

ROLE OF LIBRARIES IN ENHANCING THE RESEARCH VISIBILITY AND COLLABORATION OF ACADEMICS

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Abstract

Scholarly publications are one of the parameters to evaluate the performance of individuals as well as institutions. Reputation and ranking of any academic or research institution is highly impacted with its scholarly output contributed by each individual. Promoting collaboration among the academics can improve the quality and visibility of academic publication in global level. Libraries are playing a key role in handling various tools and techniques that can promote the research findings thereby maximize the research impact and visibility among the academics which can successively lead to have a network of potential researchers. This paper will discuss in detail about various publication strategies that can support in attaining maximum research visibility at a global level thereby enhance the chances of collaboration among the academic and research community. Paper will also highlight the impact of different research and publication marketing tools such as Researcher Identifiers and Profiles, Academic Social Networking Sites, Online Reference Management Tools, Blogging and Online Magazines, Personal or Institutional Websites and Open Repository System in detail which are supportive in disseminating the scholarly publication for its optimal visibility. Further the paper will also discuss the major role of librarians in providing valuable assistance to the academic and research community in promoting various publication marketing tools which are acting as walking aid to improve the visibility and creating collaborative networks.

Keywords: Scholarly publications, research visibility, research collaboration, researcher identifier, researcher profile, publication marketing tool.

Introduction

There is an enormous growth in the number of publications which are of discipline based, interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary in existence contributing to the advancement of knowledge. Reputation and ranking of any academic or research institution is highly impacted with its scholarly output largely produced by the scientific community. Different parameters are being used to measure the quality of such scholarly output. In most cases, rating research quality relies on the number of research publications and its citations. All scholarly publications arising from academic activities should ensure maximum visibility which can enhance the chances of citations and collaboration. However the traditional discovery tools are not sufficient any more to facilitate optimum visibility to the research publications and further it constrain the chance of getting connected among the academics. Information and communication technologies have also made it easier for authors and researchers to perform their research process faster and to improve the visibility of their work through different online social networking sites and social media platforms. Libraries are playing a pivotal role in dealing with such tools and techniques that can promote the research findings there by maximize the research impact and visibility among the academics.

Objectives

Objectives of this paper is to discourse in detail on various pre publication and post publication strategies that can support in attaining maximum research visibility at global level there by widen the chances of collaboration among the academic and research community. The role of libraries in such initiative will also be discussed. However, the specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- To identify different pre publication strategies to support and enhance visibility and collaboration among the academics

- To list out various post publication strategies to enhance visibility and widen the collaborative networks among the academics
- To highlight the impact of different research and publication marketing tools which are supportive in disseminating the scholarly publication.
- To assess the role of libraries in promoting the research visibility and collaboration among the academics.

Significance of the Study

Research output generated globally is being available in different formats and adopts different communication channels to broadcast it to a wider audience. Better visibility of the research output through online mode has become necessity to increase the effectiveness of readership and utilization which directly associate with the citation enhancement. The technique of search engine optimization has to be learned to improve the visibility and citation to the articles. Impact factor of the journal is highly influenced by readership and citations. Authors and researchers should be able to improve the discoverability of their research output using various means. Using different publication marketing tools help the academicians to render better visibility to their research output. Further librarians can play a major role in implementing technological and marketing tools to enhance the academic output in the web platforms.

Scholarly Publication

Scholarly publication in its simple terms is a report of a scientific investigation, research findings, with specific objectives in mind; the outcome is reviewed by subject experts in the domain. In other words, it is the published results of researchers who have gained new knowledge in a discipline by means of applying appropriate scientific theories and research methods. It is the process of academics, scholars and researchers sharing and publishing their research findings so that they are available to wider academic community and beyond. They are also called, academic, peer-reviewed or refereed publications. Publication types usually consist of journal articles, research reports, conference

papers, and books. Scholarly articles are a full-length evidence based research findings, and sources of new knowledge in the domain. They are published in specialized research-oriented peer-reviewed journals, which are mainly intended for researchers and academic community. Quality publications and contributions in high impact journals are essential in increasing the reputation of institute and researcher which can attract research funding agencies and employment opportunities.

Research Visibility

The research visibility by definition is the Process of making the research findings visible to the scholarly community using Academic Social Networking Sites (ASNS). Journal publications, papers in conference proceedings, preprints, books and book chapters, video lectures, research data, video, presentations and posters etc are all evidence of research activities. Giving the resources accessible in the public platforms enhances the visibility, preserve the output and make them available for future use. Research visibility improves the citation impact. Figure 1 represents the stages of publication strategies in scholarly communication

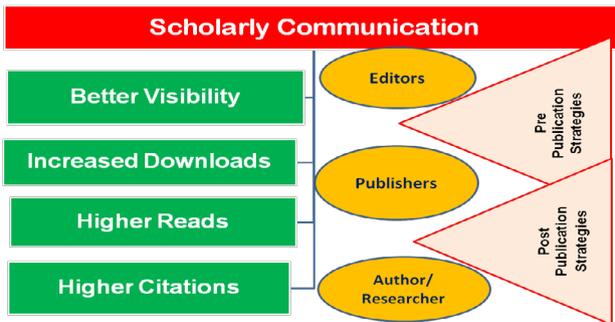


Fig 1. Stages of publication strategies in scholarly communication

Publication Strategies

Quality publications are result of hardwork, dedication and quality time spent on a particular research question to find solution. In order to enhance the visibility and citations of scholarly output following ways can be adopted:

- Identify a suitable journal in which the research report can be published for wider circulation or the appropriate audience who can refer the publication
- Uploading and updating published work on research online tools for a broader visibility.

Pre Publication Strategies

Publishing a paper in an appropriate journal with a reasonable publishing reputation of publisher or with a high impact factor is the most common practice of researchers for wider visibility and getting cited. But there are many other things a scholar can do to promote his or her work and make it easy for others to find.

- **Identify the knowledge gap:** As a researcher or author the first and foremost thing before starting a research journey is to identify the knowledge gap and deal with trending topics.
- **Target a wider audience:** It is always advisable to write for a larger audience to get more visibility rather than targeting a small group.
- **Maintain the Quality:** Article must be methodologically sound and justified, theoretically well grounded, clearly written and structured, contain a strong, current, comprehensive and solid literature review, contribute something new and useful to that literature, deliver a thorough discussion of their findings and offer a satisfying conclusion.
- **Make title short and relevant:** Choose a suitable title for the manuscript and make it descriptive. It is also better to incorporate a keyword related to that particular topic of research in the title. This is the most effective way to make the title search engine friendly to give optimal online visibility.
- **Use of attractive and appropriate technical keywords:** Further, the researcher has to select the most appropriate technical keywords to the paper and repeat them in the abstract, headings, sub-headings, graphics, tables, figures, file name, description tags

and the full text also. Appropriate keywords improve the chances of article discoverability which can further lead to enhance the possibility of citation.

- **Use headings, subheadings, links etc.:** Appropriate headings, subheadings and linkage between the concepts and paragraphs always gives a better attention to the reader to refer and cite the publication
- **Publish in a suitable journal having good IF:** Researcher has to plan to publish the manuscript in a suitable, quality and in an indexed journal (national and international indexing databases). Further it has to be checked with points like whether the articles on that journal are easily discoverable, whether they are indexed in services such as Web of Science or Scopus database etc. Popularity of the journal among the research community also needs to be checked.
- **Publish with OA journals:** Open access publishing makes scholarly works online, free for everyone to find and read. Publishing with open access journals will help the writer to reach their publications worldwide to attract more citations. Studies say making the research output available through open access repositories have a greater research impact than articles which are not open access to the users. There are two methods to make a research output open access. One method is to publish the paper in an OA journal and the other method is to self-archive the paper in an open access repository.
- **Prefer Print plus Online publication:** It is preferred to choose a journal which has both print and online publishing versions.
- **Presenting research findings in conferences:** Research findings may be presented in conferences, colloquiums to get feedbacks and to improve the quality before its submission for its actual publication. Conferences are a great opportunity to promote oneself and research activities of an individual.
- **Simple and easy to understand manuscript:** It is known fact that a researcher has to prepare a manuscript according to the

publication policies rendered by the journal publisher. However, the manuscript preparation should be search engine friendly, simple, with common terminologies and catchy title to improve its discoverability. Abstract should state clearly the article's central message and outline its general subject, objectives, main findings, and contribution accurately..

- **Share the research data:** Sharing the research data can increase the visibility of research as it allows validating the individual's work.

Post Publication Strategies

Publishing a quality paper in a highly impact factor journal cannot always guarantee that the publication can attract high citations. There are some useful research publication online platforms like LinkedIn, Researchgate, Pinterest, Twitter, Instagram, Facebook which are helpful in showcasing and disseminating the scholarly publications for its optimal visibility and enhancing the chances of collaboration and citation.

Research and Publication Marketing Tools

There are many research tools or publication marketing tools which are helpful in showcasing and disseminating the scholarly publications of a researcher for its optimal visibility and also to have a collaboration network. Few of them are explained here.

Researcher Identifiers and Profiles

Author identity in the scholarly community is a persistent problem. Hence, managing an author identifier/profile is essential to promote the intellectual output. Unique researcher identifiers and profiles help the scholarly publishing community to associate the creators with their works in precise and unambiguous way to optimize the research discoverability in the global level. Individuality of a researcher should always be constant even if the researcher changes his name, affiliation, discipline and organization etc. With many authors having identical names on one side and ever-growing literature to keep pace with the

information explosion on the other side are putting on a great challenge of keeping a track of each author and his/her research outputs in a way to make it easily discoverable. Creating researcher identifier and profile is a well-advised method to distinguish all the intellectual output of a researcher.

Researcher profile enables a researcher to pool all his research contributions in one place without any identity crisis and act as a reliable source for an individual as well as an organization. As all the information pertaining to a particular researcher is available at one place it can act as a source for the assessment of an individual. Further, it helps the funding organizations to simplify the grant submission workflow and monitor the status of the funded research activities. It is useful in creating organizational repositories without any author ambiguity. As a researcher it is helpful in finding his potential collaborators, and an easier way to get credit for their scholarly activities. For an institutions it helps to collect, showcase and often evaluate the scholarly activities of their faculty or scientist. Helpful for publishers to simplify the publishing workflow, including peer review process without any author identity issues and for the scholarly societies it is an easier way to track the achievements of their members. Figure 2 represents the application of researcher identifier in various sectors. One has to use the same name version consistently throughout career and also a standardized institutional affiliation and address. ORCID, Researcher ID, Google Scholar Citation Profile, Publons Profile, Microsoft Academic Search Profile, Vidwan, IRINS, International Standard Name Identifier (ISNI) are some of the platforms for such initiatives. There are many such similar researchers profile platforms where a researcher or author can register himself and enhance the visibility of scientific output to the community. AuthorClaim, Virtual International Authority File (VIAF), LATTES, RePEc Author, NARCIS, Names Project etc. generate unique identifiers for the institutions as well.

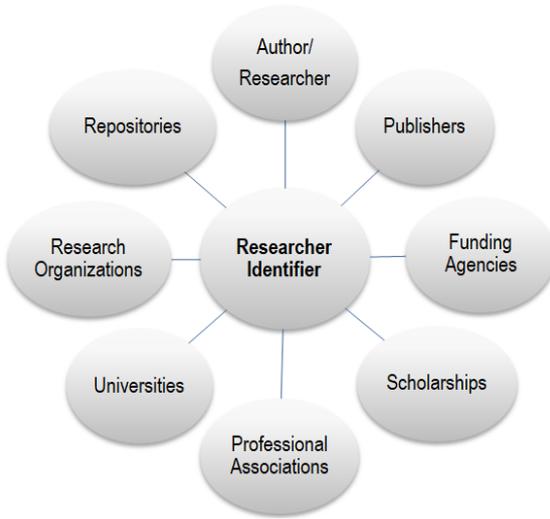


Fig 2. Application of researcher identifier

Academic Social Networking Sites

Social network and professional connections are very much important in all human endeavors including academic activities which can enhance the opportunity of sharing and collaborating. A researcher can gain feedback and comments from other peers, as well as expand their networks to enhance research visibility and citation impact. There are many such platforms available in both free and fee viz., Academia.edu, ResearchGate, Penprofile, MyScienceWork, LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook etc.

Online Reference Management Tools

Reference Management tools offer an easy way of finding relevant literature, collecting references, organizing them in a database, and insert citations in a manuscript with proper citation style. An online reference management tool provides an easier way for collaboration and use across multiple devices and assists to improve publication visibility and impact. Most of the new Reference Management tools

provide facility to connect with other researchers that one cannot find on other platforms. Mendeley, Zotero, CiteULike, EndNote etc are some of the online reference management tools which can be utilized to manage references while writing and are highly influential in assuring the quality publications which can in turn enhance the visibility of scholarly communication.

Blogging and Online Magazines

Blogs are a vital tool for academics to publicly communicate about research development and findings. Writing a blog post on the research output with a link to the location where it is available can be a good practice. It is one of the strategies to reach out to a wider audience thereby increases the chance of citation counts. Online magazines and blogs can be solutions through content curation to immediately circulate the research findings. Contribution to Wikipedia or such online magazine portals can help the academics to enhance their visibility and create community collaborations. Wordpress, Weebly, Blogger etc., are examples of such platforms. Wiki is another platform where the researchers can showcase their academic activities and keep them live in online.

Personal or Institutional Websites and Open Repository System

Personal or institutional websites, self archiving of research activities will considerably increase the visibility and citation impact of articles. Anything which is made available in open platform removes the barriers to access and share. Free repositories also can be used to archive the researcher paper based on its copyright policies. It is better to use non-commercial open repository to upload the research findings. OpenDOAR, SSRN, SelectedWorks, Figshare etc are some of the examples for such repository systems.

Role of Libraries

Libraries have to play a pivotal role in providing valuable assistance to the academic and research community in promoting the various

publication marketing tools which are acting as the walking aid to improve the visibility and collaborative networks. Conducting research oriented seminars, workshops, training activities helps the academics to identify the research gap and deal with relevant topics. Methods and techniques to write research proposals, manuscript writing, research methodologies etc need to be arranged. Libraries can provide awareness to the researchers and academics on tools like Google Trends, Google Adwords etc to enable them to choose right keywords for the contents they write, so that the chances of searching, retrieving and catching the attention of readers will be high. Matters related to quality journals, predatory publications, impact factors, open access publishing, open repositories need to be advocated to the academic community. Libraries can also facilitate to discuss the research findings by arranging research conferences, colloquiums and poster presentation to get feedbacks and to improve the quality before its submission for its actual publication. Further such programs will be a great opportunity to the academics to promote their research.

Having a researcher profile makes a scholarly communication more discoverable and highly visible in the global platform. It also helps the researcher to associate the creators with their works in precise and unambiguous way to optimize the research discoverability in the global level. Libraries have to educate the academics about the existence, advantages and help them to create such profiling system to enable the researcher to connect all his publications together. As a researcher it is always advisable to create online profiles in multiple platforms and link them each other to reach out to a wider research community. As an online marketing strategy, educating the academics and researchers on search engine optimization (SEO) techniques can increase the visibility for optimization.

Most of the academic social networks are not open access repositories. Hence one has to register in order to download the articles unlike in non-commercial open repositories. Libraries play a major role in imparting awareness about such academic social networking sites and its advantages and benefits. Also need to assist and advocate the

academicians to create collaborative mechanisms using online tools, platforms for exchanging ideas, discovery platforms and interaction, and how to stay up to date with the latest developments in their field.

Further awareness programs and hands on training programs also enable them to utilize it effectively.

Creating and maintaining blog can effectively contribute to showcase research activities. Libraries can play a major role in educating the academics on different blogging tools and online magazines.

Libraries have to play a key role in promoting the usage of self archiving tools which are helpful in showcasing the published intellectual output of an individual. Institutional repositories can be used to preserve the academic research output permanently and effectively.

Conclusion

Showcasing oneself in the online platforms and sharing the research activities can considerably help the individual to make a greater impact in the community. This also leads to promote research work to a greater extent open up ways to have collaboration among the interested. Such kind of promotional activities have to be started from the prepublication stage. Taking the advantage of publication marketing tool always have a greater impact and open up the window into a researcher's expertise. Availability of a researcher's credentials in the online space help to reach it to the larger audience and lead to future collaborations and publication opportunities, job opportunities, emergence of new ideas and innovation which can enhance the citations and other metrics. One has to raise the visibility of the research output through online platforms as it definitely increases the potential of being discovered and downloaded in a larger extent. By making ones profile accessible to the public also leads to attract others attention to gain other individual benefits such as invitation to present seminar/conference talks, consultancy opportunities, media attention, awards, grants, fellowships

including promotions etc. The social media platforms have greater exposure possibilities and considerably assist and influence in more downloads and citations of scholarly publications.

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