

## Perception and Usage of Academic Social Networks among Scientists: A Cross-Sectional Study of North Indian Universities

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**Abstract :** Purpose: The purpose of this paper is to evaluate and investigate the scope of usage of Academic Social Networking Websites (ASNs) by the Science faculty members across universities of North India, viz. Panjab University, Punjabi University and University of Delhi, Delhi. Design/Methodology/Approach: The present study is based upon the primary data collected from 81 science faculty participants from three universities of North India. Questionnaire method was used as an instrument for survey. The study is descriptive and research-based to investigate the popular ASNs amongst the participants from three sample universities and the purpose for which they use them along with the problems they encounter while using ASNs. Findings: The findings of the study revealed that majority of the participants were using ASNs for their academic needs. It was observed that majority of the participants (78%) used ASNs to access scientific papers, while 73.8% of the participants used them to share their research publications. ResearchGate (60.5%) and Google Scholar (59.7%) were the top two most preferred and widely used ASNs by the participants. The critical analysis of the data shows that laptops (86.3%) emerged as major tools for accessing ASNs. Shortage of computers was found to be the chief obstacle in accessing ASNs by the participants. Results of the study demonstrate that 56.3% of participants suggested conduct of seminars and training as the most effective method to increase the awareness of ASNs. Research Limitations/Implications: The study in hand absorbed the 81 faculty (Assistant Professors) members from 15 Science teaching departments across three sample universities of North India. The findings of this study will help the Government of India to regulate and simultaneously make effort to develop and enhance ASNs usage among faculty, researchers, and students. The present study will add to the existing library and information science literature and will be advantageous for all the information professionals as well. Originality/Value: This study is original survey based on primary data investigate the usage of ASNs by the academia. This study will be useful for research scholars, academicians and students all over the world.

**Keywords :** academic social networks, awareness and usage, North India, scholarly communication, web 2.0

**Conference Title :** ICKLM 2020 : International Conference on Knowledge and Library Managing

**Conference Location :** Tokyo, Japan

**Conference Dates :** October 05-06, 2020