

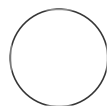


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Change in Research Metrics and ResearchGate dental users during the COVID-19 pandemic

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ABSTRACT

The field of dental science has experienced significant growth, with a substantial increase in research publications, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. This growth is evident in the shift of academic and research activities to online platforms like ResearchGate (RG). However, there is a lack of understanding regarding how dental academics navigate this digital landscape, especially in the face of challenges posed by the pandemic. Additionally, it is crucial to explore the potential connection between the use of RG and changes in research metrics, as this represents a key knowledge gap in current scholarly discussions.

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We use this protocol and it's working

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Background and Rationale

- 1 The field of dental science has witnessed a notable surge in growth, marked by an exponential increase in research publications. This expansion was particularly pronounced in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has led academics to transfer at least part of their academic and research activities online through the use of academic social networking sites (ASNS) such as ResearchGate (RG). However, there is a notable gap in our understanding of how dental academics navigate this digital terrain, especially amidst the unique challenges posed by the global pandemic. Moreover, there is a pressing need to elucidate the potential correlation between use of RG and changes in research metrics, forming a critical aspect of knowledge gaps in the current scholarly discourse.

Objectives

- 2
 1. Investigate the use of RG by dental academics during the COVID-19 period.
 2. Analyze changes in research metrics related to use of RG, including number of publication, citation impact, collaboration patterns and publication models.

Study Design

- 3 An observational study using meta-research approach will be conducted. Data collection will span a two-year period from 2019 to 2021.

Data collection

- 4 Data about dental users of RG will be collected from official academic institutional websites and ResearchGate. The eligibility criteria will be dental academics with profiles on the selected academic social networking site (ResearchGate) in countries with the greatest number of dental academics. Data about the research metrics will assess output (number of documents indexed in the Web of Science), % of papers with international collaboration and with domestic collaboration, % of papers with any open access publishing model, with gold and green open access publishing models, the category normalized citation impact, % of papers cited, total citations number, and % highly cited papers. The research metrics data will be extracted from Clarivate Analytics InCites.

Analysis

- 5 The analysis plan will include:
 - Descriptive statistics to summarize RG use numbers and research metrics.
 - Correlation analysis to explore relationships between number of dental RG users and research metrics.

Ethical Considerations

- 6 This study will be conducted by researchers from Alexandria University, Alexandria, Egypt. Alexandria University does not require an ethical approval to conduct studies using openly available information on the internet. However, confidentiality of the collected data will be ensured by anonymizing the data during analysis and reporting. Furthermore, the data will only be available with the principal investigator (M.E.T).

Study Outcomes

- 7
- Insights into the patterns of using RG among dental academics during the study period.
 - Understanding the association between the growth in RG use and changes in research metrics.

Dissemination

- 8 The study findings will be disseminated through peer-reviewed publications, and relevant academic forums.

Timeline

- 9
- Baseline data collection: Month 1-3.
 - Regular monitoring and data updates: Ongoing.
 - Data analysis and interpretation: Month 12-15.
 - Manuscript preparation and submission: Month 16-18.

Funding

- 10 No external funding will be used for this study.