no.of Social media users worldwide in 2019 are 3.484 billion, up 9% year-on-year. The number of mobile phone users in 2019 is 5.112 billion, up 2% year-on-year.

The number of active users is presented by Statista.com It is found that Facebook stands first with 244 million users, Youtube 2000 million users, WhatsApp 1600 million users and Twitter 340 million users as of January 2020.

The Statista.com presents the statistics of epublishing as follows:

- publishing has built a revenue of 1,53 327 million US \$ in 2019 when compared to 1,45,535 million US\$ in 2018.
- publishing users have increased in millions 1,325.5 in 2018 to 1,442.4 millions in 2019.

Coverage of articles from India in different social media platforms as captured by altmetric.com and

WoS in 2016 show that 76,621 research papers were published from India. But only 21,644 are found to be included in altmetric.com. This data also shows that it is 28.5% of the research articles from India

Discipline-wise differences in overall altmetric coverage of articles from India were collected from altmetric.com. The data for altmetric coverage of research articles from India in four different social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook and Mendeley. The results show that in Twitter Biology and Medicine have highest coverage with values 38.3% and 30.7% respectively. English and Information Technology have least coverage of 5.9% and 7.1% respectively. In Facebook Multidisciplinary has the highest coverage of 11% while medicine with 7.9%. English and Information Technology have the lowest coverage in Facebook also. In Mendeley, Biology has the highest coverage of 44.4% followed by Multidisciplinary research with 44.3% and MED with 36.4%. Thus we find that Biology and Medical have more social media coverage when compared to other disciplines. As regards the social media used by Indian researchers, Mendeley and Twitter are widely used while Facebook has lower coverage.

V. CONCLUSION

India is a developing country and Indian population increases by 1.1% (Statista.com). The use of digital media is very much less compared to other countries across the world. This study presents the results about social media coverage across countries. This study also presents the discipline-wise differences in data distribution. When compared to worldwide social media users India ranks the lowest rank. Social media is a great boon for researchers. It provides lots of services and resources. So, it will be wise to use social media in research platform to make India a digital India.

REFERENCE

1. Pew research Centre's Internet Project. (2014, January). Retrieved Dec 20, 2018, from pewresearch.org
2. Ahlqvist, T., & Back, A. (2008). Social media road maps exploring the futures triggered by social media. *International Journal of Innovative Research in Advanced Engineering*, 2(10), 29-31.
3. Banshal, S. K., Singh, V. K., Muhuri, P. K., & Mayr, P. (2019). How much research output from India gets social media attention? *Current Science*, 117(5), 753-760.
4. Costas, R., Zahedi, Z., & Wouters, P. (2015). Do 'altmetrics' correlate with citations? Extensive comparison of altmetric indicators with citations from a multidisciplinary perspective. *Journal of Association Information Science and Technology*, 66(10), 2003-2019.
5. Haustein, S., Peters, I., Sugimoto, C., Thelwall, M., & Lanviere, V. (2014). Tweeting biomedicine: an analysis of tweets and citations in the biomedical literature. *Journal Association of information Science and Technology*, 65(5), 656-669.
6. Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, Unite! The challenges and opportunities of social media. *Business Horizons*, 61.
7. Liu, Y., Lin, D., Xu, X., Shan, S., & Sheng, Q. (2018). Multi-views on Nature Index of Chinese academic institutions. *Scientometrics*, 114(3), 823-837.
8. Peters, I., Kraker, P., Lex, E., Gumpenberger, C., & Gorraiz, J. (2016). Research data explored: an extended analysis of citations. *Scientometrics*, 107(2), 723-744.
9. Priem, J. (2014). *Altmetrics. Beyond Bibliometrics: Harnessing Multidimensional Indicators of Scholarly Impact*. MIT Press.
10. Shema, H., Bar-Ilan, J., & Thelwall, M. (2014). Do blog citations correlate with a higher number of future citations? Research blogs as a

- potential source for alternative metrics. *Journal of Association Information Science and Technology*, 65(5), 1018-1027.
11. Shu, F., Lou, W., & Haustein, S. (2018). Can Twitter increase the visibility of Chinese publications? *Scientometrics*, 116(1), 505-519.
 12. Soutdeh, H., Mazarei, Z., & Mirzabeigi, M. (2015). CiteULike bookmarks are correlated to citations at Journal and author levels in library and information science. *Scientometrics*, 105(3), 2237-2248.
 13. Sugimoto, C., Work, S., Lariviere, V., & Haustein, S. (2017). Scholarly use of social media and altmetrics: a review of the literature. *Journal of Association of Information Science and Technology*, 68(9), 2037-2062.
 14. Thelwall, M. (2018). Early Mendeley readers correlate with later citation counts. *Scientometrics*, 115(3), 1231-1240.
 15. Thelwall, M., & Kousha, K. (2015). ResearchGate:Disseminating, communicating, and measuring scholarship? *Journal of Association of Information and Science Technology*, 66(5), 876-889.
 16. Thelwall, M., & Kousha, K. (2017). ResearchGate versus Google Scholar: which finds more easily citations? *Scientometrics*, 112(2), 1125-1131.
 17. Thelwall, M., & Nevill, T. (2018). Could Scientists use Altmetric.com scores to predict longer term citation counts? *Journal of Informetrics*, 12(1), 237-248.