

**The availability of scientific publications for researchers through academic networks: a field study with professors of library science at Algiers2University, Oran 1, and Constantine2**

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**Abstract:**

The study sought to highlight academic social networks in support open access to scientific publications. Through non-formal scholarly communication among researchers and academics, this contributes significantly to increase the pace of scientific production.

We used a descriptive approach, to explore the views of professors regarding the availability of their publications and their evaluation by peers

In this study, we found that library science professors in Algeria rely on academic social networks, especially Academia.edu in scientific communication with their peers, and they also make their scientific publications available through this academic support in order to increase the visibility of their scientific publications.

**Keywords:** Academic social networks; availability of scientific publications; scientific communication; library professors; visibility

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The frequent dissemination of information via the Internet has drowned us in an ocean of knowledge, because it has become difficult to manage this flow of information alone and to access information. There is nothing better than being with people who share the same interests as you. In order to meet the needs of researchers, a new medium has emerged that reflects modern research methods, namely academic social networks that have brought together researchers and scholars with common interests and facilitated collaborative work and interaction between them. It also supported open access to scientific publications and increased the visibility of researchers by increasing the visibility of their scientific publications and their possession of scientifically branched accounts containing their institutional affiliations and professions, as well as a list of their scientific publications with full texts and other research projects. Each network provides its own services that set it apart from the others. Universities are among the institutions closely linked to scientific communication, as they are a stimulating place for social interactions, knowledge exchange and participation in its production. On the other hand, there are academic social networks that have facilitated the circulation of knowledge in various disciplines among university professors around the world. As it has become a new platform for the exchange of electronic information, whether related to pedagogical aspects or the setting up and participation in scientific events, this academic medium is also considered a privileged space for researchers to provide scientific publications and their peer review, particularly with regard to pre-publication articles. It also allows researchers to discuss their ideas in the form of a dialogue or using other means provided by these academic networks.



Academic social networks play a major role in promoting free access to information because they provide the full texts of scientific publications, whether they are scientific articles before or after publication, and the possibility of sharing them. Researchers, on the other hand, seek to use this type of social network to gain free access to scientific publications and encourage the valorization of knowledge by making their unpublished scientific work available in the form of pre-publication articles for peer review and to learn and value their opinions through the ideas that are exchanged. And even works published as scientific articles by increasing their visibility and therefore increasing the percentage of their citation, which increases the scientific value of the researcher or what is called the H-index. “Hirsch.

This is why professors and researchers from various disciplines, including professors of library and information science in Algeria, make their scientific publications accessible through these university social networks, due to the characteristics provided by these networks such as Researchgate, which is characterized by a semantic search engine that allows scientific publications to appear in the first interface of the results of the Google search engine and Academia.edu, which provides statistics allowing researchers to know their scientific value at the international level through the percentage of citations to their scientific publications .

Thus, the problem that we will try to address in this study revolves around the use of academic social networks by professors of library and information science in Algeria in the provision of their scientific publications.

In order to achieve its objective, this study aims to answer the following questions:

- Do library and information science teachers in Algeria use academic social networks in their scientific communication with their counterparts?

- What is the academic social network most used by researchers to make their scientific publications available?

- What are the most important services provided by academic social networks to library science teachers in Algeria?

- Do library and information science teachers in Algeria make their scientific publications available directly through academic social networks, or do they store them first in open archives?

- What is the objective of making researchers available for their scientific publications via this academic support?

This study made it possible to know to what extent library science professors in Algeria make their scientific publications available through academic social networks. And to learn more about the academic social network most used by researchers. With reference to the most important services provided by this type of network. And the motives behind the use of this academic medium by professors.

In order to achieve the objectives of the study, we relied on the descriptive approach, which concerns the study of a phenomenon that exists in a particular group in a particular place, and we saw that this is the appropriate approach to the nature of the study, because we collected data and information related to the use of academic social networks by researchers in scientific exchanges and in the availability of their scientific publications, Then we classified the data obtained, analyzed, commented and tried to interpret them in order to achieve generalizable results. This is based on the electronic questionnaire form we distributed to the category of professors who represent a sample study In order to collect the necessary data and information by sending them

via the e-mail of professors and researchers. The questionnaire was divided into two axes, a particular erasure of the use of academic social networks by researchers in science communication. And a special focus on the extent to which researchers make their scientific publications available through this academic medium. We also processed data and extracted frequencies and percentages using the SPSS statistical package. The study was conducted in the departments and institutes of library and information science of the universities of Algiers, Oran and Constantine.

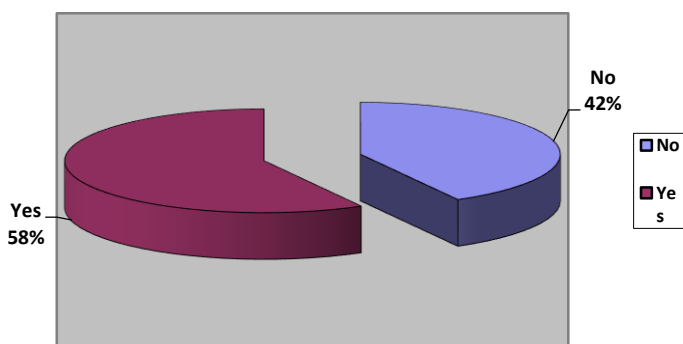
Due to the large population studied, represented by the professors of library and information sciences of the universities of Algiers 2, Oran 1 and Constantine 2. There are 133 people, including 71 teachers in Algiers, 40 in Constantine and 22 in Oran. We had to randomly select the members of the sample where we took 20% of the total population, the equivalent of 27 teachers: 14 professors in Algiers2 ,8Teachers in Constantine and 5 professors in Oran.

## **2.The use of academic social networks by professors and researchers of library and information sciences in Algerian universities:**

Researchers use academic social networks, which are websites that widely disseminate educational or research content in different ways that bring together researchers and academics with common interests in universities and research centres. It also facilitates collaborative work between them and increases the visibility of their scientific publications, as well as allows them to have branched accounts in a scientific way that also provides information about their institutional affiliations, professions and scientific interests. Among the most

famous university networks are ResearchGate Academia.edu, MyScienceWork. (Malingre, 2012) Among the researchers influenced by this academic medium are professors of library and information science in Algeria, whose presence through these networks varies according to the results presented in the figure below:

**Fig.1.** Use of social networks by library and information science professors in Algeria



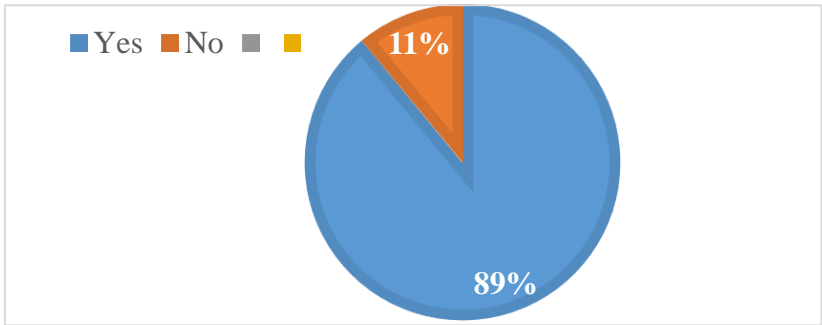
We see through the figure above that the majority of the members of the sample, represented by 58% of the respondents, use academic social networks in their scientific and academic field, because they allow them to communicate with researchers in specialties, and facilitate the process of their access to scientific publications, which indicates their awareness of the importance of this academic support in the valorization of scientific communication. between them. While 42% do not adopt this type of academic social network. Instead, they prefer to rely on email in their scientific communications with their counterparts, indicating their lack of awareness of the importance of this academic medium, which differs in its services from email.

## 2.1 Use of the academic social network academia.edu:

Created in 2008 by Richard Price, a doctor of philosophy from Oxford University, and hosted in San Francisco's Silicon Oasis, this researcher-

focused social network is the most used academic network by researchers with more than 11 million users, according to CEO Richard Price, and has received \$17.7 million from entrepreneurs. focused on sharing resources and aiming to rebuild scientific publishing from scratch. It is most commonly used by humanities and social sciences teachers. (URFIST info, 2016) Regarding their use by library science profesors in Algerian universities, it is illustrated in the figure below:

**Fig.2.** Use of the academic network academia.edu by library science teachers in Algeria



It turns out that the majority of library and information science professors in Algeria who use academic social networks prefer the academia.edu network by 89%, because it allows them to follow researchers in the field around the world and see their publications, comment on them and make their scientific publications available, thus increasing the percentage of access to them at the international level and increasing the percentage of citations. Thus, increase the scientific value of the researcher by increasing the percentage of scientific citations of his publications, while 11% of respondents prefer to use other academic social networks.

## 2.2 Use of the academic social network researchGate:

This social network for researchers and academics was created in 2008 by Ijad Madisch, a former Berlin doctor and virologist, with two of his friends. The network has more of 4.5 million researchers and aims to become a major meeting place for scientists wishing to engage in Collaborative discussions and scientific articles reviewed by network members. Its goal, according to its founder, is to win the Nobel Prize. It has also received \$35 million in financial backing from investors, including the richest person in the world, Bill Gates. (Aventurier, Usages des réseaux sociaux académiques : enjeux et opportunités, 2015). It is characterized by a semantic search engine that holds several databases responsible and is more used by specialists in the field of technical and medical sciences (Boudry & Bouchard, 2017; Boudry & Bouchard, 2017; Boudry & Bouchard, 2017). As for its use by professors and researchers of library and information science in Algeria, it is illustrated in the following figure:

**Fig.3.** Use of the researchgate academic network by library science professors in Algeria

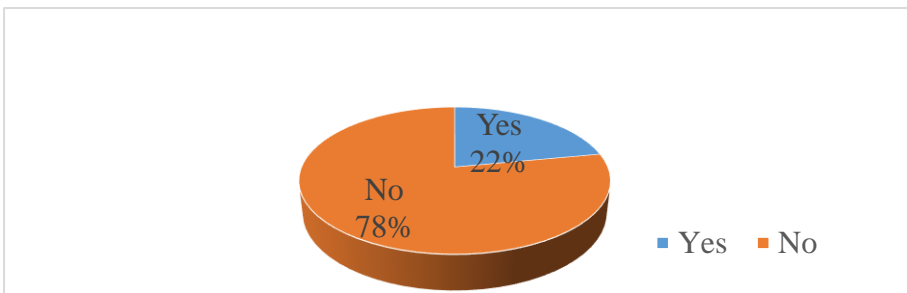


Figure 03 shows that 78% of respondents do not use the academic social network, while 22% rely on it in their scientific communication with their peers because it is characterized by a semantic search engine that



empowers several databases, and the scientific publications in which they are found appear on the first page of the Google search engine results.

We conclude from the above that the majority of the members of the study sample, represented by library science professors Information in Algeria prefers to use the academic social network academia.edu 89%, while 22.2% prefer to use the academic social network researchgate, the same conclusion Nature magazine reached when she wrote to Tens of thousands of researchers sent an email in May 2014 asking how Their use of social media and other famous sites to host resumes and engines, received more than 3500 responses from 95 countries, where 3000 scientists and engineers They confirmed their knowledge of these giant social networks and even sites that host private resumes. through research, and another segment surveyed with 480 researchers in the arts and humanities,

This study concluded that the number of regular visitors to the social network Researchgate reached 1,529 visitors. regular, while the number of regular visitors for academia.edu reached 283 visitors. It was also noted that humanities researchers are more likely to use the academic network academia.edu while researchers in the exact and medical sciences prefer to use researchgate. ( Gouzi, 2017)

### **3. The services most used by university professors and researchers Algerian in academic social networks:**

Although each academic social network has characteristics that distinguish it from the others, if it is Academia.edu provide an institutional view of the search, as the URL of your personal account depends on the organization you belong to and changes with your location, while Researchgate focuses on researchers' scientific publications, but they share a range of services, because according to

the study conducted by nature.com the results indicate that The majority of researchers use the academic social network researchgate in case of contact with their counterparts by 69%, while 40% use it for peer detection and follow-up, and 32% use it to develop content related to their work and to discover research papers.

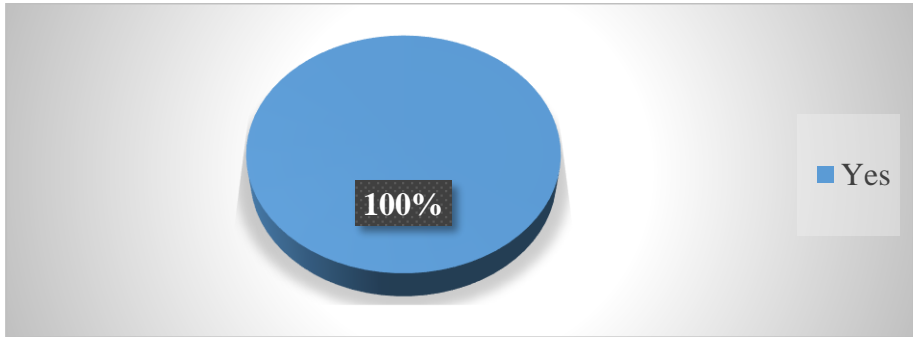
Regarding the social network academia.edu We find that the majority of researchers use it to discover and know their peers at 65%, while 39% use it to develop content related to their work and 35% use it to discover research articles that interest them. (Bianchini, 2012) Among the most important services provided by academic social networks to researchers and academics in the field of library and science science. information in Algeria, which helps them in their scientific communication with their counterparts and in their exchange of information and availability, we find:

### **3.1 Follow-up of recent scientific publications:**

These social networks contain databases of scientific publications, and therefore make it possible to follow scientific publications related to various disciplines and interests of researchers, as well as to share scientific content, download links and follow the publications of other researchers, as well as see anything new. If there are researchers who publish somewhat obsolete scientific articles on these social networks, there are others who publish their recent scientific articles that have already been published in peer-reviewed scientific journals or even those that have not yet been published "pre-published articles" in order to promote them. It also provides a "post service" that allows for various conference announcements, publications, websites. ( BENECH, 2013)

Researchers and professors rely on these social networks to follow scientific publications that are in their field of interest and thus see all the developments as shown in the following figure:

Fig.4. The most used services within the academic social networks of library science professors in Algeria - Follow-up of scientific publications -



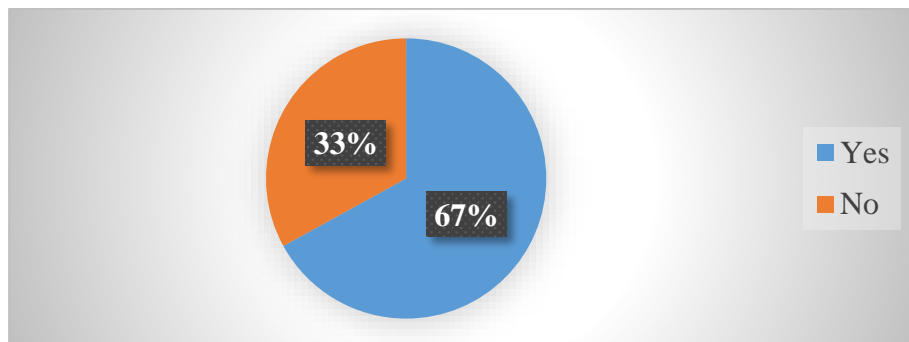
We conclude through what is shown above that all members of the sample prefer to use academic social networks because they allow them to follow scientific publications and contain databases for these scientific publications and thus see the latest publications of researchers, especially since there are researchers who publish their scientific drafts, and others make their newly published articles available on their personal pages in these social networks, and therefore, we find in these social networks valuable information, most of which are primary documents, so The majority of researchers have 100% access to these scientific publications.

### 3.2 Follow-up of researchers in the specialty:

Among the services offered by these academic networks, there is the possibility of receiving messages informing you if someone has viewed your profile, which are options that can be canceled. These social networks also provide a set of communication and exchange tools with other researchers, following people and therefore knowing the updates that occur on their profile, as well as the people they follow, and among these tools we also find the "questions" service that allows the scientific

community to be held accountable and receive answers. Researchers can follow these questions to see new answers ( Cabanis, 2007). Professors and researchers in library and information science follow their counterparts in the specialization and know everything they do in their field of science and research, and they also receive messages telling them who follows them, in varying proportions illustrated in the following figure:

**Fig.5.** The most commonly used services in academic social networks for library science professors in Algeria - monitoring of people in the specialty



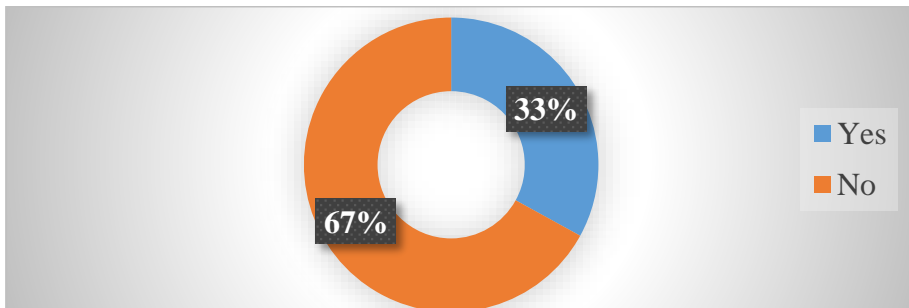
It is clear to us that the majority of the members of the sample prefer the service of follow-up of people in the specialty and therefore access to all the publications they provide, which allows the researcher to get acquainted with all the new modern topics of 67%, while 33% of the sample studied do not attach great importance to this service, but prefer other services provided by this type of network.

### 3.3 Measuring the visibility of scientific publications :

One of the most important services provided by academic social networks to researchers is to present their scientific publications and increase their visibility throughout the network by publishing their

scientific production and presenting it on the widest scale, displaying the scientific production of the researcher on the first page of his personal account and making it available in a branched and organized way, whether scientific articles, books, theses, presentations, etc., and whether the author is a person or a co-author. (Aventurier & Cocaud, les reseaux sociaux numériques en recherche, 2013) . Professors and researchers in librarianship in Algeria rely on this medium to measure the degree of visibility of their scientific publications, through the statistics provided by these networks, which make it possible to know the number of times the scientific article is viewed and how often it is downloaded. In addition, the number of times your scientific research has been cited, and the following figure shows us the degree of interest of researchers in this academic service:

**Fig.6.** The most commonly used services in the academic social networks of library science professors in Algeria - measuring the visibility of scientific publications -



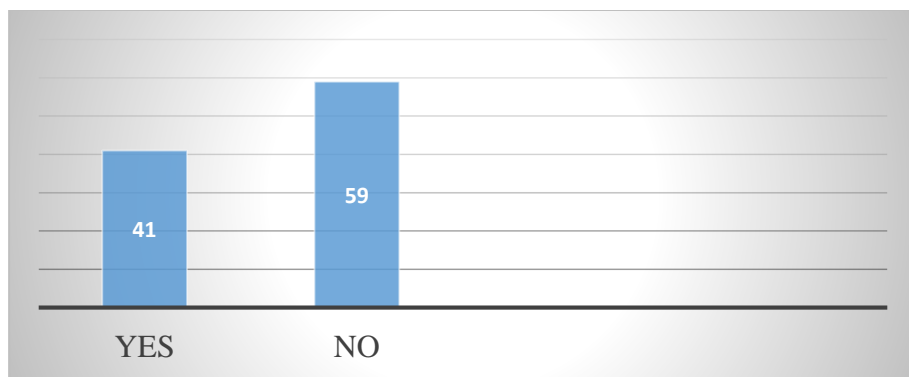
It turns out that the majority of respondents do not measure the degree of visibility of their scientific publications via academic social networks at 67%, while only 33% of the sample studied benefits from this service to measure the degree of visibility of their scientific publications by knowing the number of times they have been seen, downloaded and

even quoted, which is one of the important services that allow the researcher to know and measure his scientific value.

### 3.4 Know the opinion of peers on scientific drafts and the opportunity to comment on and critique scientific research after reviewing it:

Where this service offers researchers the opportunity to value their research through criticism and discussion with their counterparts about their scientific work, and the "questions" accountability service provided by these social networks allows the scientific community to be questioned, and these questions give rise to rich scientific discussions, most of which last a long time. ( Bardon, 2011) As for the dependence of library and information science professors on the opinions of their counterparts through their criticism of their scientific articles through these social networks, it is illustrated in the figure below:

**Fig.7.** The most commonly used services in the academic social networks of library science professors in Algeria - knowing the opinion of your peers in your scientific projects -



The majority of respondents do not use academic social networks to find out the opinion of their peers in their scientific drafts in 59% fear

that their works will be plagiarized, especially since they are works that have not yet been published. While 41% use this type of social network to promote their scientific drafts through criticism and know the opinion of their peers in what they publish, we find that the majority of them believe in the principle of open science and facilitate access and sharing of information with all. This is an encouraging percentage as it indicates that respondents are interested in peer review, which can motivate them to improve the level of their research and thus improve the image of libraries in general and the library profession.

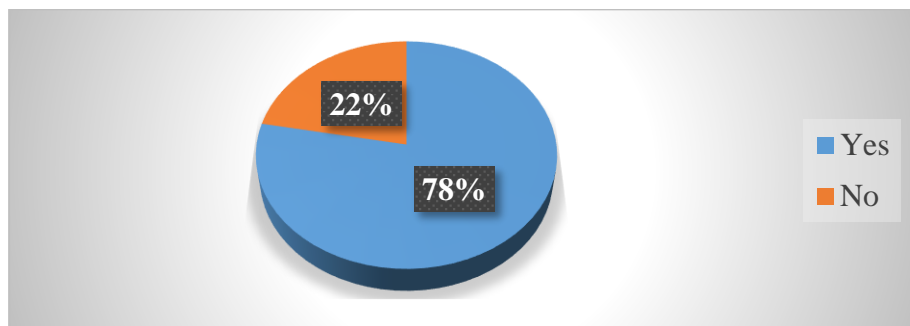
We conclude from the above that the most important service provided by academic social networks to library professors in Algeria is to follow recent scientific publications 100% as they contain databases for scientific publications, and there are researchers who publish their recent scientific articles through academic social networks. Then, follow the people of the specialty and receive messages informing you of those who follow you at 67%, also knowing the opinion of your peers on your articles published through the reviews provided by 41%, which helps to value them and the questions and observations asked can lead to rich scientific discussions, and finally measure the visibility of your scientific publications by 33% by introducing them well through the first page of your personal account.

#### **4. 5. Publication of scientific articles within academic social networks:**

Researchers seek to present their scientific publications, and their access to as many researchers as possible in the world and adopt several means, and the most used of these is that of academic social networks, which in turn offer free access to these scientific publications and encourage researchers to share their knowledge by making their scientific work available, whether they are not yet published or published works such as scientific articles, chapters of a book, a book,

conference proceedings, theses, etc. (Maurice, 1998) Professors and researchers from various disciplines make their scientific publications available within these networks. Social either directly by making the full text available via these social networks, or by placing them in the open archive. And put a link within these social networks referring to the location of the scientific publication. ( LERECULEUR, 2022) The following figure shows us to what extent professors are willing to publish their scientific publications through academic social networks:

**Fig.8.** Publication of scientific articles within academic social networks



We can see from the figure above that 78% of respondents publish their scientific articles within academic social networks, as they are only intended for researchers and academics. This allows them to communicate only with specialists and makes the scientific work more accurate and adds a scientific character. While 22% of respondents do not publish their scientific articles through them for fear of scientific theft. Many researchers are content to adopt them only in scientific exchanges, but when it comes to publishing scientific articles, they prefer scientific journals for fear of scientific theft, although these networks offer them better visibility via the Internet.



#### 4.1 Publication of scientific articles within academic social networks directly or via open archives:

Researchers make their scientific publications available directly through academic social networks to increase their visibility via the network without saving them in the open archive - a repository for depositing articles or super texts based on the principle of open access, knowing that social networks do not provide permanent archiving of scientific publications, but only availability on line (Arztscheid, 2009). Accordingly, they care about availability without preservation. This is what will be noticed with the teachers of library and information science in the following figure:

**Fig.9.** Publish scientific articles within academic social networks directly or through open archives

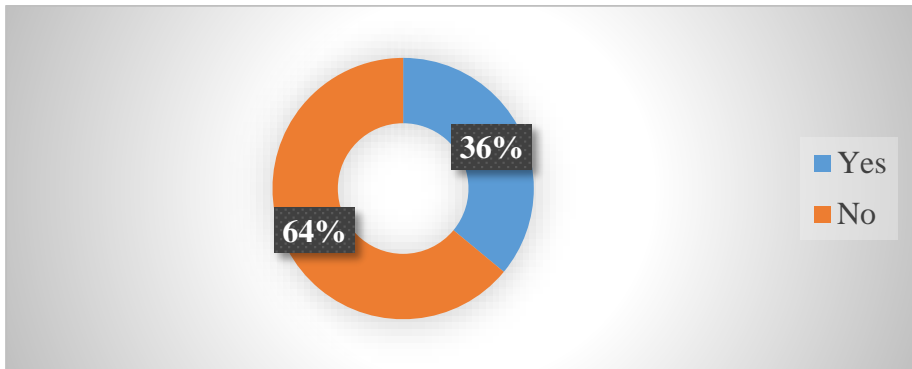


Figure 9 shows that the majority of respondents do not publish their scientific articles directly in academic social networks (64%). It is also out of fear of scientific theft in order to preserve the long-term archiving of scientific articles, which is provided by the open archive, so that they first make their scientific publications available through it and then put a link to it within these academic social networks. While 36% publish

their scientific articles directly within academic social networks, what is important for them is to make their scientific publications known internationally and to reach as many researchers as possible.

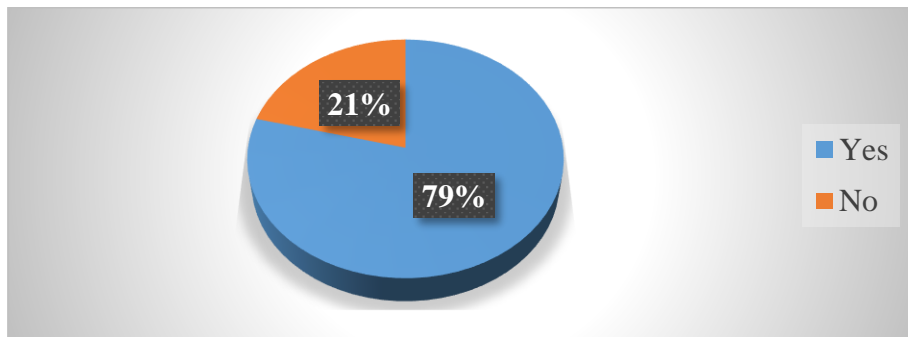
## **5. The purpose of publishing scientific articles within academic social networks:**

Researchers and professors publish their scientific articles via social networks in order to increase their visibility and reach their scientific publications to as many peers as possible and thus increase the number of times their scientific publications are cited, which increases the scientific value of the researcher. The desire of researchers to evaluate themselves through their scientific publications is one of the most important objectives of the researchers behind the publication of their scientific articles within academic social networks, through statistics showing the number of visits to their personal accounts and access to their scientific publications, and they also aim to use them to present their scientific publications and know the opinion of their peers about them, as well as reaching as many researchers as possible.

### **5.1 Network Visibility:**

Among the objectives that researchers seek to achieve behind the use of academic social networks is the introduction of their scientific publications, since the emergence of new channels of scientific communication has led researchers to rely on themselves in promoting their scientific publications, since social networks, especially academic ones, have helped researchers to provide and value their scientific research, and increase scientific competition among themselves and increase their degree of visibility by increasing the degree of visibility of their scientific publications, and these social networks also provide statistics that allow researchers to measure their degree of visibility and knowledge. Their ranking at the global level. (Pierre, 2014)

**Fig.10.** The objective of increasing the visibility of scientific publications within social networks



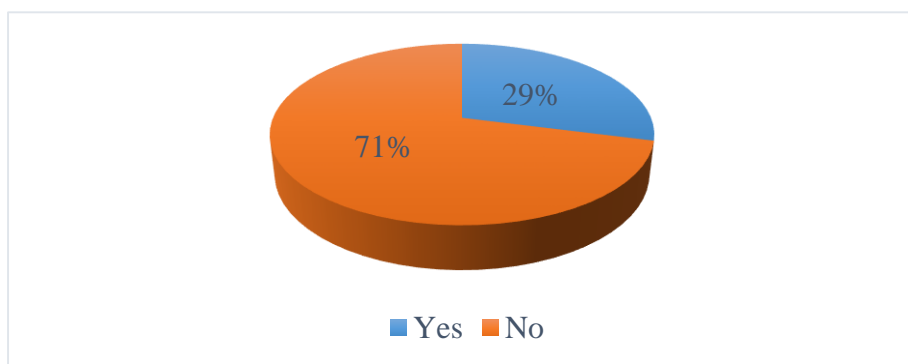
Through the graph above, it can be concluded that the majority of respondents publish their articles via academic social networks in order to increase the visibility of their scientific publications and thus increase their visibility at the global level by 79%, while 21% are not interested in increasing their visibility at the global level, but have other objectives such as the exchange of opinions and the valorization of their scientific publications through criticism and opinions they receive on each scientific publication.

## 5.2 Recognition of publications by peer review:

L'un des principes les plus importants qui sous-tendent l'épistémologie selon Karl Popper est la critique en tant que facteur le plus important dans le développement de la connaissance scientifique. Elle permet l'exclusion des théories et idées fausses et leur modification ou abandon et détermine la valeur de la connaissance scientifique en général dans sa susceptibilité à la critique. C'est le mécanisme le plus approprié pour démontrer la nature scientifique de ces connaissances. La science se développe dans un environnement qui encourage la différence, le pluralisme, la diversité et la concurrence des connaissances, et plus

l'espace de critique est complet, plus la valeur du travail scientifique est grande, en particulier dans l'environnement Web interactif, qui fournit un ensemble d'applications permettant la publication scientifique et recevant des critiques de spécialistes du domaine. (Ben salman, 2021).

**Fig.10.**The objective of valuing scientific publications through the criticism presented

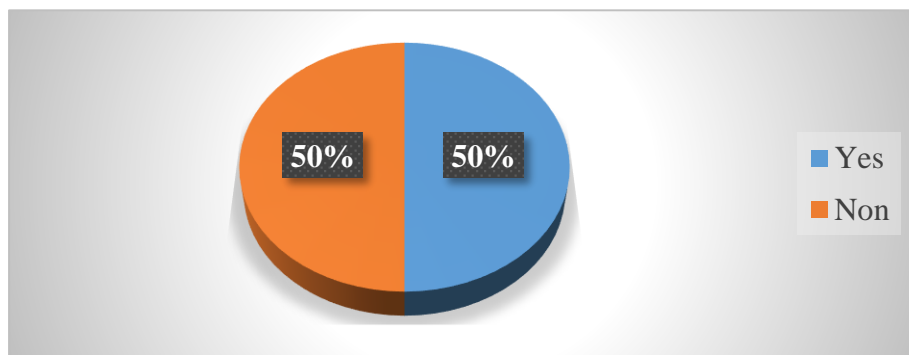


We see through the previous figure that the minority of the members of the sample 29% make their scientific drafts available via social networks in order to value their research through the criticisms provided, which allows them to exclude misconceptions and exchange opinions with researchers of the same specialization, the more complete the criticism, The greater the scientific value of the preprint article, while the estimated majority at 71% reject the idea of making their scientific drafts or preprint articles available through these academic social networks.

### 5.3 Citation of scientific articles by factor H:

Researchers take advantage of social networks to increase the citation frequency of their scientific articles, and thus increase the frequency of the "H-index" factor, which is a statistical coefficient that takes a mathematical form to measure the academic index of the researcher. As for the letter H, it is an abbreviation of the name "Hirsch" and a physicist named Jorge E. Hirsch who discovered this statistical tool in 2005. This factor is calculated from the researcher's bibliometric data by combining two variables: the number of articles published by the researcher and the number of times cited. Therefore, if the researcher has 4 papers and they are cited 4 times, his H-factor is 4, but if he has 4 papers and none of them are cited, his H-factor is 0. (Schubert, Braun, & Glänzel, 2006) Thus, this factor measures the academic value of the researcher according to the number of times his scientific publications are cited, so that researchers benefit from social networks in the arrival of their scientific publications to the largest possible number of researchers to increase their citation and this should increase the scientific value of researchers, As a study by the academic social network academia.edu showed that the document downloaded from the network's website is cited by 83% more than if it were not available on the network over five years, followed by 75% if it is available. On a personal website or university website. (URFIST info, 2016)

Fig.10.The objective of citing scientific publications available within social networks



It is clear from the graph above that half of the respondents, or 50%, publish their articles via social networks in order to cite them, and the higher the citation rate, the higher the researcher's H coefficient. That is, the value of the researcher is known from the extent to which his scientific publications are cited, not the extent to which they are accessed or downloaded. While 50% have other goals behind the publication of their scientific articles on social networks. Academic.

## 6. General results of the study:

58% of respondents use academic social networks in their scientific and academic fields

89% of respondents use the academic social network acadamia.edu

100% of respondents believe that the most important service provided by social networks to researchers is the follow-up of scientific publications

78% publish their scientific articles via academic social networks

64% of respondents first make their scientific publications available in open archives in order to maintain a permanent archive of their scientific publications

79% of respondents make their scientific publications available within academic social networks in order to increase the visibility of their scientific publications.

## **7. Conclusion:**

The electronic exchange of information that occurs between researchers within these academic social networks and their availability of and open access to their scientific publications leads to openness and sharing of knowledge and allows researchers to work in a network without duplicating research and studies, leading to scientific acceleration and an increase in discoveries and innovations and access to This is called open science.

This study concluded that professors of library and information science in Algeria use academic networks in the scientific and academic aspect and that they also make their scientific publications available via these academic social networks, especially academia.edu, by first placing them in open archives in order to preserve their permanent archiving, then they put a link that refers them to academic social networks, This allows them a broader view of their scientific articles and increases the number of times they are cited, which increases the scientific value of the researcher and the institution to which he belongs.

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