SCHOLARLY INFORMATION SHARING THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA BY THE SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH SCHOLARS: A STUDY IN SELECTED UNIVERSITIES IN TAMIL NADU

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the scholarly information sharing through social media by the social science research scholars in eight state universities in Tamil Nadu, India. Through convenient sampling, 600 questionnaires were distributed to the research scholars of the selected universities and out of which 501 received back were analysed and inference drawn. It is found that lion's share of the scholars use Internet Explorer; WhatsApp is employed by majority for information sharing, laptop as the major ICT tool, RefWorks used most, Researcher ID was shared most than Scopus ID, prefer to obtain data on human behaviour and majority on daily basis use social media for sending and receiving messages. Suggestions provided.

Keywords: *Social Media, Social Networks, Social Networking Sites, Use of Social Media, Knowledge Sharing, Information Sharing, Data Sharing, Doctoral Students, Research Scholars, University Students, Research Information, Research Identification, Researcher ID, Researcher Profiling Tools, Reference Management Software, Tamil Nadu.*

1. Introduction

The internet has revolutionized the communication, networking and sharing of information in the present century. It has changed the way we seek, retrieve, store as well as sharing of information. Now the advent of social media made information sharing seamless and effortless. Social media has now become part of human life and people all over the World are utilising it for interpersonal and public communication. It enables the transmission of knowledge between individuals from all parts of the World at a much faster rate than that of traditional methods, further helps in expanding socialisation also.

Social Networking Sites (SNS) are web based services and Facebook was the first one established in 2004. Later several SNSs came into existence. University students are now finding it easy to convey their thoughts, ideas and benefits through SNS. They not only share general information, but also academic information such as assignments, examination time tables, lecture notes, group readings, seminars, webinar recordings etc.

University research scholars find social media convenient because they can use them at their preferred time and place to fulfil their varied academic needs. Social media are categorised in different ways. The categories are Social Networking Sites (Facebook and Linkedin), blogs (WordPress and Blogger), Wikis (PBworks and Notion), microblogging (Twitter and Tumbir), collaborative authoring (Google Docs), instant messaging (WhatsApp and Telegram), idea mapping (Micro and Mindoma), social book marking (Pinterest and Stumble Upon),

Podcasting (Apple Podcasts), social news (Reddin) and media sharing (YouTube and Wine).

2. Review of Literature

There are umpteen number of studies on the use of social media or Social Networking Sites by various categories of students at various levels (such as undergraduates, post-graduates and research students). But studies on the use of social media for scholarly information sharing or knowledge sharing by research scholars that too particularly in the social science area and that too in the Indian context are comparatively less. Thus the authors found that a research gap exists, which necessitated this study.

The authors are doing research on this area and published few papers, singly and jointly – Baskaran (2018a and 2018b), Baskaran and Pitchaipandi (2021a and 2021b). The other studies in this area are Sevukan (2015); and Das and Mahapatra (2018).

Some of the prominent studies related to the topic reported from Pakistan are by Anwar and Zhewei (2021), Bashir et al. (2021). Khan (2018), Rafique (2017).

The rest of the studies are given in decreasing chronological order. The paper by Mulambik et al. (2022) investigates the proposition that SNS user attitudes and behavior studied in the context of Saudi Arabia. The purpose of a recent article by Abbas et al. (2022) uses bibliometric analysis tools to evaluate works on social media and information sharing. Klar, S. et al. (2020) discusses the use of social media to promote academic research. The above aspect on students in the field of Medicine, Nursing and Health sciences were studied by Naqvi (2019). Use of SNS among PG students at University of Rajshahi, Bangladesh was described by Munshi et al. (2018). The main objective of the research done by Khamali et al. (2018) reveal the influence of social media tools by students on the sharing of knowledge in Kenyan universities. University students' perceptions of SNS in their educational experience in an Australian university has been reported by Sadowski et al. (2017).

Even though not for scholarly communication sharing, Hadebe et al. (2016) reported the use of SNS by undergraduate students in two African universities. The study by Manca and Ranieri (2016) aims at providing empirical evidence on how higher education scholars in Italy are using social media for personal, teaching and professional purposes. The article written by Petrosky analyses the factors that cause social media effect on doctoral students of the PhD in Education of the University of Salamanca, Spain.

Al-Aufi and Fulton (2014) describe the use of social networking tools for informal scholarly communication in humanities and social sciences disciplines. Shafique et al. (2010) studied the exploitation of social media among university students. The other literature referred by the author are given in the reference part.

3. Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of the study are

1. To find out the internet browsers used by the Social Science research scholars in selected universities in Tamil Nadu
2. To determine the type of social media shared by the researchers.
3. To explore the ICT tools used for information sharing
4. To find out the reference management software shared by them

5. To explore the researcher profiling tools shared
6. To find out the preference of sharing of research information tasks
7. To know the purpose and frequency of research information
8. To find out the level of satisfaction on shared information

4. Methodology

Six hundred questionnaires were distributed to eight prominent universities in Tamil Nadu. The names of the universities selected are given below figure 1. Duly filled in questionnaires numbering to 501 were received back personally from full time social science research scholars of eleven departments and a few others (see table 1). The collected data were entered in excel and analysed.

5. Analysis of Data and Interpretation

5.1. University-wise Response

Most of the research scholars (17.4%) were from Annamalai University and 14.6% from Alagappa University. Response rate of other universities are illustrated in fig.1.

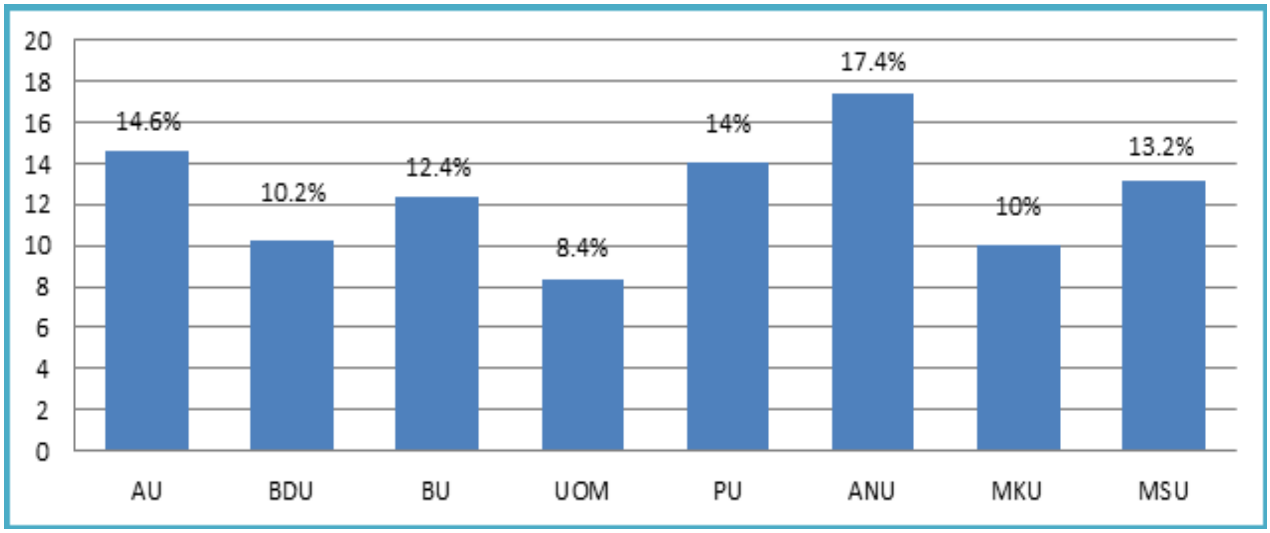

Fig. 1. University - wise Response

AU - Alagappa University, BDU - Bharathidasan University, BU- Bharathiar University, UOM - University of Madras, PU - Periyar University, ANU- Annamalai University, MKU - Madurai Kamaraj University, MSU - Manonmaniam Sundaranar University.

5.2. Socio-Demography

In the sample taken half are males (51.9%) and the rest females. Two third (66.9%) of the research scholars are in the age group of 26-35 years and a quarter of them are from the the management/commerce department. Those from the rural areas are more (57.3%) than urban.

Table 1

Socio-Demography of the Respondents

Variables	Level	Count	Percentage
Gender	Male	260	51.9
	Female	241	48.1
	Total	**501**	**100**
Age Group	Below 25 years	101	20.2
	26-35 years	335	66.9
	36-45 years	58	11.6
	Above 45 years	7	1.4
	Total	**501**	**100**
Research area	Economics	54	10.8
	Education/Physical Education	80	16
	Management/ Commerce	127	25.3
	Sociology/ social work	50	10
	Library and Information Science	41	8.2
	History/ Geography	48	9.6
	Philosophy/ Psychology	34	6.8
	Public Administration	3	0.6
	Anthropology/ Criminology	6	1.2
	Journalism and Mass Communication	20	4
	Political Science	16	3.2
	Others	22	4.4
	Total	**501**	**100**
Residing area	Rural	287	57.3
	Urban	214	42.7
	Total	**501**	**100**

5.3. Internet Browsers Used

It is found (table 2) that lion's share (93.6%) of the research scholars are using Internet explorer. Internet Explorer is a geographical web browser developed by Microsoft used in the windows. It is able to download any or all of the browsers. A little more than a quarter (27.7%) are using Mozilla Firefox. Those using Google Chrome are 24.2% only.

Table 2

Internet Browsers Used by the Research Scholars

Types Browser	AU	BDU	BU	UOM	PU	ANU	MKU	MSU	Total
Internet explorer	68 (13.6)	49 (9.8)	60 (12)	40 (8)	67 (13.4)	81 (16.2)	46 (9.2)	58 (11.6)	469 (93.6)
MozillaFirefox	25 (5)	18 (3.6)	19 (3.8)	9 (1.8)	21 (4.2)	11 (2.2)	17 (3.4)	19 (3.8)	139 (27.7)
Google Chrome	18 (3.6)	8 (1.6)	16 (3.2)	12 (2.4)	16 (3.2)	14 (2.8)	20 (4)	17 (3.4)	121 (24.2)
Chromium	7 (1.4)	1 (.2)	6 (1.2)	3 (.6)	2 (.4)	3 (.6)	6 (1.2)	5 (1)	33 (6.6)

5.4. Type of Social Media Shared

It is seen from the analysis given in table 3 shows that a large majority (86.2%) of them are using WhatsApp. Several studies shows that WhatsApp is the most used messaging services Worldwide. They opined that the WhatsApp is more user friendly, does not require large data (when compared to Facebook), can follow them through video calls, allows one to share the documents as well as videos. Next in order, after WhatsApp, the most used is YouTube (73.9%). It has become a resource for research particularly for the social science scholars as it has contemporary events, social problems, news, current affairs, political issues, collective responses etc. Those research scholars using Facebook are 70.9% and Google+ used by 57.5% of them. Rest of the social media are used comparatively less.

Table 3

Types of Social Medias Shared by the Research Scholars

Type of Social Media	AU	BDU	BU	UOM	PU	ANU	MKU	MSU	Total
WhatsApp	63 (12.6)	45 (9.0)	55 (11.0)	41 (8.2)	60 (12.0)	67 (13.4)	45 (9.0)	56 (11.2)	432 (86.2)
YouTube	53 (10.6)	37 (7.4)	51 (10.2)	35 (7.0)	56 (11.2)	49 (9.8)	44 (8.8)	45 (9.0)	370 (73.9)
Face book	46 (9.2)	40 (8.0)	52 (10.4)	37 (7.4)	50 (10.0)	52 (10.4)	42 (8.4)	36 (7.2)	355 (70.9)
Google+	47 (9.4)	24 (4.8)	41 (8.2)	25 (5.0)	38 (7.6)	53 (10.6)	28 (5.6)	32 (6.4)	288 (57.5)
Twitter	21 (4.2)	16 (3.2)	21 (4.2)	16 (3.2)	20 (4.0)	18 (3.6)	19 (3.8)	14 (2.8)	145 (28.9)
Tumblr/ Messenger	23 (4.6)	11 (2.2)	25 (5.0)	13 (2.6)	24 (4.8)	18 (3.6)	12 (2.4)	11 (2.2)	137 (27.3)
Instagram	17 (3.4)	13 (2.6)	27 (5.4)	19 (3.8)	17 (3.4)	17 (3.4)	15 (3.0)	9 (1.8)	134 (26.7)
Others	18 (3.6)	4 (.8)	9 (1.8)	8 (1.6)	8 (1.6)	5 (1.0)	10 (2.0)	8 (1.8)	70 (14.0)

5.5. ICT Tools Used

Majority of the research scholars (79.0%) possess laptop and are using for information sharing. Almost 3/4th of them (73.7%) use smartphone/mobiles for sharing scholarly information to others. Those who are using desk top computers are 35.3%. The rest of them (table 4) are used comparatively less.

Table 4

ICT Tools Used for Information Sharing

Tools	AU	BDU	BU	UOM	PU	ANU	MKU	MSU	Total
Laptop	49 (9.8)	42 (8.4)	53 (10.6)	40 (8.0)	56 (11.2)	60 (12.0)	45 (9.0)	51 (10.2)	396 (79.0)
Smartphone/ Mobiles	53 (10.6)	30 (6.0)	49 (9.8)	36 (7.2)	53 (10.6)	60 (12.0)	34 (6.8)	54 (10.8)	369 (73.7)
Desktop	31 (6.2)	16 (3.2)	30 (6.0)	24 (4.8)	20 (4.0)	13 (2.6)	22 (4.4)	21 (4.2)	177 (35.3)
Tablet computer	12 (2.4)	6 (1.2)	13 (2.6)	9 (1.8)	6 (1.2)	10 (2.0)	7 (1.4)	8 (1.6)	71 (14.2)
I-pad	3 (0.6)	0	2 (0.4)	2 (0.4)	2 (0.4)	7 (1.4)	4 (0.8)	5 (1.0)	25 (5.0)
Other devices	4 (0.8)	2 (0.4)	1 (0.2)	0	2 (0.4)	2 (0.4)	2 (0.4)	3 (0.6)	16 (3.2)

5.6. Reference Management Software Shared

Among the various reference management software, most used by the research scholars, is RefWorks (44.1%). RefWorks is very helpful for research scholars because it is very easy to use for data import, collaboration and formatting. It produces better accurate papers and simplifies the research, collaboration, data organisation, further provide easy to use tool for citation and bibliography. More than a quarter (26.3%) share Mendeley. This is followed by End Note (23.6%). The other software such as CiteULike and Zotero are used less. But a study by Amrutha et al. (2018) among science research scholars of University of Kerala shows that Mendeley is used most (76.3%).

Table 5

Reference Management Software Shared by Research Scholars

Reference Management Software	AU	BDU	BU	UOM	PU	ANU	MKU	MSU	Total
RefWorks	29 (5.8)	18 (3.6)	27 (5.4)	13 (2.6)	34 (6.8)	46 (9.2)	23 (4.6)	31 (6.2)	221 (44.1)
Mendeley	25 (5.0)	21 (4.2)	20 (4.0)	12 (2.4)	23 (4.6)	9 (1.8)	10 (2.0)	12 (2.4)	132 (26.3)
EndNote	11 (2.2)	16 (3.2)	10 (2.0)	11 (2.2)	14 (2.8)	26 (5.2)	14 (2.8)	16 (3.2)	118 (23.6)
Others	17 (3.4)	10 (2.0)	16 (3.2)	10 (2.0)	12 (2.4)	19 (3.8)	10 (2.0)	10 (2.0)	104 (20.8)
CiteULike	8 (1.6)	6 (1.2)	4 (0.8)	4 (0.8)	5 (1.0)	7 (1.4)	3 (0.6)	7 (1.4)	44 (8.8)
Zotero	4 (0.8)	3 (0.6)	7 (1.4)	3 (0.6)	7 (1.4)	2 (0.4)	8 (1.6)	5 (1.0)	39 (7.8)

5.7. Researcher Profiling Tools Shared

Researcher profiles boost author identification, apart from that it boost author exposure. It enhances the visibility and research impact of scholarly works of the author. The research scholars used three researcher profiling tools for sharing to their counterparts. Among this, they mostly share Researcher ID (70.3%). ResearcherID solves the problem of author identification. Research scholars use to claim their published works and link it, further it keeps their publication list UpToDate and online. Those sharing Scopus ID are 23.4% and the least shared one is ORCID ID (10.8%).

Table 6

Researcher Profiling Tools Shared by the Research Scholars

Researcher Profiling Tools	AU	BDU	BU	UOM	PU	ANU	MKU	MSU	Total
ResearcherID	58 (11.6)	36 (7.2)	41 (8.2)	22 (4.4)	48 (9.6)	63 (12.6)	35 (7.0)	49 (9.8)	352 (70.3)
Scopus IDs	16 (3.2)	9 (1.8)	16 (3.2)	16 (3.2)	16 (3.2)	21 (4.2)	11 (2.2)	12 (2.4)	117 (23.4)
ORCID ID	17 (3.4)	9 (1.8)	6 (1.2)	6 (1.2)	7 (1.4)	4 (.8)	2 (.4)	3 (.6)	54 (10.8)

5.8. Research Information Tasks

A quarter of the research scholars (24.6%) gave utmost preference to obtain data on human behavior aspects to a very large extent and 21.6% to a large extent. The second preference of using social media is to gather a large amount of data for analysing it a very large extent (16.4%). Rest of the research information tasks preferred by them can be seen in table 7.

Table 7

Preference of Research Information Tasks

SI. No.	Research Task	LOE	AU	BDU	BU	UOM	PU	ANU	MKU	MSU	Total
1	Obtain Natural/ Raw data on Human information behavior	VLE	19 (15.4)	12 (9.8)	11 (8.9)	8 (6.5)	19 (15.4)	21 (17.1)	14 (11.4)	19 (15.4)	123 (24.6)
		LE	20 (18.5)	12 (11.1)	22 (20.4)	5 (4.6)	14 (13.0)	11 (10.2)	10 (9.3)	14 (13.0)	108 (21.6)
		SE	26 (14.6)	13 (7.3)	24 (13.5)	19 (10.7)	27 (15.2)	29 (16.3)	21 (11.8)	19 (10.7)	178 (35.5)
		LE	3 (7.5)	6 (15)	2 (5)	4 (10)	6 (15)	8 (20)	3 (5)	8 (11.5)	40 (8.0)
		NE	5 (9.6)	8 (15.4)	3 (5.8)	6 (11.5)	4 (7.7)	18 (34.6)	2 (3.8)	6 (11.5)	52 (10.4)
		Total	**73 (14.6)**	**51 (10.2)**	**62 (12.4)**	**42 (8.4)**	**70 (14.0)**	**87 (17.4)**	**50 (10.0)**	**66 (13.2)**	**501 (100)**

2	Easy to access massive amount of data to analyze	VLE	17 (20.7)	8 (9.8)	8 (9.8)	10 (12.2)	13 (15.9)	4 (4.9)	12 (14.6)	10 (12.2)	82 (16.4)
		LE	22 (14.3)	10 (6.5)	20 (13.0)	12 (7.8)	23 (14.9)	27 (17.5)	13 (8.4)	27 (17.5)	154 (30.7)
		SE	23 (15.2)	19 (12.6)	21 (13.9)	12 (7.9)	20 (13.2)	24 (15.9)	15 (9.9)	17 (11.3)	151 (30.1)
		LE	5 (13.9)	2 (5.6)	7 (19.4)	5 (13.9)	7 (19.4)	3 (8.3)	3 (8.3)	4 (11.1)	36 (7.2)
		NE	6 (7.7)	12 (15.4)	6 (7.7)	3 (3.8)	7 (9.0)	29 (37.2)	7 (9.0)	8 (10.3)	78 (15.6)
		Total	**73 (14.6)**	**51 (10.2)**	**62 (12.4)**	**42 (8.4)**	**70 (14.0)**	**87 (17.4)**	**50 (10.0)**	**66 (13.2)**	**501 (100)**
3	Good to conduct a Longitudinal study. If time permit	VLE	16 (20.5)	9 (11.5)	3 (3.8)	7 (9.0)	14 (17.9)	10 (12.8)	8 (10.3)	11 (14.1)	78 (15.6)
		LE	25 (20)	7 (5.6)	19 (15.2)	11 (8.8)	18 (14.4)	14 (11.2)	15 (12)	16 (12.8)	125 (25.0)
		SE	22 (12.6)	22 (12.6)	27 (15.5)	11 (6.3)	23 (13.32)	33 (19.0)	15 (8.6)	21 (12.1)	174 (34.7)
		LE	6 (13.3)	2 (4.4)	6 (13.3)	6 (13.3)	6 (13.3)	8 (17.8)	4 (8.9)	7 (15.6)	45 (9.0)
		NE	4 (5.1)	11 (13.9)	7 (8.9)	7 (8.9)	9 (11.4)	22 (27.8)	8 (10.1)	11 (13.9)	79 (15.8)
		Total	**73 (14.6)**	**51 (10.2)**	**62 (12.4)**	**42 (8.4)**	**70 (14.0)**	**87 (17.4)**	**50 (10.0)**	**66 (13.2)**	**501 (100)**
4	Easy to set parameters to attain good study	VLE	11 (16.4)	4 (6.0)	6 (9.0)	5 (7.5)	10 (14.9)	9 (13.4)	10 (14.9)	12 (17.9)	67 (13.4)
		LE	18 (16.5)	11 (10.1)	14 (12.8)	13 (11.9)	20 (18.3)	9 (8.3)	10 (9.2)	14 (12.8)	109 (21.8)
		SE	31 (17.0)	18 (9.9)	25 (13.7)	13 (7.1)	26 (14.3)	26 (14.3)	21 (11.5)	22 (12.1)	182 (36.3)
		LE	6 (10.9)	6 (10.9)	8 (14.5)	6 (10.9)	4 (7.3)	14 (25.5)	5 (9.1)	6 (10.9)	55 (11.0)
		NE	7 (8.0)	12 (13.6)	9 (10.2)	5 (5.7)	10 (11.4)	29 (33.0)	4 (4.5)	12 (13.6)	88 (17.6)
		Total	**73 (14.6)**	**51 (10.2)**	**62 (12.4)**	**42 (8.4)**	**70 (14.0)**	**87 (17.4)**	**50 (10.0)**	**66 (13.2)**	**501 (100)**

Note: VLE: Very Large Extent, LE: Large Extent, SE: Some Extent, LE: Less Extent, NE: No Extent

5.9. Purpose of Research Activities Through Social Media

Majority (62.7%) of the research scholars (daily basis) use it for sending and receiving messages. The second purpose (60.7%) on daily basis using it to read articles and books in pdf form. The third purpose is for research assignments, which is found to be 34.1% on daily basis.

Table 8

Purpose and Frequency of sharing of Research Information

SI. No.	Purpose	Level	AU	BDU	BU	UOM	PU	ANU	MKU	MSU	Total
1	Send/ Receive an Messages	Daily	43 (13.7)	25 (8.0)	38 (12.1)	29 (9.2)	51 (16.2)	45 (14.3)	39 (12.4)	44 (14.0)	314 (62.7)
		Weekly	7 (17.9)	6 (15.4)	3 (7.7)	4 (10.3)	5 (12.8)	3 (7.7)	5 (12.8)	6 (15.4)	39 (7.8)
		Monthly	1 (6.7)	1 (6.7)	3 (20)	0	2 (13.3)	0	1 (6.7)	7 (46.7)	15 (3.0)
		Rarely	22 (16.5)	19 (14.3)	18 (13.5)	9 (6.8)	12 (9.0)	39 (29.3)	5 (3.8)	9 (6.8)	133 (26.5)
		Total	**73 (14.6)**	**51 (10.2)**	**62 (12.4)**	**42 (8.4)**	**70 (14.0)**	**87 (17.4)**	**50 (10.0)**	**66 (13.2)**	**501 (100)**
2	PDF form can Read articles/ Books etc.	Daily	42 (13.8)	29 (9.5)	42 (13.8)	22 (7.2)	49 (16.1)	55 (18.1)	33 (10.9)	32 (10.5)	304 (60.7)
		Weekly	15 (13.5)	12 (10.8)	12 (10.8)	14 (12.6)	13 (11.7)	13 (11.7)	10 (9.0)	22 (19.8)	111 (22.2)
		Monthly	6 (20)	1 (3.3)	2 (6.7)	4 (13.3)	4 (13.3)	5 (16.7)	2 (6.7)	6 (20)	30 (6.0)
		Rarely	10 (17.9)	9 (16.1)	6 (10.7)	2 (6.7)	4 (13.3)	14 (25)	5 (8.9)	6 (10.7)	56 (11.2)
		Total	**73 (14.6)**	**51 (10.2)**	**62 (12.4)**	**42 (8.4)**	**70 (14.0)**	**87 (17.4)**	**50 (10.0)**	**66 (13.2)**	**501 (100)**
3	For Research Assignment	Daily	24 (14.0)	16 (9.4)	24 (14.0)	11 (6.4)	29 (17.0)	20 (11.7)	23 (13.5)	24 (14.0)	171 (34.1)
		Weekly	22 (19.5)	10 (8.8)	13 (11.5)	10 (8.8)	14 (12.4)	16 (14.2)	13 (11.5)	15 (13.3)	113 (22.6)
		Monthly	3 (6.1)	5 (10.2)	5 (10.2)	5 (10.2)	6 (12.2)	8 (16.3)	4 (8.2)	13 (26.5)	49 (9.8)
		Rarely	24 (14.3)	20 (11.9)	20 (11.9)	16 (9.5)	21 (12.5)	43 (25.6)	10 (71.4)	14 (8.3)	168 (33.5)
		Total	**73 (14.6)**	**51 (10.2)**	**62 (12.4)**	**42 (8.4)**	**70 (14.0)**	**87 (17.4)**	**50 (10.0)**	**66 (13.2)**	**501 (100)**
4	Collaborate with a team	Daily	20 (13.2)	10 (6.6)	22 (14.6)	15 (9.9)	17 (11.3)	21 (13.9)	23 (15.2)	23 (15.2)	151 (30.1)
		Weekly	22 (23.4)	10 (10.6)	15 (16.0)	8 (8.5)	12 (12.8)	6 (6.4)	9 (9.6)	12 (12.8)	94 (18.8)
		Monthly	7 (16.7)	6 (14.3)	4 (9.5)	3 (7.1)	4 (9.5)	2 (4.8)	3 (7.1)	13 (31.0)	42 (8.4)
		Rarely	24 (11.2)	25 (11.7)	21 (9.8)	16 (7.5)	37 (17.3)	58 (27.1)	15 (7.0)	18 (8.4)	214 (42.7)
		Total	**73 (14.6)**	**51 (10.2)**	**62 (12.4)**	**42 (8.4)**	**70 (14.0)**	**87 (17.4)**	**50 (10.0)**	**66 (13.2)**	**501 (100)**

5.10. Level of Satisfaction of Research Information

The study analysed the level of satisfaction with research information from social medias shared by research scholars in Tamil Nadu which shows that 28.3% of them opined Very Highly Satisfied to promote online learning, for research and e-learning (17.0%), to collaborate with research project (21.8%), to have greater access to research content very less 16.6%. It supports mutual and peer learning only (23.2%).

Table 9

Level of Satisfactions of Research Information

SI. No.	Research Information	LOS	AU	BDU	BU	UOM	PU	ANU	MKU	MSU	Total
1	Promote Online Learning	VHS	23 (16.2)	13 (9.2)	16 (11.3)	13 (9.2)	11 (7.7)	22 (15.5)	18 (12.7)	26 (18.3)	142 (28.3)
		HS	23 (16.4)	16 (11.4)	16 (11.4)	10 (7.1)	28 (20)	18 (12.9)	14 (10)	15 (10.7)	140 (27.9)
		S	14 (11.7)	15 (12.5)	14 (11.7)	14 (11.7)	21 (17.5)	21 (17.5)	10 (8.3)	11 (9.2)	120 (24.0)
		LS	1 (4.2)	1 (4.2)	6 (25)	2 (8.3)	5 (20.8)	3 (12.5)	2 (8.3)	4 (16.7)	24 (4.8)
		NS	12 (16)	6 (8)	10 (13.3)	3 (4)	5 (6.7)	23 (30.7)	6 (8)	10 (13.3)	75 (15.0)
		Total	**73 (14.6)**	**51 (10.2)**	**62 (12.4)**	**42 (8.4)**	**70 (14.0)**	**87 (17.4)**	**50 (10.0)**	**66 (13.2)**	**501 (100)**
2	Research and e-learning	VHS	10 (11.8)	12 (14.1)	10 (11.8)	9 (10.6)	9 (10.6)	10 (11.8)	10 (11.8)	15 (17.6)	85 (17.0)
		HS	34 (21.3)	15 (9.4)	16 (10)	11 (6.9)	21 (13.1)	20 (12.5)	20 (12.5)	23 (14.4)	160 (31.9)
		S	17 (11.7)	11 (7.6)	22 (15.2)	16 (11)	31 (21.4)	23 (15.9)	11 (7.6)	14 (9.7)	145 (28.9)
		LS	3 (12)	2 (8)	4 (16)	1 (4)	4 (16)	4 (16)	1 (4)	6 (24)	25 (5.0)
		NS	9 (10.5)	11 (12.8)	10 (11.6)	5 (5.8)	5 (5.8)	30 (34.9)	8 (9.3)	8 (9.3)	86 (17.2)
		Total	**73 (14.6)**	**51 (10.2)**	**62 (12.4)**	**42 (8.4)**	**70 (14.0)**	**87 (17.4)**	**50 (10.0)**	**66 (13.2)**	**501 (100)**

3	Collaborate with Research Project	VHS	14 (12.8)	11 (10.1)	12 (11.0)	7 (6.4)	13 (11.9)	18 (16.5)	14 (12.8)	20 (18.3)	109 (21.8)
		HS	31 (19.0)	20 (12.3)	24 (14.7)	14 (8.6)	20 (12.3)	22 (13.5)	13 (8.0)	19 (11.7)	163 (32.5)
		S	22 (15.6)	9 (6.4)	17 (12.1)	15 (10.6)	26 (18.4)	24 (17.0)	11 (7.8)	17 (12.1)	141 (28.1)
		LS	1 (5)	3 (15)	0	1 (5)	7 (35)	2 (10)	4 (20)	2 (10)	20 (4.0)
		NS	5 (7.4)	8 (11.8)	9 (13.2)	5 (7.4)	4 (5.9)	21 (30.9)	8 (11.8)	8 (11.8)	68 (13.6)
		Total	**73 (14.6)**	**51 (10.2)**	**62 (12.4)**	**42 (8.4)**	**70 (14.0)**	**87 (17.4)**	**50 (10.0)**	**66 (13.2)**	**501 (100)**
4	Greater access to Research Content	VHS	16 (19.3)	13 (15.7)	9 (10.8)	6 (7.2)	9 (10.8)	7 (8.4)	9 (10.8)	14 (16.9)	83 (16.6)
		HS	32 (20.9)	13 (8.5)	18 (11.8)	14 (9.2)	20 (13.1)	26 (17.0)	12 (7.8)	18 (11.8)	153 (30.5)
		S	15 (10)	16 (10.7)	20 (13.3)	16 (10.7)	28 (18.7)	22 (14.7)	18 (12)	15 (10)	150 (29.9)
		LS	4 (10.5)	1 (2.6)	4 (10.5)	3 (7.9)	8 (21.1)	6 (15.8)	3 (7.9)	9 (23.7)	38 (7.6)
		NS	6 (7.8)	8 (10.4)	11 (14.3)	3 (3.9)	5 (6.5)	26 (33.8)	8 (10.4)	10 (13.0)	77 (15.4)
		Total	**73 (14.6)**	**51 (10.2)**	**62 (12.4)**	**42 (8.4)**	**70 (14.0)**	**87 (17.4)**	**50 (10.0)**	**66 (13.2)**	**501 (100)**
5	Supports mutual and peer learning	VHS	18 (15.5)	13 (11.2)	12 (10.3)	11 (9.5)	12 (10.3)	15 (12.9)	12 (10.3)	23 (19.8)	116 (23.2)
		HS	28 (20.1)	14 (10.1)	18 (12.9)	8 (5.8)	23 (16.5)	19 (13.7)	13 (9.4)	16 (11.5)	139 (27.7)
		S	16 (11.7)	9 (6.6)	20 (14.6)	16 (11.7)	29 (21.2)	22 (16.1)	11 (8.0)	14 (10.2)	137 (27.3)
		LS	4 (13.8)	3 (10.3)	3 (10.3)	4 (13.8)	4 (13.8)	3 (10.3)	6 (20.7)	2 (6.9)	29 (5.8)
		NS	7 (8.8)	12 (15)	9 (11.3)	3 (3.8)	2 (2.5)	28 (35)	8 (10)	11 (13.8)	80 (16.0)
		Total	**73 (14.6)**	**51 (10.2)**	**62 (12.4)**	**42 (8.4)**	**70 (14.0)**	**87 (17.4)**	**50 (10.0)**	**66 (13.2)**	**501 (100)**

Note: VHS - Very Highly Satisfied, HS - Highly Satisfied, S - Satisfied, LS - Less Satisfied, NS - Not Satisfied.

6. Major Findings

1. Lion's share (93.6%) of the social science research scholars in universities in Tamil Nadu use Internet Explorer. Only around a quarter (27.7%) of them are using Mozilla Firefox.

2. WhatsApp is employed for information sharing by a large majority (86.2%) of the research scholars and YouTube is preferred next (73.9%).

3. Laptop is the major ICT tool (79%) used by them for information sharing through social media, next only to mobile phone (73.7%).

4. More than 2/5th of them (44.1%) use RefWorks (Reference Management Software) followed by Mendeley (26.3%).

5. Majority (70.3%) of them are sharing Researcher ID, than Scopus ID (23.4%).

6. A quarter of the research scholars prefer to obtain data on human behaviour aspects to a Very Large Extent, than Research Information Tasks.

7. Majority of the research scholars on daily basis use social media for sending and receiving messages and the second purpose is to access articles and books in pdf format.

8. More than a quarter (28.3%) are Very Highly Satisfied in that it promotes on line learning than other aspects.

7. Suggestions

a) The University libraries in Tamil Nadu should promote the use of social media through library 2.0 and web 2.0.

b) Research guides in the universities may advise their research scholars in sharing research information through social media.

c) It is high time to develop software for sharing research information among teachers and research scholars.

8. Conclusion

This study found that social media are widely used among research scholars for sharing research information. While interviewing them, they revealed that social media greatly helped in connecting and communicating with fellow research students, both nationally as well as internationally. Such communication helped in generating new ideas and to keep up-to-date with the latest issues pertaining to their research problem. It benefitted in sharing their research work done by them and getting a critical opinion from a wider audience. By doing so, some of the research scholars may appreciate their research work while some of them may criticise also. Anyway, this will help in revising their research work and streamlining their work in a new direction and ultimately beneficial for them.

Now a days several higher educational institutions have face book and similar social media. Those research scholars do post their information in it and will get quickly spread and capture the attention of a group. Further, in these days there are various types of social media groups instituted by research scholars themselves (for eg. Tamil Nadu Research - a WhatsApp group of researchers) through which the research scholars can request for journal articles and documents needed for them for their research work and those members possessing the document will share the same to disseminate to other research scholars who are in need. Similar kind of studies should be conducted in other universities in the state among the research scholars in Arts, Humanities, Science, Technology and other disciplines.

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