



Academic Reputation Building Mechanisms in Online Learning Environments

(Extended Abstract)

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Abstract

Currently academic reputation building is mainly based on research activities and publications. Online reputation building platforms such as ResearchGate, ImpactStory, GrowKudos, Academia and alike all mainly focus on research. Some of these also take into account interactions among peers and knowledge exchange activities; however, teaching and education related activities are totally missing in current reputation building activities. This paper studies a range of online reputation building platforms such as Altmetrics platforms, academic social networking services, and online learning environments to find out about any data and measure of reputation related to teaching and learning activities. Then, considering the types of data potentially available through different types of learning platforms, teaching related reputation building mechanisms and measures are proposed.

Keywords

Academic reputation, Education, Learning environments.

1. Introduction

One of the key factors for success in scientific endeavor is having good scholarly reputation [1]. Reputation is important both for individual scholars and for research and higher education institutions. As Becher [2] maintains "the main currency for the academic is not power, as it is for the politician, or wealth, as it is for the businessman, but reputation."

Given the publish-or-perish culture of modern academic environments, reputation for academics has been translated into having a good track record of publications. The main reputation measures for scholars nowadays are publication- and citation-based indices such as h-index. However, publications represent only part of one of the activities of scholars which is research. Research is only one strand of scholarship. Therefore, measuring academic reputation only based on research and publication means ignoring all other activities, which are as important as research, and sometimes even more important than research. The other scholarship

activities include teaching, scholarship of application (producing application oriented output) and so on.

The aim of this paper is twofold: to find out about any reputation measure or mechanism related to teaching activities in the current reputation building platforms; and to propose mechanism and measures for reputation building platforms with regard to teaching activities.

2. Method

The study includes two sections. In the first section a list of about 30 platforms of different kinds including academic social networking services (e.g. ResearchGate, Academia, Academici, LabRoots, Profology, MyScienceWork, MyNetResearch, BiometExperts, Epernicus, Epernicus, Scitable, Loops, Mendeley, LinkedIn), Altmetric services (e.g. GrowKudos, ImpactStory), and learning platforms (e.g. Coursera, Edx, CourseTalk) will be studied for any coverage of teaching related activities. This will help us know the extent to which teaching is covered

by current platforms as one of the main scholarship activities.

In the second section, based on the data that can be extracted from online learning environments, suggestions are made as to what teaching and learning related activities can be covered by reputation building platforms and what indices and measures can be made for representing those activities.

3. Results

Currently the only teaching related reputation building mechanism supported by current platforms are the rating of online courses by students, and academic genealogies (based on student supervisor) relationship.

Suggestions are made in this study about how to improve academic genealogies and what other learning activities can be represented in the platforms and how this could be achieved.

References

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