

# Impact of Media Trends for Social Science Research - A Case Study on Perceptions of Researchers

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**Abstract:** Media is a live wire in the human development and information transmission among the world. It is through media, the advancement in the communication has been taking place and as a source, media is playing pivotal role in many diversified areas. Social science research is one of the broad areas in research where the researchers have been searching for the sources which help them to complete the research work with more accurate and wide information. Right from selection of the research problem to framing objectives, data collection, applying of statistical techniques, interpretations and generating findings in a precise form is a herculean task for researchers. Media as a tool for research has been providing tremendous support for the researchers in gathering the information, searching, evaluation and framing of models for effective research. The present paper investigates how the media can be an effective tool for social science research. The paper evaluates the different tools and applications in media contributing for social science research and further, the paper provide the views of the researchers with regard to the contribution of media for effective fulfillment of research. The paper is based on both primary and secondary data sources. The paper examines the hypothetical statement whether there is a significant impact of media for the effecting conducting of social science researchers or not.

**Keywords:** Data collection, media tools, Packages, Research, Search engine.

## I. SIGNIFICANCE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

Research process is the systematic investigation of searching for a specific solution to the research problem. Social science research is one of the effective resources that help to understand, explain and predict human behaviour by observing, reflecting and or measuring social phenomena. Social science research focuses on the various issues pertaining to the study of society and the relationships of individuals by exploring meaning from human perspective and testing and or constructing theories based on these investigations. Social science research includes perceptions, behaviors, emotions and/or personalities. It is important to understand that whereas approaches to social science research vary by discipline and approach, all consider in one way or another to what extent we truly are capturing what we say we are capturing.

## II. ROLE OF MEDIA FOR SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

Media provide much contributory assistance for social science research. Media enable the increase the diversity and number of people who get involved in research, allowing for one-off as well as on-going involvement. Further, it allows people to get involved when it is convenient for them rather than restricting involvement to meeting times.

It enable people to network with each other and to be involved who are unable or do not wish to attend face-to-face meetings/events. Further, it help people to keep in touch with researchers and other members of the public in between face-to-face meetings/events.

Media provide the advantage to the respondents in such a way that people to feel more comfortable expressing their opinions because they can do this anonymously. It Provide opportunities to have contact with other involved in research. Media is one of the better sources which helps the researchers to get more accessible than other methods for involving people with certain disabilities (Eg: easychirp.com). Further, it create a place where people can communicate with each other and with researchers in relative confidence for example use closed and secret Facebook groups.

## III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study mainly provide an in depth analysis on how media trends can be used as a effective resource for conducting social science research. The paper examines how the media is going to play the useful role in every part of research process. All the research process steps are cross examined by analyzing the contribution of various trends in media and its applicability in conducting social science research effectively. Further, an attempt is made to analyze the perceptions of the social science researchers to examine the role of media in effective execution of social science research.

The study is based on both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data is collected from the researchers from 3 select areas. These include Economics, Commerce and Business Management. A sample size of 180 is administered through a structured questionnaire. Secondary data is collected from the sources of existing literature, published reports, and articles from internet, magazines and journals.

#### **IV. ANALYSIS ON MEDIA TRENDS FOR SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH**

The social science research process generally include the execution of the following steps.

- 1) Formulating the Research Problem
- 2) Extensive Literature Review
- 3) Developing the objectives
- 4) Preparing the Research Design including Sample Design
- 5) Collecting the Data
- 6) Analysis of Data
- 7) Generalisation and Interpretation
- 8) Presentation of Results-Formal write ups of conclusions reached.

The present study investigates how the media trends is helping the researchers in conducting each step in the social science research process.

#### **A) FORMULATION OF RESEARCH PROBLEM**

Problem in general refers to difficulty. Research problem refers to some difficulty which a researcher experiences in the context of either a theoretical or practical situation and wants to obtain a solution for the same. The research problem is one which requires a researcher to find out the best solution fo the given problem. The research problem must be a situation or area where there must be some objective to be attained at.

Media is an important technological trend that has big implications for how researchers (and people in general) communicate and collaborate. Researchers have a huge amount to gain from engaging with media especially social media in case of select social science researches in various aspects of their work.

Research involves the production, use and consumption of information and knowledge. The research world has evolved a number of mechanisms designed to facilitate the transfer of knowledge between researchers. These include scholarly journals and conferences, and quality assurance mechanisms like appointment committees, peer review, publication and review. The research community has traditionally used a variety of mechanisms to facilitate collaboration between researchers: researchers are organised into departments and research groups; they meet at conferences and meetings; and they come together to organise journals and edit books and so on.

The following are the important trends that have been contributing to the execution of defining the research problem. Enabling through google groups, social

networking sites including LinkedIn, Face book, twitter mainly help the researcher to form groups who can share their valuable ideas for effectively defining the problem.

#### **B) EXTENSIVE LITERATURE REVIEW**

Collection of existing literature, processing and editing the literature is one of the typical tasks which require more time and labour. This also requires physical verification of extensive publications, researchers and also recording of sources of research work done by the earlier researchers. The following media trends have been observed as one of the most valuable supporting sources for the collection of literature.

##### **i) DELNET**

DELNET popularly known as Delhi Library Network, networking the libraries of the Delhi. It is registered as a society in 1992 and later DELNET became DELNET-Developing Library Network. Presently, it is the major resource sharing library network in India connecting more than 1300 libraries in 30 States and Union Territories in India and six other countries. The main objectives of DELNET is to promote resource sharing among the member-libraries by collecting, storing and disseminating information and by providing networked services to the researchers and scholars to supplement their research activity. The data collection methodology includes the electronic transfer of the exported records through email, ftp protocols, the data is physically sent in CDs by the member libraries, the data back-ups are also physically taken by the DELNET staff during their visits to the respective libraries. Also, various libraries in the country are using various software packages which range from the commercial software packages (Libsys , Alice for Windows, Libman, Netlib, etc) to the in-house developed software packages developed with the backend on SQL, Access, Excel, Oracle, Sybase, etc. DELNET collects the records from the member libraries in the default exported format and the conversion programs are being developed to convert the base records into the standard ISO 2709 format before they are finally merged in the Union Catalogues.

The DELNET databases are accessible through the World Wide Web by the registered member libraries of DELNET and their researchers and scholars. The DELNET online servers are being connected with 11 mbps RF link. DELNET provides access to more than 5 million bibliographic records of books in English script available with various member libraries located in and outside the country. The databases can be accessed by any of the desired fields including Title, Author, Subject, Date of Publication.

##### **ii) MENDELEY**

Mendeley is "a free reference manager and academic social network that can help the researcher to organize research, collaborate with others online, and discover

the latest research." By registering through online, researcher can download the Mendeley tool which also offers Social Connectivity. Mendeley can perform several functions which include as a Reference Management(can generate citations and bibliographies in Microsoft Word, OpenOffice, and LaTeX), Read and annotate. Upload PDFs and add "sticky notes" and highlights, organize. Import PDFs from computer, or from other reference management software, Collaborate with colleagues. Share papers, notes, and annotations. Backup, sync and mobile. You can access your papers on the web, or on your iPhone or iPad.

### **iii) ONLINE JOURNALS, NEWS PAPERS AND SEARCH ENGINES**

The development of internet enabled the access of online journals of present and previously published, access to the news papers for editorial as well as relevant news columns, searching of data and articles through search engines including Baidu, Bing, Google, yahoo, ask etc. These online services provide tremendous contribution for wide analysis of existing literature especially useful for effective research.

### **C) DEVELOPING OF OBJECTIVES**

Objectives are the core part of research. The output of the research study reflects on the basis of well defined objectives. It requires the researcher to get assistance from not only with the research supervisor but also the opportunity to identify and then communicate with other researchers in area(s) of interest can be highly valuable. This kind of academic correspondence has always happened but it has been energised with the development of the Internet. Maintaining one-to-one correspondence with everyone who might be useful to the researcher however, quickly results in information overload. The many-to-many forms of communication that characterise media offer a more manageable way to stay in touch with a wide variety of researchers with whom the researcher share interests.

### **D) PREPARING THE RESEARCH DESIGN INCLUDING SAMPLE DESIGN**

Research design is simply regarded as the plan for the entire research. Research design is the blue print for the collection, measurement and analysis of data. It is the plan and structure of investigation. It is a plan that specifies the sources and types of information relevant to the research problem. It also includes the time and cost budgets. It is a strategy specifying which approach will be used for gathering and analyzing the data. A well formed research design will give idea about why the research problem is to be studied, why the study should carry out, how to collect the data, how to design sample and what are the techniques to be used for the data collection.

### **E) COLLECTING THE DATA**

For the collection of data pertaining to financial context and organizational context, internet has been

used as one of main sources of data collection supporting tool. Searching of information pertaining to company profile, annual reports of the company, news and view about the companies is possible for the collection of Secondary data. With reference to primary data, media has provided the following applications.

#### **A) Google Form**

Google Forms is a free service that brings forms to the Google Drive. With Google Forms, researcher can create online polls, surveys, quizzes, interview questionnaire, and more. There are no limits and all the data is capture in a Google spreadsheet. Google form provides the following advantages.

- a) Collected data through Google form is automatically saved in Google drive which can be used as a source for data collection from unlimited number of respondents.
- b) Google scripts are saved according to the date and time and it can be used as a useful source for quick response sheet and it is also enabled for conducting poll on twitter with Google Forms.
- c) Questionnaire can be composed and can be sent to any respondent situated any where in the world.
- d) By using the applications including chart, excel import, researcher can visualize the proportion of responses in a simple graphical form.

#### **B) Survey Monkey**

Survey Monkey tool helps to create, send and analyze surveys. Since Survey Monkey collects and stores data, it can also be used to accomplish a wide variety of tasks and help make better decisions like keeping track of customer data, planning an event etc. Survey Monkey tool helps to create and surveys with ease, make smarter decisions with data, real-time results, text analysis, SPSS integration, further, it is a readily inbuilt to meet the researcher academic and business needs and further provide industry leading security.

### **F) ANALYSIS OF DATA**

Data Analysis is the process of systematically applying statistical and/or logical techniques to describe and illustrate, condense and recap, and evaluate data. There are a number of issues that researchers should be cognizant of with respect to data analysis. These include: skills to analyze, selecting proper data collection methods and appropriate analysis, drawing unbiased inference, following acceptable norms for disciplines, determining statistical significance, measuring the outcome, reliability and validity analysis, partitioning text when analyzing qualitative data.

Especially for the support of data analysis using statistical tools, the following media trends provide valuable advantages.

#### **1) EXCEL ANALYSIS TOOL PACK**

The Analysis ToolPak is an Excel add-in program that provides data analysis tools for financial, statistical and engineering data analysis.

## 2) SPSS

**SPSS:** Statistics is a software package used for statistical analysis. Long produced by SPSS Inc., it was acquired by IBM in 2009. The current versions (2015) are officially named **IBM SPSS Statistics**. Companion products in the same family are used for survey authoring and deployment (IBM SPSS Data Collection), data mining (IBM SPSS Modeler), text analytics, and collaboration and deployment (batch and automated scoring services).

The software name originally stood for Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), reflecting the original market, although the software is now popular in other fields as well, including the health sciences and marketing.

## 3) SAS

**SAS** (Statistical Analysis System) is a software suite developed by SAS Institute for advanced analytics, multivariate analyses, business intelligence, data management, and predictive analytics. SAS was developed at North Carolina State University from 1966 until 1976.

## 4) STATA

**STATA** is a general-purpose statistical software package created in 1985 by statacorp. Most of its users work in research, especially in the fields' of economics, sociology, political science, biomedicine and epidemiology. Stata's capabilities include data management, statistical analysis, graphics, simulations, regression analysis (linear and multiple), and custom programming.

## G) GENERALISATION & INTERPRETATION

In this stage, the researchers needs to write the interpretations on the basis of analysis of data. Interpretation refers to the task of drawing inferences from the collected facts after an analytical and/or experimental study. It is essential for establishment of some explanatory concepts. Media trends have been providing the following applications for effective generalization and interpretation.**a)**

### **Microblogging**

Microblogs offer a way to make small pieces of writing or data available online. They usually include features that enable researcher to build up a network of followers or friends. Microblogs encourage conversations that would not take place in any other medium. Whereas email generally offers one-to-one communication, microblogs are a many-to-many form of communication. This can create a web of interactions that can initially be confusing to follow. Microblogging tools include:

1. Twitter ([www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)) is the clear market leader, a general tool used for a wide range of purposes. It enables the discussion sharing of views and reviews from large pool.

2. Other microblogs include Tumblr ([www.tumblr.com](http://www.tumblr.com)) and Plurk ([www.plurk.com](http://www.plurk.com)) which offers a stranded structure for the microblog conversations.

### b) Amplified conferences

The term 'amplified conference' term was coined to describe use of networked technologies at events to maximize(amplify) ideas mentioned at a conference and subsequent discussions, including both discussions between conference attendees and remote participants. This makes the participants to make a quick enquiry, sharing of thoughts, views and suggestions that can improve the purpose of presentations in the conferences.

## H) PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND PREPARATION OF REPORT

A research report is an oral presentation and/or a written statement that has the purpose of communicating research findings, recommendations for courses of action, other findings to management or other specific audiences. A report could be described as a formal statement of the results of an investigation, or of any matter on which definite information is required, made by some person or body. Reports may be presented orally or in written form. In a report situations are analyzed and conclusions are drawn, alternatives considered and recommendations made. Reports are concise and have a specific structure.

There is a range of tools which enable researchers to collaborate in writing and research tasks. Wikis are websites which allow easy creation and editing of interlinked web pages via a web browser. They are extremely flexible, and so they have been put to a wide range of uses, including community websites, personal note taking, corporate intranets and knowledge management systems. Most wikis allow administrators to adjust access rights to the site or to individual pages, so that they can choose who is allowed to add to or modify the content on the site.

i) **Wikipedia** Many academics have probably come across wikis through the influence of Wikipedia, the world's most successful online encyclopaedia, now containing over 3.3 million English language articles. Wikipedia is built using open source software called Wikimedia; this software can also be used to underpin other kinds of wiki.

ii) **Google Docs** is a free, Web-based service from Google, with word processor, spreadsheet, presentation, online data collection forms, and data storage. The Document part of the service allows multiple authors to collaborate in producing and editing documents in a format similar to Microsoft Word (the most recent versions of Microsoft Office now also offer an online facility for licence holders). As with most wiki sites, each document has a full revision history, enabling editors to track back and restore previous versions if desired. Apart from eliminating the need for email circulation of drafts,

online authoring also means that all contributors can be sure they are working on the current version of the document.

### iii) Tools for filtering

Among the most powerful filtering tools is RSS, a format used to publish frequently updated works such as blog entries, news headlines, audio or video. An RSS document (called a ‘feed’) includes full or summarized text, plus metadata such as publishing dates and authorship. RSS feeds benefit readers who can subscribe (usually for free) to timely updates from favoured sources, and also aggregate feeds from many sites into one place using software called an ‘RSS reader’, ‘feed reader’, or ‘aggregator’.

### iv) Plagiarism tools

Plagiarism is considered as the unauthorized access of one’s written work, wrongful appropriation, stealing and publication of another author’s language, thoughts, ideas or expressions and the representation of them as one’s own original work. Plagiarism tools in research are used to critically examine the proportion of data

which is actually copied from the existing works. It also enable the researcher to analyze from where the existing data is been copied.

### v) Contribution of Research profiling services

A survey of use of research profiling services across the 24 Russell Group universities was carried out in July 2012. The survey used a variety of techniques to give indications of the numbers of users of these services which is summarized in table 1.

Service	No. of users
Academia.edu	33829
LinkedIn	134669
ResearchGate	18166

## V. PERCEPTIONS OF RESEARCHERS TOWARDS MEDIA TRENDS IN SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

The following table shows the perception on type of media tools performed for conducting research.

**Table2: Perception of researchers on type of media tools utilized for conducting research**

Sl.N o.	Classification of Researchers	Type of media tool utilized more for conducting research				Total
		Literature review tools	Data collection tools	Statistical analysis tools	Reporting and data checking tools	
1	Economics area	26 (43.3%)	16 (25.6%)	12 (20%)	6 (10%)	<b>60 (100%)</b>
2	Commerce Area	28 (45.6%)	18 (30%)	11 (18.3%)	3 (5%)	<b>60 (100%)</b>
3	Business Management Area	29 (48.3%)	17 (28.3%)	10 (15.6%)	4 (5.6%)	<b>60 (100%)</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>83 (45.1%)</b>	<b>51 (28.3%)</b>	<b>33 (18.3%)</b>	<b>13 (7.2%)</b>	<b>180 (100%)</b>
<b>ANOVA of One-way classification results</b>						
Source of Variation		SS	df	MS	F	P-value
Between Groups		882.66	3	294.22	175.53	1.2E-07
Within Groups		13.33	8	1.66		
Total		896	11			

Source: Field Survey and excel analysis results

Table 2 shows the field survey results with reference to the perceptions of researchers on type of media tools utilized for conducting research. Majority of the researchers from Economics area, i.e., 43% of them opined that they utilized literature review tools from media. From Commerce Area and Business Management Area, majority of the Researchers, i.e., 45.6% and 48.3% respectively have also opined that they utilized literature review tools from media for performing the research. Hence, from the survey, it is evident that majority of the Researchers of all select areas, i.e., 46% of them have opined that they have utilized literature review tools. For the above table, ANOVA of One-way classification is performed in

order to analyze the significant difference in the perception of the perceptions of Researchers with regard to the services provided to buyers. And from the results, it is observed that null hypothesis is rejected hence; there is a significant difference in the perceptions of Researchers with regard to the type of media tool utilized for research.

## VI. RESEARCHERS' PERCEPTION ON USE OF MEDIA ASSISTING IN COMPLETION OF RESEARCH IN LESS TIME PERIOD

The following table shows the field survey results on researchers with reference to ‘assistance of media in completion of research in less time period.

**Table3:Perception of researchers on assistance of media**

Sl.No .	Classification of Researchers	No (media won't assist in completion of research in less time period)	Yes(media assist in completion of research in less time period)	Total
1	Economics area	21(35%)	39(65%)	<b>60(100%)</b>
2	Commerce Area	25(41.6%)	35(58.3%)	<b>60(100%)</b>
3	Business Management Area	27(45%)	33(55%)	<b>60(100%)</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>73(40.5%)</b>	<b>107(59.4%)</b>	<b>180(100%)</b>
Chi-square test result : 1.29 Degrees of freedom : 2 Probability :0.525 Tabular value :5.99				

**Source: Filed survey**

From the above table, it is evident that majority of researchers i.e., 65% of the researchers from Economics area, 58% of researchers from Commerce Area and 55% of researchers from Business Management Area have opined 'Yes' which indicates that media will assist incompletion of research in less time period. In order to test, whether there is a significant difference in the perception of researchers with regard to assistance of media, Chi-square test is applied. From the results, it is clear that the calculated value of Chi-square is greater than the tabular value, hence null hypothesis is rejected, hence it is to conclude that there is a significant difference in the perception of researchers from the 3 districts with regard to their perception on informing the buyers about latest offers and the new model arrivals.

## VII. PERCEPTION OF RESEARCHERS ON MOST VALUABLE ADVANTAGE OF MEDIA FOR RESEARCH

The following table shows the field survey results with reference most valuable advantage of media for research

**Table 4: Perception oon most valuable advantage of media for research**

Sl.No.	Classification of Researchers	Perception on most valuable advantage of media for research				Total
		Less time completion of research	Simplified statistical analysis	Wide collection of literature	Advancement in research	
1	Economics area	14 (23.3%)	13 (21.6%)	22 (35.6%)	11 (18.3%)	<b>60 (100%)</b>
2	Commerce Area	13 (21.6%)	10 (15.6%)	21 (35%)	16 (25.6%)	<b>60 (100%)</b>
3	Business Management Area	16 (25.6%)	12 (20%)	19 (31.6%)	13 (21.6%)	<b>60(100%)</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>43 (23.8%)</b>	<b>35 (19.4%)</b>	<b>62 (34.4%)</b>	<b>40 (22.2%)</b>	<b>180 (100%)</b>

**ANOVA of One-way classification results**

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	139.33	3	45.44	13.93	0.001	4.066
Within Groups	25.66	8	3.33			
Total	166	11				

**Source: field survey and excel statistical results**

From the table, it is clear that majority of the respondents from Economics area have opined that 'wide collection of literature' is the most valuable advantage of media for research. 35% and 32% each from Commerce and Business Area researchers have also opined that wide collection of literature is the most valuable advantage of media for research. ANOVA of One-way classification is performed in order to analyze if there is any significant difference in the perception of researchers with reference to most valuable advantage of media for research. 5% significance level is selected in order to analyze the test results, and the results found that  $F_{cal} = 13.93$  and  $F_{tab} = 4.06$ . Therefore:  $F_{cal} > F_{tab}$ . Hence, Null Hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there is a significant difference in the perception of researchers with reference to most valuable advantage of media for research.

### **VIII. CONCLUSIONS**

Once the decision maker/user is clear about the short and long term aims in using media for research, selecting the right platform in media types and effectively initiating and guiding the respondents to the research and maintenance of proper governance in place to deal with the use of media enables them to design effective research output. User having sufficient time bound can depend on media which may help to receive the needed information at considerable speed. Media tools can be used as part of the traditional cycle of academic research and publication. However, researchers who are active users of media feel they offer them benefits in their professional life. By speeding up communication and enabling new forms of collaboration, media also have the potential to spark exciting new research, and to increase productivity. The field survey results on researchers from three different areas of social science research has also indicated that media is a very valuable resource for collection of literature, analysis of results, and most of the researchers are depending for literature review and also the results further indicates that consumers have the opinion that media helps to complete advanced research for less time period.

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