

# A REVIEW ON USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES BY ACADEMICIANS AND RESEARCHERS

<sup>1</sup>Pratibha Kulkarni, <sup>2</sup>Dr. Poornashankar

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor, <sup>2</sup>Professor

<sup>1</sup>MCA Department,

<sup>1</sup>P.E.S.Modern College Of Engineering., Shivajinagar, Pune – 05, India

**Abstract:** Social Networking Sites (SNS) are Social media used for enhancing communication by using media tools and internet sites. SNS are becoming very popular and the number of users are increasing quickly as it is used to stay in touch with friends, share each and every event with friends and that also free of cost. SNS are as important for academicians as they are for others. There are a number of ways that SNS are useful to Academicians such as Sharing ideas, affiliation with other colleges in different states and countries, getting information, professional development, increasing the access to resources, communicating with parents and alumni. Researchers can get benefits using SNS such as easy interaction with other's research work, increase the amount of interest in research, getting help from other researchers in the same area of study, providing platform for sharing quick updates about recent developments in a particular area of research. A new branch of online social networking has emerged which is known as academic SNS (ASNS). Some of the ASNS are Research Gate, Acedemia.edu, LinkedIn, Mendeley and Zotero. This review examines different literature that focuses on how SNS are useful in Academicians to improve Academic Performance and Research..

**IndexTerms - Academicians, Academic SNS, SNS Researchers.**

## I. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays SNSs are becoming very trendy and many people are attracted to them. SNSs are used for enhancing communication with other people. SNS are useful to users to share ideas, activities, events, and interests within their individual networks. They are also used in today's modern times to meet new people and form relationships. They are used for all sorts of purposes by different people, and it has been said by social networking advocates that "if you are not on social networking, you are not alive". The use of SNS is a growing phenomenon in both private and academic life. SNSs are as important for academicians as they are for others. Today many academicians are using Web 2.0 technologies, drawing upon their ability to assist in creating, collaborating and sharing content. The modern usage has generated new opportunities of sharing academic experiences, and research practices of the renowned scholars of the world.

Researchers from different specialization come together on Academic social media platform.

Academic social media help young researchers in different way such as to find out research trends, assist to know about conference organizers, to identify capable experts as potential committee members.

SNS are useful to faculty for improving the involvement of their students in studies and education, improve technological ability, provide a great sense of collaboration in the classroom and make good communication skills.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

SNS researchers specially focused on SNSs where some of these are connected to social media, educational technologies, community research, etc. The review focused on following few specific researches only for benefits of social network sites for academicians and researchers for investigation.

People have started to use the SNS for different purposes. The common reason behind use of the social networking is to stay in touch with friends, share each and every event with friends and that's too free of cost [1]. The available literature on SNSs put forward useful ideas for implementing in higher education [2]. Educational usage is an important benefit of SNS. Educational benefits of SNSs are in three ways: 1) Facilitation 2) Collaboration, and 3) Resource/material sharing [3]. SNS allow users to share ideas, activities, and interests within their individual networks. It is also used in today's modern times to meet new people and develop relationships[4]. Social networks use as a tool for developing a new style of learning, [5]. Social media is significantly changing the way that people communicate and interact online. Higher education institutions started to use social media to interact with current and prospective students and alumni[6]. Wide-range of applications for teachers to administer knowledge acquisition process, organizational responsibilities, evaluations and feedback on performances make them an ideal choice for their usage as Learning Management

Systems[7]. SNSs are used for education in the advanced education environment [8]. One simple way to define a social networking platform might be, “a tool that lets students, parents, and educators collaborate online”. The innovative use of social media doesn’t stop here; the students also use it for making blogs, making professional links, announcing and making class announcements, sharing information with students, parents and educators, etc[9].

Like the general population, faculty might use social media for a number of purposes, such as for personal use only, with no relationship to professional and/or teaching responsibilities, for professional (nonteaching) use, and finally, for use in the classes they teach[10]. Faculties are using social media sites for both personal and professional purposes. Most of the faculties using social media sites for “lurking” while few used such sites for promoting one’s research. [11]. Faculty members have adopted SNSs mainly for the purpose of communicating with others, finding and sharing information with peers and students as well. Faculty members with the help of SNSs communicate, send/receive messages and find general and specific information[12]. SNS helped faculty members to receive information about their subject[13]. Social networking has a place in teaching and learning[14]. Social Networking gives benefits in academic life and opportunities in career making among academicians. Benefits in academic life is in terms of job searching however, opportunities in the area of homework, classwork, assignment work and project work. [15].

SNS had several impacts on the lifestyle of students and teachers with the positive effects. Students can formulate group discussions so as to exchange their ideas, communicate to their teachers and request to their friends about assignments. Teachers enable research work and communicate with their fellow teachers from other universities using social media [16]. Professional development of teachers and lifelong learning could greatly benefit especially from SNS[17]. Some academicians are using social media and there are many benefits that they have experienced for their academic work. These benefits included connecting and establishing networks not only with other academicians but also people or groups outside universities, promoting openness and sharing of information, publicizing and development of research and giving and receiving support[18]. Social media is a very important input to academic performance, while the collaborative learning is the mediator. [19].

There are number of social media platforms available in today’s world of science. Among them are Lattice Grid, SSRN, Social Science Space, Academia.edu, etc. Most of them offer such services for researchers and scientists as information sharing and networking. Research Gate is a social networking website created entirely for researchers and research scientists. It serves such purposes as searching and sharing information, discussing current topics and connecting to other professionals in the field of research[20]. With Web 2.0 and online social networks, the modern idea of networking finds its application within the academia, thereby allowing free access to scientific work through intended sharing of the scholar researchers/authors. [21].

Faculty are choosy about their choice of social media sites, using different sites to their different needs; most often they visit sites for personal use (Facebook), professional use (LinkedIn), and for use in teaching(Blogs and Wikis) are all different. In 2011 Facebook was mostly used by faculty for professional purposes; by 2012 this has been replaced by LinkedIn[22]. Social media like Facebook, Twitter, Orkut, MySpace, Skype etc. are used broadly for the purpose of communication[23]. Blogs, Twitter and Facebook are most popular social media tools being used by researchers. These are used by Ph.D students and researchers to benefit their scholarly communication practice, promote their professional profiles, disseminate their work to a wider audience quickly, and gain feedbacks and support from peers across the globe[24]. Academic social network sites Academia.edu and ResearchGate and reference sharing sites Mendeley, Bibsonomy, Zotero, and CiteULike give scholars the ability to publicize their research outputs and connect to each other. [25].

Google is a universally accepted medium for searching all or any type of information through Internet, there is a growing trend of using Social Media for particular information. Social media are useful to create a mastery over a subject[26]. Five famous ASNSs; namely Research Gate, Acedemia.edu, LinkedIn, Mendeley and Scholastica are used for academic improvement [27]. Usage for LinkedIn is at high level which is followed by ResearchGate, Acedemia.edu, Mendeley and Zotero, respectively[28].

Academic social-networking sites (ASNS) such as Academia.edu and ResearchGate are becoming very popular among academicians. These sites allow uploading academic articles, abstracts, and links to published articles; track demand for published articles, and engage in professional interaction. Researchers uses ASNS mainly for utilization of information, slightly less for sharing of information, and very poorly for interaction with others[28]. Social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace have become popular among millions of users including students of all ages. The most popular social media tools for research purposes are those for collaborative authoring, conferencing, and scheduling meetings. Social network includes peer assessment, discussions, and collaborative work[29].

Academia.edu is a networking site for academicians which works in a similar manner to Facebook, and allows users to upload their research work and share them with other scholars. Users can also follow other academicians and receive notifications about their papers and other research updates. [30]. Students and academicians are open to the idea of using social media in e-learning, more apparent among the younger ones. [31].

Academicians use SNS for academic research few are using it for collaboration with other academic colleagues. [32]. Researchers require a large amount of participants to add to their data collection and assist in their research. Social media are a feasible method for conducting research and collecting data[33]. Professional development (PD) from the perspective of Social Learning Theory (SLT). SLT is evaluated in terms of the extent to which it is able to describe and explain the phenomena of professional learning. An example of reform-oriented PD is used for this purpose. This study demonstrates that SLT provides a potentially useful theoretical approach in the context of teachers' professional learning[34].

Research scholars remain updated by surfing profile of each other, posting of messages, videos and photos, share professional and personal information at international online platform. Now a days SNSs have become one of the largest online platforms in the world for sharing real time information[35]. New ways of academic practice (such as asking for help for references from colleagues on social media and circulating draft forms of manuscripts for comments) differ clearly from traditional approaches to academic scholarship[36]. Faculty mostly use academic social networking websites (ASNWs) for following purposes: interacting with experts, promotion/sharing of their research output, participation in discussions, to get ideas about the latest research trends and to get help in resolving research problems. [37].

Social media tools can be used to search for knowledge and stay update with new literature or publish research-related information and to promote research projects, conferences and publications[38]. SNS can aid adaptation through: 1) facilitating knowledge exchange, 2) alleviating apprehension, and 3) enabling socialization and building community among researchers[39]. Online data collection takes two main forms: conducting 'traditional' methods online and using 'naturally occurring' online data. For collection of data, traditional methods such as interviews and group discussions can be conducted online. This proves that a popular approach for researchers, because it removes the need for a physical venue and transportation costs, and enables geographically spread individuals to participate in the same discussion. Social media gives the information about 'naturally occurring' data. Researchers can use the data created and shared on social media to answer their research questions. Over recent years researchers are able to collect large quantity of data from Social media using data mining[40].

Increasing number of research regarding social media finds its use in different areas, mostly in education. Social media changes the traditional relationship between teachers and students. Social media use to motivate learners. The use of social media provides a new and innovative dimension in the whole educational process in order to enable student to adapt to a future where everything evolves rapidly. It is an emphatic assertion that "Social Media Sites are not a part of our life, it is fully part of our living" [41].

### III. FINDINGS

- Researcher has done survey of various papers and found that
- Important benefit of SNS is an educational usage.
- Faculties are using social media sites for both personal and professional purposes.
- SNS are helped for faculty members to receive information about their subject.
- SNS is a important tool to improve academic performance of faculty.
- SNS allow Faculties to share ideas, activities, events, and interests within their individual networks.
- SNS are used to form technical community forums.
- Academic social-networking sites (ASNS) such as Academia.edu and ResearchGate are becoming very popular among academics.

Researchers mostly use academic social networking websites (ASNW) for following purposes:

- To refer others research for deciding topic.
- To collect data using questionnaire through Google forms.
- Saves time, effort and cost incurred in field visits to collect data.
- Project tools such as Trello involves all team members' participation in all phases of a project and helps in achieving the required tasks at a specific time.
- Interacting with experts.
- Promotion/sharing of their research output.
- Participation in discussions to get ideas about the latest research trends.
- To get help in resolving research problems.

### IV. CONCLUSION

Now a days SNS are becoming very popular among all the academicians and researchers. The above mentioned some researchers have found that, SNS are useful to Academicians in various ways such as for personal use, professional development, classroom teaching, improvement of communication skills, exchange of resources, lifelong learning, getting knowledge of their subject, communicating with

Alumni, interacting with academicians of other institutes to share ideas, knowledge, activities, events, and interests within their individual networks. Other researchers have found that SNS are useful to Researchers to improve their research in different phases of research such as to take the review of other researchers for deciding topic, to easily interact with other's research work, get help from other researchers in the same area of study, collect data for research through online Questionnaires, take view and feedback from other researchers, provide a platform for sharing quick updates about recent developments in one's area of research, increase the amount of interest in research, share research ideas, thoughts, vision, problems and experiences that arise in the course of research with our friends, get suggestions/feedbacks on that, interact with the research scholars from other universities, know and learn new tools in research work, get alerts on subjects regarding seminars/ conferences, keep ourselves updated with what other friends are doing while staying in some other corner of the world and thus helps to stay connected with our research partners from other states and communities. SNS are beneficial to education in three ways: 1) Facilitation 2) Collaboration, and 3) Resource/material sharing.

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