

StudyLink: A Unified Platform Bridging Researchers and Students for Knowledge Sharing, Mentorship, and Community Building

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Abstract - Meaningful engagement with academic research remains difficult for most students due to the fragmented and informal nature of existing pathways. Current platforms such as ResearchGate, Academia.edu, Google Scholar, and LinkedIn each address only a narrow slice of the problem — they either serve researchers exclusively, lack interactive features, or are too general to support structured student-researcher collaboration. StudyLink is a proposed web-based platform designed to address this gap by providing a unified space where researchers can publish papers, post internship and mentorship opportunities, and build topic-based academic communities, while students can discover research, connect with researchers, and apply for opportunities through a structured interface. What distinguishes StudyLink from existing platforms is its simultaneous focus on research discovery and human connection, making research an active and participatory experience rather than a passive one. The platform is designed as a full-stack web application built on React with TypeScript and Chakra UI on the frontend, FastAPI on the backend, and PostgreSQL as the primary database, with real-time communication supported via WebSockets. This paper presents the motivation behind StudyLink, a description of its architecture and core features, a comparative analysis with existing platforms, an assessment of its projected impact, and a discussion of its limitations and future development directions. The overarching goal of StudyLink is to democratize access to research mentorship and internship opportunities for students across all institutions, regardless of their personal networks or institutional prestige.

Key Words: Research Platform, Student-Researcher Collaboration, Academic Mentorship, Research Internship, Community Building, Knowledge Sharing, Web Application, Academic Networking

Table -1: List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full Form
AI	Artificial Intelligence
API	Application Programming Interface

CI/CD	Continuous Integration and Continuous Deployment
DM	Direct Message
E2E	End-to-End
EdTech	Educational Technology
HTTPS	Hypertext Transfer Protocol Secure
IISER	Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research
IIT	Indian Institutes of Technology
IOS	iPhone Operating System
JSON	JavaScript Object Notation
JWT	JSON Web Token
ORM	Object Relational Mapper
PDF	Portable Document Format
REST	Representational State Transfer
SQL	Structured Query Language
UI	User Interface
URL	Uniform Resource Locator

1. INTRODUCTION

The gap between the student body and the research community is a defining feature of the contemporary academic ecosystem. Every year, researchers from universities and other institutions publish thousands of papers, carry out innovative research, and provide invaluable domain expertise. However, students, especially those pursuing undergraduate and graduate degrees, are still largely cut off from this activity. The methods by which a student can find an ongoing research internship, connect with a researcher for mentorship, or engage in an academic community are dispersed, unofficial, and largely reliant on cold outreach or personal networks with little chance of response.

The platforms currently available are only able to do this partially. ResearchGate [1] and Academia.edu [2] are repositories for research papers but are focused on interaction between researchers and do not offer a mechanism for students to get involved, apply, or interact

with researchers. Google Scholar [3] is simply a search engine with no interactive features whatsoever. LinkedIn [4] is a popular networking site but does not have depth for academic use and does not offer research discovery or mentorship structuring within a domain-specific context. This leaves a hole in the market, as currently, no platform is able to offer all of research paper discovery, mentorship, internship, and interaction with students as a primary focus. StudyLink is proposed as a solution for the aforementioned problem. StudyLink is a web-based platform developed as a full-stack application. The backend is built on top of FastAPI, and the frontend is built on top of React and TypeScript with the Chakra UI library. In addition, the platform is equipped with a WebSocket-based messaging system for direct communication between the researcher and the student. The platform is designed to support two types of users: Researchers and Students. Each type of user is supported through the respective dashboards and features.

1.1 Motivation

The motivation behind StudyLink is derived from a recurring situation faced by academic institutions across India, wherein students are keen on participating in research activities but are not able to do so because of a lack of a structured, accessible, and centralized platform through which they could do so. Cold emailing professors results in a response rate of less than 5% most of the time. Research internship opportunities are not posted on any platform, but rather through word of mouth. Communities for a particular research domain do not exist, nor are they available in an accessible manner for students. StudyLink aims to replace this informal, luck-based mechanism with a transparent, structured, and scalable mechanism.

1.2 Scope of the Paper

The organization of this paper is as follows: in Section 2, related platforms are discussed and their limitations are identified. In Section 3, the problem statement is formally defined. In Section 4, the proposed StudyLink system is discussed. In Section 5, a comparison of the proposed StudyLink system and existing platforms is made. In Section 6, the projected impact of the proposed platform is discussed. In Section 7, the challenges and limitations of the proposed platform are discussed. In Section 8, the future scope of the platform is presented. In Section 9, the conclusion of the paper is presented.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The need for academic collaboration platforms has increased in the past few years, and as a result, several platforms have been designed to cater to the need for such collaboration. However, if these platforms are analyzed in the context of student involvement and the interaction of the researcher

with the student, the limitations of such platforms can be understood.

2.1 ResearchGate

ResearchGate [1] is one of the most popular social networking sites for the academic community, with over 20 million registered researchers around the world. Researchers can upload published articles, ask domain-specific questions, and follow other domain-specific researchers on the site. Though the site is very effective for researcher-to-researcher networking, it does not target students. There is no way for the researcher to post internship opportunities or mentorship opportunities, or for community building for domain-specific discussion.

2.2 Academia.edu

Academia.edu [2], for instance, is a platform dedicated to paper sharing and readership tracking metrics for the author. It provides a simple interface for paper discovery but does not have any interactive or community-based elements. There are no direct messages for researchers and students, no internship or mentorship opportunities, and no community building tools.

2.3 LinkedIn

LinkedIn is the largest professional networking site in the world and is sometimes used for disseminating research articles and for internship searches by students. However, LinkedIn is not suited for academic or research-based applications. Research articles are scattered and not discoverable on LinkedIn due to their posting style as articles or individual posts. Internships are mostly industry-based and not related to research-based opportunities on LinkedIn. Additionally, there is no option for publishing papers or for academic networking or mentorship in a research-based scenario on LinkedIn, making it unsuitable for solving the student-researcher interaction problem.

2.4 Google Scholar

Google Scholar is a widely used tool for academic searching. Google Scholar is a search engine for scholarly literature, including articles, theses, conference papers, and books. Google Scholar is an invaluable tool for finding scholarly research, and there is absolutely no interactive feature on Google Scholar. Students can simply search and read the scholarly material, but there is no option to follow people, communities, send messages, or even apply for opportunities. Google Scholar is just a tool for finding scholarly material and has no feature for human connection.

2.5 Summary

Each of the platforms reviewed above has a specific focus on a limited aspect of the overall issue. ResearchGate and Academia.edu are focused on paper sharing for researchers. LinkedIn is focused on professional networking but lacks depth for academics. Google Scholar is focused on search but lacks interaction capabilities. None of the platforms reviewed above cater to the student-researcher mentorship issue. There is no single platform today that offers a combination of research discovery, mentorship opportunities, internship opportunities, and community building with a focus on students as a primary stakeholder group. StudyLink is intended to fill this need.

3. PROBLEM STATEMENT

In spite of the rapid increase in academic research output worldwide, the processes by which students are exposed, engaged, and participate in academic research remain informal, fragmented, and inaccessible. The main challenges are identified across four dimensions:

3.1 Difficulty in Discovering Research Internships

Internship opportunities in research internships are not usually advertised anywhere. Students who want to gain experience in the field of research have to resort to sending cold emails to professors and researchers in the field, which is a highly ineffective strategy with a high dependency on personal relationships and the reputation of the institution. This is a highly unfair system in which students from well-known universities have a much higher advantage over equally talented students from unknown universities, just because of the absence of an open platform for discovering opportunities.

3.2 Absence of a Verified Mentorship Channel

There is no such verified or structured medium for a student to ask for a mentorship from a researcher. Although email is the preferred method of contacting potential mentors, it is unstructured and does not guarantee a response. Students are unaware of which researchers are willing to be mentors, what domain they are active in, or what the mentorship will look like. The lack of a formal mentorship discovery and application medium means that a majority of students are unable to access research mentors outside of their immediate surroundings.

3.3 Low Visibility of Published Research Among Students

The number of research papers published in thousands of research journals, conference articles, and preprint servers makes it impossible for students to be aware of research

articles published on their areas of interest without the aid of efficient search tools and access to research journals. Even if research articles are made publicly available, there does not exist a platform where students are made aware of relevant research articles based on their academic interests or notified when their followed authors publish new research articles. The research, though publicly funded, remains invisible to the student community.

3.4 Lack of Research-Focused Student Communities

For example, students interested in a particular domain, like artificial intelligence, biotechnology, or quantum computing, lack community spaces where they can interact with others interested in the same domain and discuss ideas related to the domain. For them, the existing social networking sites are not appropriate, as they are too broad, while the existing academic networking sites lack community aspects. The absence of community spaces for particular domains leaves the students intellectually isolated, while the researchers lack an active community that can provide valuable insights into their research.

3.5 Problem Summary

In summary, these four challenges highlight a general problem: the lack of a unified and student-centric platform to facilitate students and researchers in a systematic, transparent, and interactive manner. The current ecosystem only enables students to be passive actors as casual consumers of research material and offers no option for further engagement. StudyLink is presented as a solution to this problem by effectively addressing the above-mentioned challenges through the development of a set of platform features as discussed in Section 4.

4. PROPOSED SOLUTION

StudyLink is a full-stack web-based platform intended to fill the existing gap between researchers and students by providing a platform for the integration of the entire process of research, mentorship, internship, and community building. This section describes the system overview, roles of users, features of the proposed system, architecture, and technology stack.

4.1 System Overview

StudyLink has a two-fold purpose in that it provides a platform for both researchers and students to interact within a structured and feature-rich interface. At a high level of abstraction, StudyLink is designed to provide a platform for researchers to publish their research, advertise their mentorship and internship opportunities, and create topic-based academic communities. On the other hand, it provides a platform for students to access research papers of interest

to them, apply for mentorship and internship opportunities, access academic communities of interest to them, and communicate with researchers in real-time using a messaging interface. StudyLink is a web-based interface that is simple to use for both novice and expert users of computer interfaces. All interactions within StudyLink are role-based and authenticated; therefore, the interface provided for a researcher is vastly different from that provided for a student while both are connected within the same interface.

4.2 User Roles

StudyLink has two major types of users that can use the system: Researcher and Student. Both of these roles are associated with a unique dashboard and a set of permissions. A researcher on StudyLink will be an authenticated academic or a domain expert who has the capability to publish research papers, create internship and mentorship opportunities, build communities around specific topics of interest, and communicate with students through the real-time messaging system.

A student on StudyLink will be an undergraduate or a postgraduate student who has the capability to view and save research papers of interest, follow a researcher of interest, apply for internship and mentorship opportunities, join communities of interest, and communicate directly with the researcher. Students also have a profile where their academic background, areas of interest, and application history are displayed, helping the researcher to filter applicants effectively within the system.

4.3 Core Features

4.3.1 Paper Publishing and Discovery

The platform is designed to allow researchers to upload their research papers in Portable Document Format (PDF) with relevant details such as title, abstract, domain tags, and keywords. The research paper goes through a process of peer review before it is made available to the public through the platform. The research paper is sent to relevant reviewers in the domain to ensure academic validity, originality, and relevance. The research paper is accepted and made available to the public only after the review process is successful. This ensures that all research papers available to students through the platform have a certain level of academic credibility. Once the research paper is available through the platform, it can be searched by students using filters such as domain, keyword, publication date, and name of the researcher. The students also have the option of adding the research paper to their reading list and being notified by the researchers they follow if a new paper has been published. This completely changes the nature of the platform.

4.3.2 Internship and Mentorship Listings

Researchers will be able to post structured internship and mentorship opportunities directly on the platform, including information such as the domain of research, duration of research, and application instructions for the students. The students can then view these opportunities and apply for the research opportunities using a built-in application management system. This removes the need for email outreach and replaces it with a structured and transparent application process for both parties.

4.3.3 Community Building

StudyLink is intended to enable researchers to set up topic-based communities of scholars in academia, such as communities for artificial intelligence research, biotechnology research, or climate change research. Students are able to find these communities and participate in these communities of scholars for the respective research domain. These communities are persistent knowledge-sharing environments that are active beyond the publication of a research paper or even an internship period.

4.3.4 Real-Time Messaging and Interaction

StudyLink is designed to offer a real-time messaging system using WebSockets, which can facilitate one-on-one conversations between researchers and students, as well as group conversations within communities. The system offers features such as typing indicators, online tracking, and message history with pagination. There are four types of rooms available: Direct Messages, group chat, mentorship, and research project discussions. The interaction context varies in each case. All the WebSocket connections use JSON Web Token (JWT) for authentication.

4.4 System Architecture

StudyLink follows a three-tier architecture comprising a presentation layer, an application layer, and a data layer as shown in Fig. 1.

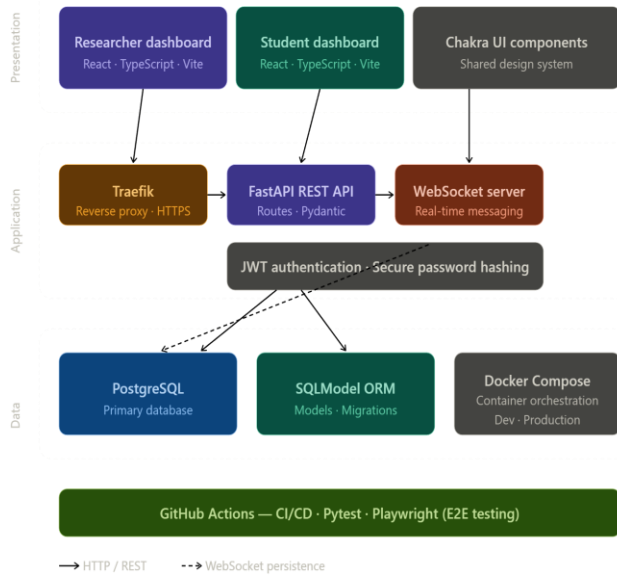


Fig -1: StudyLink System Architecture Diagram

Presentation Layer - Two role-based dashboards, Researcher and Student, built with React, TypeScript, and Vite, and they both utilize the same Chakra UI design system.

Application Layer - Traefik is the entry point for the application, and it manages the HTTPS requests and routes them to the FastAPI-based REST API or the WebSocket server for the real-time message functionality. JWT and password hashing form a shared security layer for both.

Data Layer - PostgreSQL is the primary database, and it is accessed through the SQLModel ORM. Docker Compose manages all the containers for the application in both development and production environments.

The bottom green section represents the CI/CD pipeline, which is managed through GitHub Actions and covers both Pytest and Playwright for backend and end-to-end testing, respectively.

The presentational layer utilizes React with TypeScript and Chakra User Interface (UI) components. The application layer utilizes FastAPI, which is a high-performance Python web framework. This exposes a Representational State Transfer (REST) Application Programming Interface (API) for standard operations and a WebSocket endpoint. The data layer utilizes PostgreSQL as the primary relational database. SQLModel is utilized as the Object Relational Mapper (ORM) to interact with the database. Pydantic is utilized in the entire application layer for data validation and settings management.

The application utilizes Docker Compose to containerize the entire application. This allows the application to have a consistent deployment across development and production. Traefik is utilized as a reverse proxy and load balancer. This manages incoming traffic and automatic issuance of Hypertext Transfer Protocol Secure (HTTPS) certificates.

4.5 Technology Stack

The technology stack of StudyLink has been selected to ensure scalability, maintainability, and developer productivity across both the frontend and backend layers. Table 2 summarizes the complete technology stack.

Table -2: StudyLink Technology Stack

Layer	Technology	Purpose
Frontend	React with TypeScript	User interface and client-side logic
Frontend	Chakra UI	Component library and styling
Frontend	Vite	Frontend build tool
Frontend	Playwright	End-to-End (E2E) testing
Backend	FastAPI	REST API and WebSocket server
Backend	Pydantic	Data validation and settings
Backend	SQLModel	Object Relational Mapper
Backend	JWT	Authentication and authorization
Database	PostgreSQL	Primary relational database
DevOps	Docker Compose	Containerization and deployment
DevOps	Traefik	Reverse proxy and load balancer
DevOps	GitHub Actions	Continuous Integration and Continuous Deployment (CI/CD)
Testing	Pytest	Backend unit and integration testing

The backend offers a fully documented interactive API through FastAPI's native OpenAPI support, which can be leveraged by the frontend team and integrators. The Continuous Integration and Continuous Deployment (CI/CD) workflow is implemented using GitHub Actions, which tests and deploys the code with every push to the main branch.

5. COMPARISON OF STUDYLINK WITH EXISTING PLATFORMS

To highlight the unique features of the system being proposed, a feature-based comparison of StudyLink with existing systems like ResearchGate, LinkedIn, and Academia.edu is provided in this section. The comparison is made on seven major features that are considered to be of utmost importance with respect to the student-researcher interaction issue identified in Section 3. The complete comparison is provided in the form of a table below.

Table -3: Feature Comparison of StudyLink with Existing Platforms

Feature	Study Link	Research Gate	LinkedIn	Academia .edu
Paper publishing	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Student-focused	Yes	No	No	No
Mentorship	Yes	No	No	No
Internship listings	Yes	No	Yes	No
Community building	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Verified profiles	Yes	Yes	Yes	Partial
Real-time messaging	Yes	No	Yes	No
Free for students	Yes	Partial	Yes	Partial

As is clear from Table 3, each of these platforms is good at something but fails to address other aspects of the academic networking problem. ResearchGate is good at publishing papers and networking between researchers but fails to serve students as end users and also lacks mentorship and internship features. LinkedIn is good at professional networking and verified profiles but fails to serve the academic community as end users and lacks features for publishing papers and reviewing them. Academia.edu is good at publishing papers but fails to serve the academic community as end users and lacks interactivity and features for students to leverage opportunities. Each of these platforms is well-established in their own domain and serves their purpose well for their end users.

But none of these platforms serve the academic paper publishing and reviewing need along with the student-researcher mentorship need and the internship need for researchers and the domain-based community-building need within a single platform. StudyLink aims to serve this need by providing a platform for all these needs within a single platform for students as end users. It is pertinent to mention here that as StudyLink is a proposed platform, a comparison

of its performance with other platforms is not within the scope of this paper and is a direction for future work.

6. IMPACT ANALYSIS

This section elaborates on the projected impact of StudyLink across four dimensions: impact on students, impact on researchers, impact on the broader academic ecosystem in India, and scalability potential. As StudyLink is a proposed platform that has not yet been deployed, the impact assessment presented here is based on the problem statement identified in Section 3 and the features described in Section 4, rather than empirical data from live usage.

6.1 Impact on Students

The most significant and direct impact of StudyLink is on the student community. Currently, students interested in research exposure rely on word of mouth, contacts, and emails, all of which are ineffective and only favor students from well-connected institutions. StudyLink aims to replace this ineffective system with a transparent, structured, and accessible platform through which research opportunities are publicly posted and hence discoverable by every student, irrespective of their institutions.

The paper discovery feature gives students access to a curated list of peer-reviewed research work, which is actively promoted based on their interests, rather than relying on advanced search skills or journal subscription status from their institutions. The mentorship and internship listing feature gives students a structured platform through which they can connect with researchers, eliminating the need for personal networks and contacts. The community building feature gives students a platform through which they can participate in domain-specific academic discussions, promoting their intellectual growth beyond their own institutions.

Thus, all these features have the potential to bring significant democratization of research mentorship and early research experiences for students across India.

6.2 Impact on Researchers

For researchers, StudyLink provides a larger and more engaged community to share their published research with. Currently, research papers published through existing mediums are only being accessed by other researchers. StudyLink is projected to provide access to the student community as well. This will provide more relevance to published research. Researchers would have access to a pool of students who are self-selected and have shown interest in the domain of the researcher by following their profile or reading their research papers if they post mentorship and internship opportunities. The platform is expected to reduce the administrative burden on researchers in finding mentorships. Instead of receiving unsolicited emails and

sorting through them, researchers will have the ability to post mentorships with specific eligibility criteria. The community building feature will allow researchers to build a community of engaged students and researchers around specific research themes. This will provide researchers with a large community over time. This will make StudyLink a tool for talent discovery as well.

6.3 Impact on the Academic Ecosystem in India

India generates a high volume of research material every year, and while there is a gap between the generated material and the awareness level of the students, StudyLink, being tailored for the Indian context, can help bridge this gap. By creating a space where researchers across the country can index their material, StudyLink can help create a more interconnected and collaborative community of researchers across the nation.

The mentorship and internship system can help bridge the gap in the overall research participation rates of undergraduate and postgraduate students. While the scenario is quite different in premier institutes like the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and the Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (IISERs), the availability of formal research mentorship opportunities is limited in India. By offering the opportunity for research mentorship, StudyLink can help bridge the gap in the overall distribution of research opportunities across the nation.

6.4 Scalability Potential

The technical architecture of StudyLink is also geared towards scalability. For instance, the use of a container-based approach through Docker Compose is designed to enable horizontal scaling by adding more services as the number of users increases. The real-time messaging system based on WebSockets is also designed to scale well to increasing numbers of concurrent users through connection pooling and disconnection cleanups. Additionally, the use of PostgreSQL as the underlying relational database and proper indexing of frequently accessed columns such as message time stamps and room IDs ensures that data retrieval is also performed efficiently as the amount of stored content increases.

In terms of application-level scalability, the platform can be expanded to accommodate tie-ups with various universities and research centers across the country and the globe, thereby allowing institutional users to be added to the platform as well. The modular FastAPI-based backend also enables the integration of additional features such as artificial intelligence-based paper recommendations and mobile application support without having to change the underlying architecture of the platform. Overall, these various aspects of the StudyLink platform make it highly scalable from a small academic network to a national-level platform for research networking and collaboration.

7. CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

7.1 Overview

Although StudyLink fills a recognized niche within academic networking, there are a number of challenges associated with its implementation, which must be recognized and addressed for its success and growth.

7.1.1 Cold Start Problem

The first and most immediate problem for any two-sided platform such as StudyLink is the cold start problem. The value of the platform comes from the simultaneous presence of both researchers and students; researchers are only incentivized to contribute content and opportunities when there is a sufficient number of students to contribute to, and students are only incentivized to contribute when there is sufficient content and opportunities from the researchers. To solve the cold start problem, a deliberate onboarding strategy will be needed, such as working with a small number of universities or research institutions to ensure a critical mass of verified researchers and active students before rolling out the platform to the wider world.

7.1.2 Researcher Verification and Trust

The credibility of StudyLink as an academic platform is heavily dependent on the authenticity of its researcher profiles. Without a proper mechanism of verification, the platform may be flooded with unverified or even fake accounts pretending to be researchers, which could further lower the academic credibility of the platform for students. Adding a verification mechanism, whether through email verification, cross-referencing with existing databases, or even manually through a moderation team, adds technical and operational complexity, which must be managed, especially during the early stages when the moderation team is small.

7.1.3 Moderation of Communities

The feature of community building within StudyLink, though important for academic discussions, also poses the challenge of moderation of the content within these communities. For instance, academic communities can be open to off-topic discussions or the presence of spams and inappropriate content if not moderated properly. The need to develop guidelines for these communities and to moderate the content within these communities is essential for ensuring the quality of the interactions within these communities. This is an ongoing challenge for the platform and is proportional to the number of communities and active users within the platform.

7.1.4 Competition from Established Platforms

StudyLink is entering a domain where there already exist well-established platforms such as ResearchGate, LinkedIn, and Academia.edu, each of which has a large and active user base. A major challenge for the adoption of the new platform is to convince the existing users of the other platforms to invest their time in developing a presence on the new platform as well. This is where the new platform needs to have a differentiated value proposition, especially in terms of its student-centric features and the system of mentorship, to warrant the additional effort required from the researchers to develop a presence on the new platform.

8. FUTURE SCOPE

As a concept, StudyLink has tremendous opportunities for growth and development, and several areas have been identified for its future development.

The inclusion of Artificial Intelligence (AI) based paper recommendation systems will allow the platform to proactively recommend relevant research content to students based on their reading history, followed authors, and expressed interests, thus taking the search for research content to the next level. This will greatly enhance the overall student experience on the platform.

Institutional tie-ups with universities, colleges, and research organizations will be one of the major growth areas for StudyLink. The inclusion of verified institutional accounts will allow universities to onboard their faculty members and students in bulk, thus lending credibility to the platform. In addition, this will also allow StudyLink to be integrated into the overall learning environment of the university, thus becoming an extension of the university's learning management system.

The development of a mobile application for both Android and iOS platforms would further enhance the accessibility of StudyLink, especially for students from India, as most students are used to consuming online content through their smartphone devices.

The ability for researchers to track their citations through the platform would allow them to keep track of the academic footprint of their published content, providing an additional layer of research analytics currently not offered through other platforms, such as Google Scholar.

The gamification of the platform, including providing researchers with achievement badges, contribution points, and leaderboards for active community members, would further increase student engagement and participation.

The ability for researchers to earn research points through activities on the platform, such as reading papers, participating in community discussions, and completing mentorship programs, could be used as a credible form of academic engagement by students on their profiles.

9. CONCLUSION

The current research ecosystem has suffered from a fundamental disconnect between the needs of researchers and those of students for a long period of time. Current platforms have tried to solve this problem only partially; some have focused on paper sharing for researchers, while others have focused on professional networking for researchers. None of these platforms have attempted to integrate a single platform where students can discover research, network with researchers, receive mentorship, and find research internships within a single platform. StudyLink is proposed as a direct solution for these problems within a single platform for paper publishing for researchers, mentorship for students, research-specific internship listings for students, domain-specific community building for researchers and students, and real-time communication for researchers and students.

Out of the many features proposed in StudyLink, the structured mentorship and research-specific internship listing are proposed as the most impactful contributions to the current research ecosystem for the following reasons: these two features directly tackle the biggest problem facing students today: the lack of a verified method of contacting researchers for mentorship and the lack of a transparent method of discovering research internship opportunities. By replacing the current informal method of cold-emailing researchers with a structured application-based method accessible to all students across all institutions, StudyLink has the potential to directly tackle the inequality of research opportunities that exists across institutions in India today. The larger potential of StudyLink goes beyond the current scope of a platform; it is a step toward democratizing access to research mentorship and creating a world where academic research becomes an inclusive and participatory experience for all students across all institutions in India, regardless of their personal or institutional networks. StudyLink has the potential to become a structural shift in how the next generation of researchers discovers, engages with, and contributes to the world of academic research.

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