Finding Up-to-date Academic Literature Materials for Scholarly Writings: Some Useful Tips

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Abstract

It is now a prerequisite in many academic institutions and many academic journals that most of the cited works in academic writing, especially theses and dissertations, be recent. This short article aims to give some guidelines on how a researcher can get recent and up-to-date scholarly literature materials. The tips are based on the author's experience when he was writing his PhD thesis and thereafter. The article concluded with a recommendation that researchers should continue to explore the given tips and other means through modern technological tools to be up-to-date in their chosen fields.

Keywords: guidelines on recent scholarly works, Google Scholar, academic social network services, artificial intelligence (AI) tools, Sage Publications

Introduction

One of the requirements for writing a thesis or dissertation at many academic institutions in many parts of the world is having a five-year (or something similar) recency of at least 75% of cited works in the thesis or dissertation. A scholar may think that this is difficult or even impossible. However, this is possible with diligence and the help of some resources on the Internet. This researcher discovered most of the tips to find these recent resources when he was writing his Ph.D. thesis and thereafter in his academic career. Therefore, the aim of this short article is to share some of the tips for finding up-to-date resources on the Internet that will help when one is writing scholarly write-ups.

The Tips

1. Google Scholar Alert

Google Scholar provides a service of sending alerts on recently published materials on given research interests to people by email. This can be done by going to https://www.google.com/alerts and creating an alert for one's desired research interest. Input the email address you want these alerts to be sent. Google Scholar will be sending recently published materials, mostly scholarly literature, to you by email almost every day. This will continue to happen till you stop the alerts.

2. Google Scholar Customized Search

What is popular in searching for any information online is to search through normal Google or any other online search engine (Afolaranmi, 2009). However, to get results from mostly scholarly materials, you have to use Google Scholar Search by visiting https://www.scholar.google.com. To get the most recent results, you can customize your search by specifying the range of years you desire (especially the most recent years) by the left side of the opened Google Scholar Search window. Google Alerts can also be set through this service.

3. Using Academic Social Network Services

Many online social network services like Facebook, LinkedIn, and the like are familiar to many people. There are some online social network services that are mainly for the academics. These online social network services are referred to as academic online social network services (Mohammad, Lazim, & Rosle, 2018). These services are specifically for scholars that have affiliation with academic and research institutes and "specialize in academic activities such as sharing studies, articles, and information" (Meishar-Tal & Pieterse (2017:2). Examples are https://www.Academia.edu and https://www.Researchgate.net. Others are Mendeley and Zotero who are becoming more popular among academics. You can create accounts with these networks and join other academics who share similar research interests with you. By indicating your research interests, these academic networks will be notifying you of recently published materials in your area of research interest by email. Recently published materials will also be appearing on your homepage on these networks from time to time. You can also use these academic social network platforms to search for desired literature in your area of research interest. Many of these platforms provide the services of uploading one's articles on them for other people to have access to also.

4. Sage Publications

This is another academic online social network service that specializes in connecting researchers with academic journals that are associated with the network. Its website is https://journals.sagepub.com/. You can find academic journals in almost every academic field on this network. You can create an account on the network and indicate your research interest. You can also create alerts with some desired academic journals on the network, and you will receive alerts of newly published papers/articles in these journals by email.

5. Other Online Services

There are other online services that offer the services of providing information on recently published scholarly works. One of them is https://www.emerald.com/. Others are https://www.connectedpapers.com/, PubMed®, https://www.semanticscholar.org/, and the like. To enjoy the services of these companies, it is better to create accounts on their websites.

6. Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools

This researcher is aware of many recently launched artificial intelligence (AI) tools especially ChatGPT – an innovative technology that employs advanced artificial intelligence systems to create natural language answers to a given prompt or input (Kalla & Smith, 2023). Others are https://www.researchrabbit.ai/ and https://elicit.org/ among others. This researcher has started studying these emerging technological tools. You may also explore them. However, this

researcher will not advise any scholar to start using ChatGPT or any other AI for research purposes for now without first considering the merits and demerits of doing so.

Conclusion

These above-mentioned tips are not exhaustive. More can be explored online. These tips will not only help you in finding the most recent scholarly publications during any of your academic writings but also help you in your other academic pursuits in life. Therefore, it is recommended that researchers should continue to explore the given guidelines and other means through modern technological tools to be up-to-date in their chosen fields.

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