

ACADEMICS' USE OF RESEARCHGATE **RG**

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Background: ResearchGate (RG) is a professional social network site founded in 2008 and now has more than 5 million users. RG was specifically developed for scientists as a venue to share knowledge and expertise, network with other scientists, and build a “scientific reputation”. However, little is known about the actual use of RG by scientists, and whether it relates to scholarly sharing and reputation building.

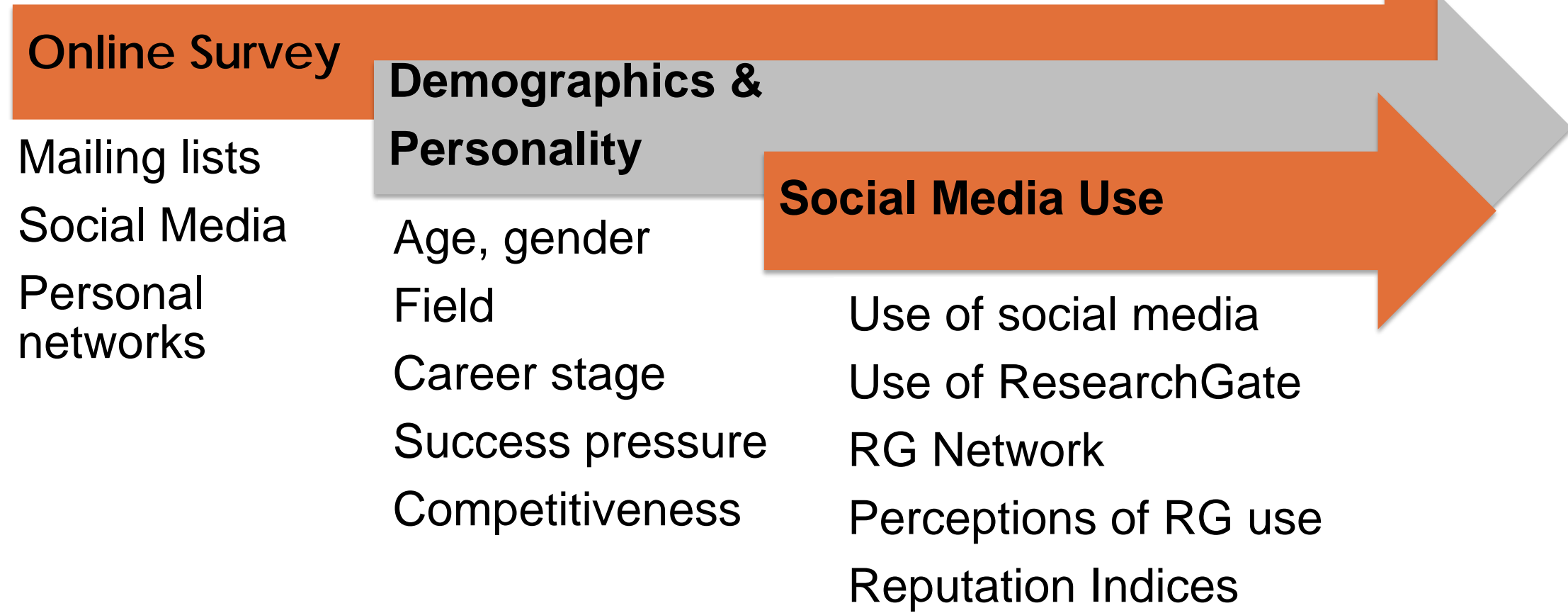
Purpose

- We examined how academics use RG and whether usage was also related to work and career related outcomes in addition to psychological variables (competitiveness, career satisfaction, perceived productivity).
- We examined whether the reputation indices mapped onto other traditional indices (i.e., google scholar) and also whether certain aspects of RG use predicted the indices.

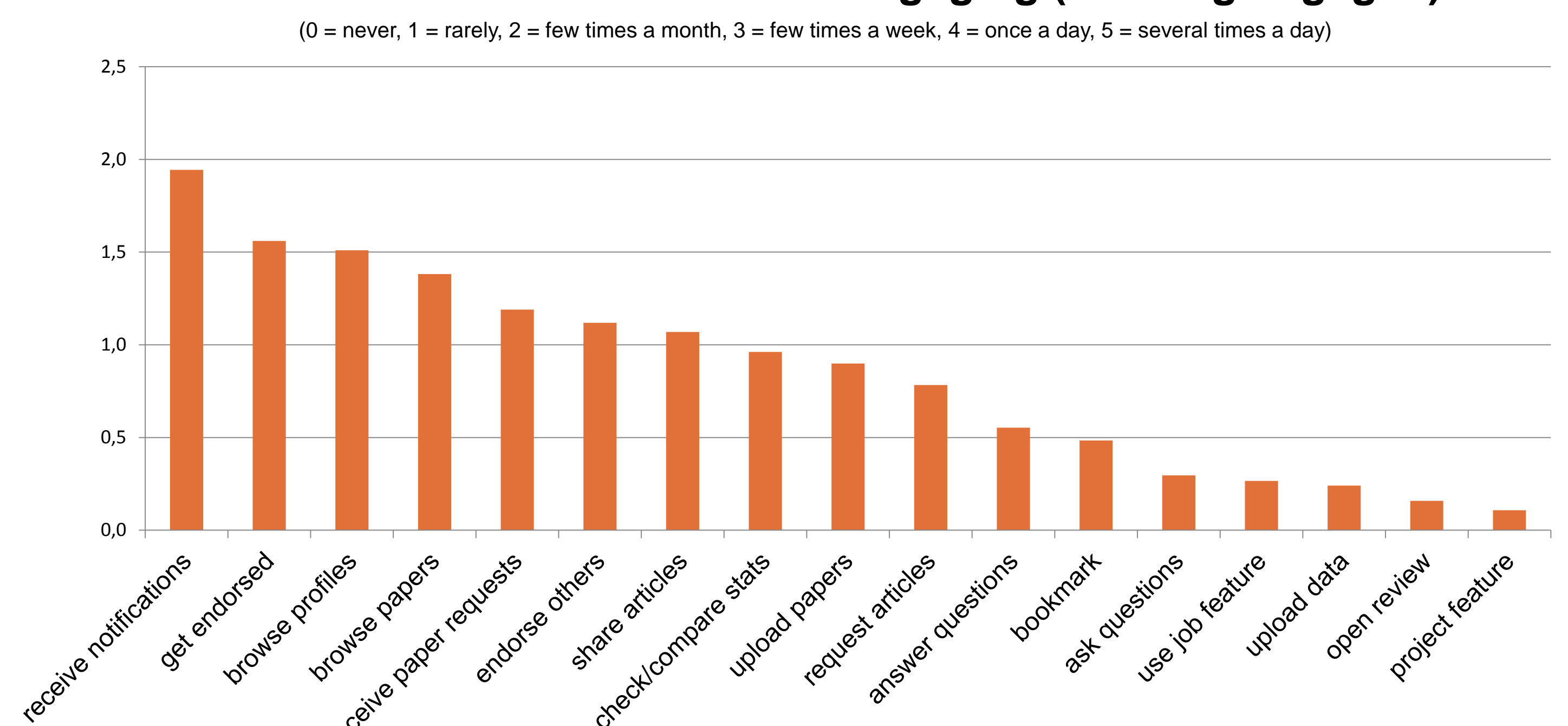
Method & Participants

- Online survey collected during the Summer of 2014
- 327 academics (53.3%women), largely social scientists (30% grad students, 22% postdoc, 12% assistant prof., 8% associate prof., 16% full prof.)

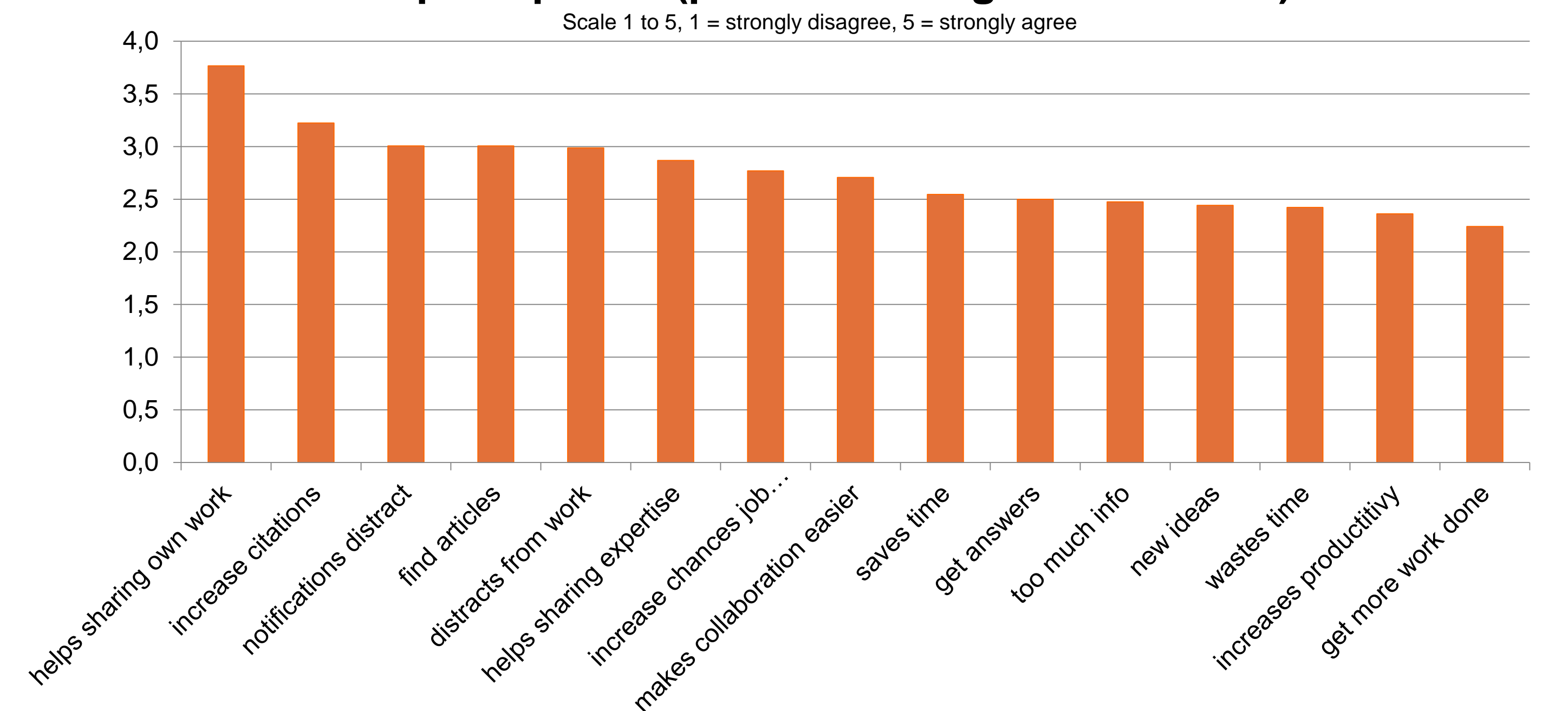
Procedure & Measures



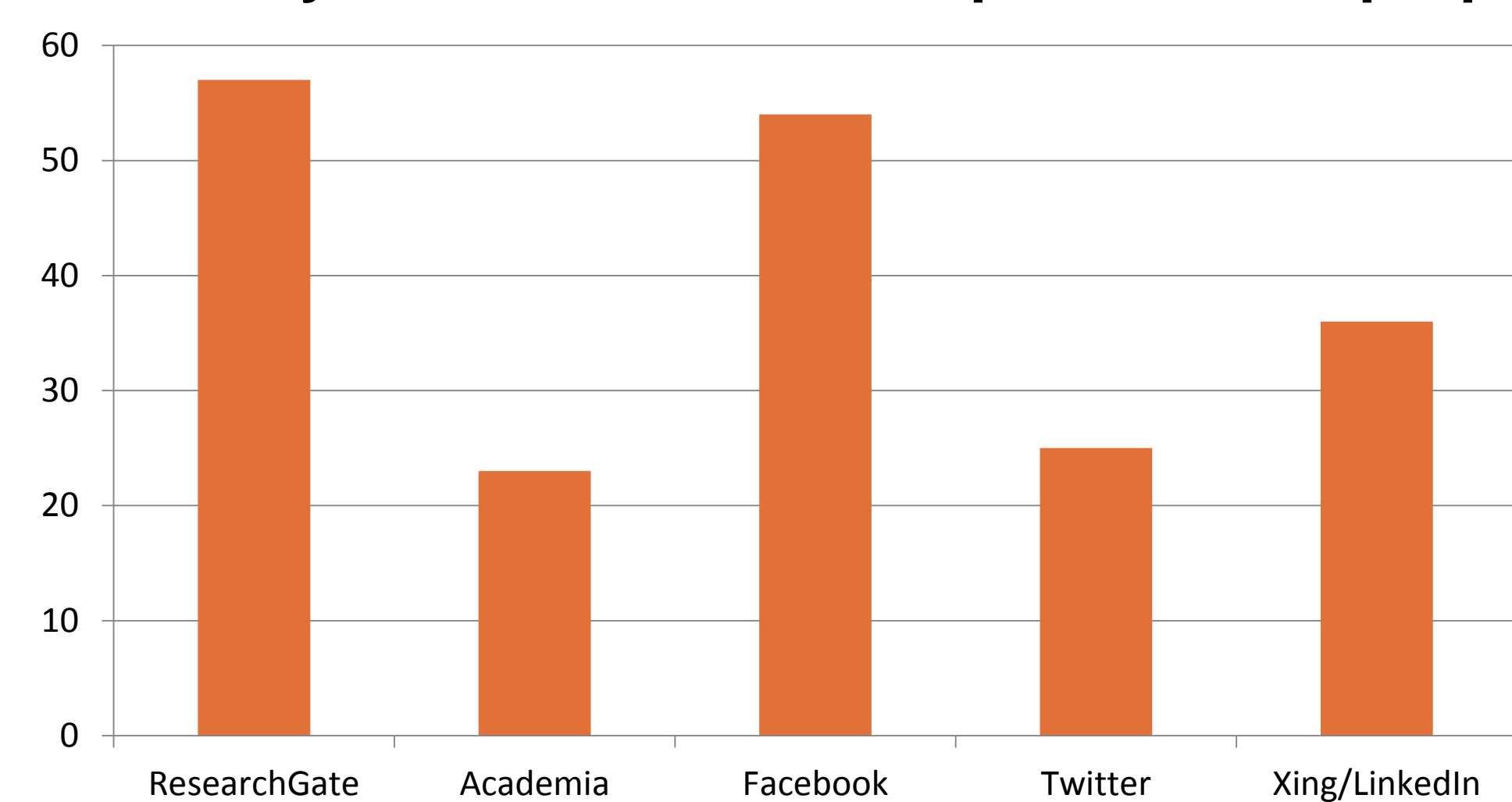
What RG activities are academics engaging (or being engaged) in?



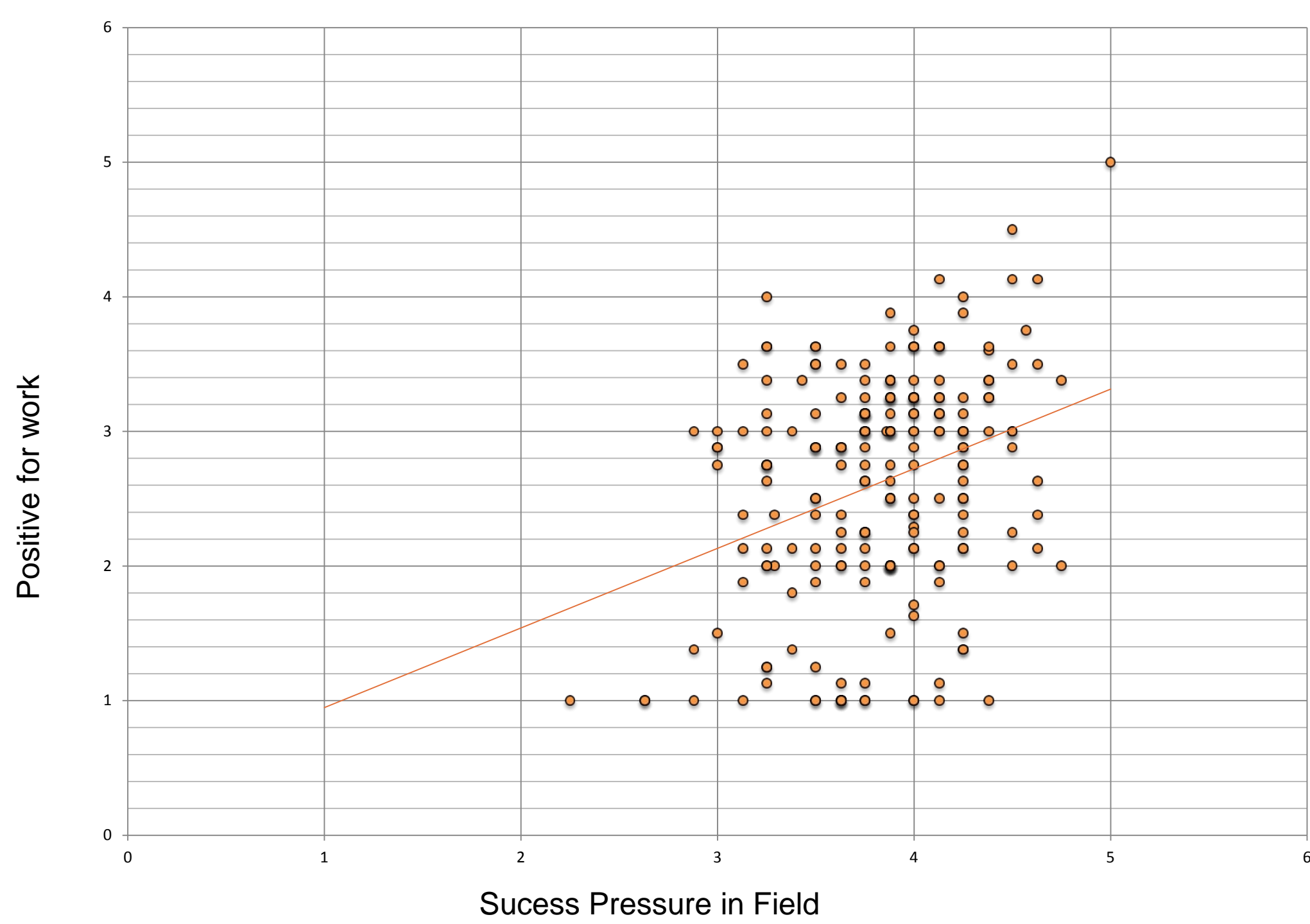
What are the perceptions (positive or negative for work) towards RG?



How many use social media for professional purposes?



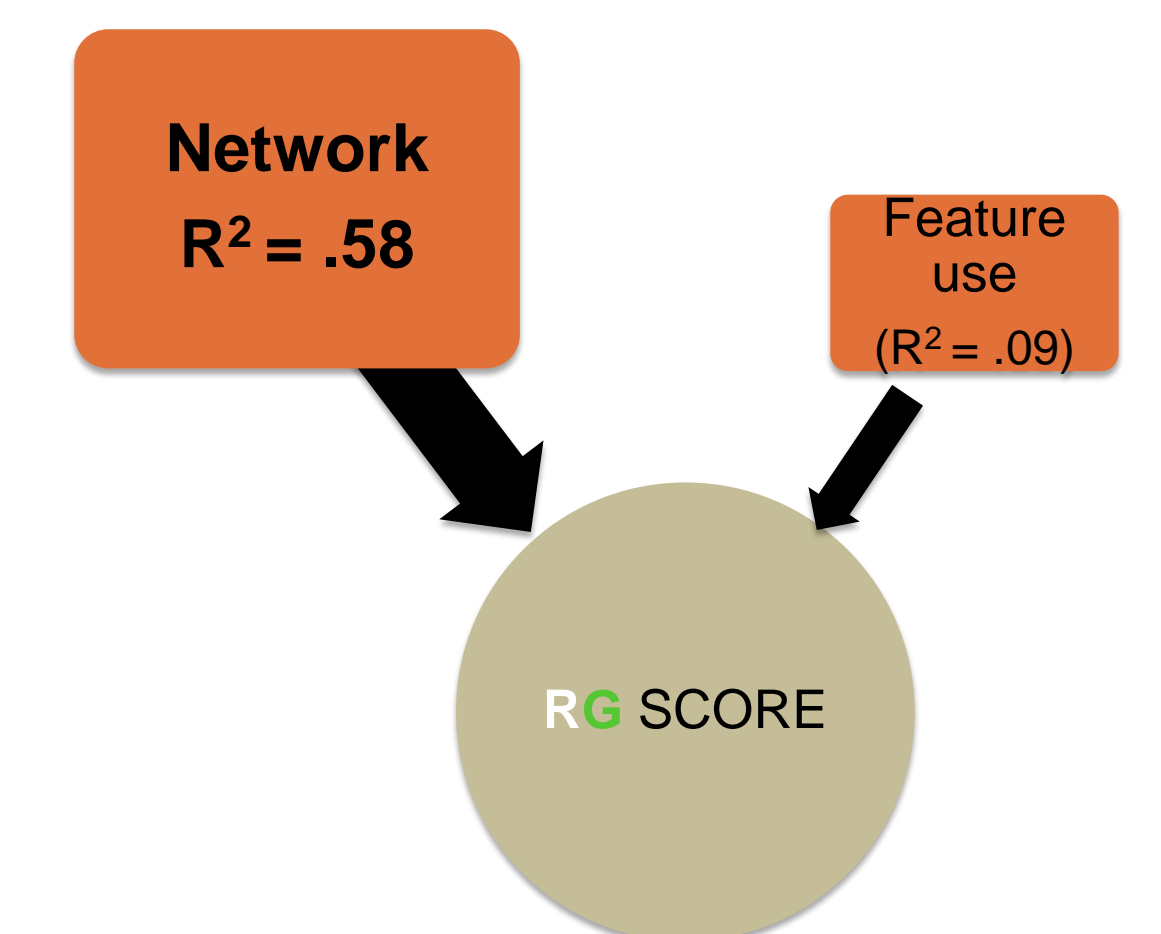
People who feel pressure have positive perceptions about RG



Reputation Correlations: RG & Google Scholar

	Google # citations	Google h-index	Google i10-index
RG Score	.71**	.74**	.72**
RG Publications	.62**	.68**	.71**
RG Impact Points	.77**	.76**	.78**
RG Views	.79**	.82**	.85**
RG Downloads	.36**	.28*	.26
RG Citations	.91**	.86**	.90**

Network Matters for RG Score!



Conclusions

- Academics used RG for scholarly purposes (more than other social media)
- Mainly visited RG rarely to a few times/month (triggered by notifications); for purpose of browsing profiles and papers
- Mostly ambivalent towards RG's usefulness, but it was perceived to be somewhat useful for sharing work and increasing citations
- Academics who felt more pressure in their field (i.e., publishing related) perceived RG to be positive for their work & career
- One's network (# of followers, # following, and # of contacts from different institutions) is influential in predicting the RG Score RG Scores highly correlated with Google Scholar indices – so, perhaps not a completely *new* measure of reputation
- Demographic, personality, RG usage – not good predictors of RG perceptions, career satisfaction, & perceived productivity