



**PROCEEDINGS OF THE
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
INFRASTRUCTURE, INFORMATION AND INNOVATION
FOR BUILDING NEW BHARAT**

November 10-12, 2022

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Gandhi Bhawan, University of Delhi
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Delhi Library Association



**Satija Research Foundation for
Library and Information Science**

Altmetrics: A Tool for Calculating the Online Impact of Research

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Abstract

The increased social media attention to scholarly articles and the impact of the output could not be calculated simply using traditional citation-based metrics. This has created platforms and services to track the social media transactions around them. These platforms follow various academic and social networks and other such networks. This led to the development of another metric in 2010, termed "alternative metrics", popularly known as "altmetrics", which uses the metrics from social media to study the total impact of the research publications. These newer metrics present helpful insight into the importance and impact of the articles.

Keywords: Altmetrics, Altmetric Attention Score, Social-Media, Twitter, Mendeley

Introduction

The development of Web 2.0 has accelerated the advancement in information and technology, the introduction of high-speed internet and has facilitated the creation of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Wikipedia, YouTube etc. This has increased the security of data sharing, increased collaboration among researchers, and changed the perception of academic publishing. Most scholarly publications are now created and published in digital format. Studying and sharing these outputs among the research community has also changed as most of the communication regarding queries and discussions is done online over the existing academic and non-academic social platforms.

Altmetrics

Altmetrics is a type of metric that is used to quantify online attention received by a publication on various academic and non-academic social networking sites and other platforms such as Blogs, Media channels and newspapers, Patents, etc., by studying how many times an article has been tweeted, viewed, mentioned, commented on, shared, cited in Wikipedia, blogged about, and so on. "Altmetrics are now being collected and analyzed for various purposes ranging from early impact assessment to measuring correlations between altmetrics and citations" (Priem et al. 2011). "The paradigm shift from traditional metrics to altmetrics paved the way for the entire research community to be active in the social web to increase their output value. And social media as a publication medium has become a widely used tool for analyzing the research impact of scholarly publications in a wider perspective rather than the traditional citation counting" (Babu, n.d.).

Akella et al. (2021). "emphasized the importance of an efficient way of identifying important scholarly works at an early stage and used altmetrics to predict citations a scholarly work could receive in the short term by building various classification and regression models for their performance evaluation." (Alperin, 2013) "Altmetrics holds the potential to induct the less known journals from developing countries in the international bibliographic databases that provide journal rankings, and explained that altmetrics would help create research communities by gathering the lesser-known researcher community with social media." (Alperin, 2013).

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B-38, Christian Colony, Patel Chest, Delhi-110007
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Contact: 9871411823 | akshat007@gmail.com
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Price: ₹ 2200/-

ISBN: 978-93-91465-18-6



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