

BEHAVIOUR OF SCHOLARS TOWARDS USE OF INTERNET IN KASHMIR VALLEY

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ABSTRACT

A survey was conducted to explore the information seeking behaviour of research scholars of Kashmir valley by administrating a well designed questionnaire and employing stratified random sampling procedure. The major objectives were to examine that (i) Internet is not a substitute for the library (ii) to find out the use of internet resources by research scholars working in different institutions of Kashmir valley. The study involved a sample of 150 researchers selected randomly from research institutions SKUAST, Kashmir University, SKIMS and Central University Kashmir. The findings of our study reveal that scholars were not fully satisfied with the internet facilities available in the valley. On the basis of findings, problems faced by scholars are addressed and some suggestions have been made about how the use of Internet among the scholars can be increased. To utilize the resources of Internet to its maximum, it is necessary to make the users well-versed in the surfing and browsing of the net.

Keywords: *E-Resources Use, Internet Resources, Use of Internet, Attitude, Kashmir*

INTRODUCTION

The Internet is a powerful means of communication, dissemination and retrieval of information. It is a network of networks spread all over the world and is considered as one of the most useful innovations of mankind. It is used by millions of users throughout the world for generating, getting and communicating information to each other. One can browse, navigate, cruise or surf the electronic information resources available on the Net. It has changed the concept of a physical library into a virtual library, i.e., library without walls, shifting the library on to a desktop at the office or home. Internet is an easily available computer communication infrastructure of the world. Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited's (VSNL) Gateway Internet Access Service (GIAS), Internet had been in India for many years in the form of Educational & Research Network (ERNET) (since 1986) funded by United Nations Development Program (UNDP). On August 15th 1995, VSNL launched the GIAS and 6th November 1998 was a landmark day in the history of Internet in India, as a revolutionary Internet Service Provider policy was introduced on that day. By the year 1999, some more companies entered in the world of service as Internet service providers. According to Act 2000, these companies were issued ISP License. The world is ever changing due to the advancement in the realm of science and technology. Internet, the largest worldwide network of networks has emerged as the most powerful tool for an instant access to information and because of this quality, the Internet has become the biggest global digital information library which provides any kind of information within few minutes.

The emergence of Internet has given rise to e-library, which is the transformation of information through the Internet. Internet has its impact in many areas especially in higher education. In this era; students and researchers can easily communicate with each other, as well as can access e-books, e-resources, bibliographic databases, and other academic resources over the Internet. Internet acts as a powerful

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supplement to the traditional way of information access. And it facilitates electronic exchange of ideas and collaboration among the users all over the world.

A sizable number of studies have been carried out from time to time to study the information seeking behaviour of researchers. Folster (1995) reviewed social scientist information-seeking patterns and found that they preferred journals instead of other sources, to follow citations instead of using indexes or abstracts to find articles. Morse and Clindworth (2000) conducted a study in the Norris Medial Library at the University of Southern California to compare the usage of the matched set of biomedical journals available for use both in print and online. The findings of the study showed that users accessed online journals more than ten times as often as print versions. Chang and Perng (2001) reported the extensive use of Internet by the students and mostly use web-based databases, electronic journals, and search engines. De Groote and Dorsch (2001) carried out a survey in the Library of Health Science Peoria (Chicago) and the results of the study revealed that print journal usage decreased significantly since the introduction of online journals.

Shokeen and Kushik (2002) reported most of the social scientists visit the library daily. The first preferred method of searching the required information by the social scientists followed by searching through indexing and abstracting periodicals, and citations in articles respectively. The Internet and the World Wide Web has greatly affected information seeking behavior of the scholars. The Web contains all sorts of information available in various formats at different locations at one place. As a result the Web has become the first choice of the scholars to find information. Cullen (2002) made a survey among family practioners in New Zealand which reveals that 48% practioners used the Internet to look for clinical information. MEDLINE was the most frequently accessed source. De Groote and Dorch (2003) made a survey at the Colleges of Medicine and Nursing at the Peroria Campus which reveals that a large percentage of faculty, residents and students prefer online resources to print. Convenience seems to play a major role in selecting resources.

Library Centre (OCLC, 2005) revealed that majority of people use search engines rather than library resources for seeking information. Asemi (2005) revealed that 100% of the respondents use Internet to search information and Google is the most widely used search engine used by 68% of the Internet users followed by Yahoo (61%), MSN (15%) and Altavista (11%) respectively. Kumbar *et al.*, (2005) investigated research scholars' preferences in using search engines and identify that most of them (91.43%) use Google, followed by Yahoo (52.86%). Mi and Nesta (2006) revealed that students perceive the Web as their information universe and Google as the most effective finding tool to explore it. The modern information seekers visit the physical library less, rarely use library websites and mostly begin searches with a commercial search engine (Kenneway, 2007). Chu and Nancy (2008) found that the research students had problems in finding relevant information sources and that they needed to at least achieve a competent level of expertise in order to effectively locate information. The study by Online Computer Loan, (2011) also identified that all (100%) the undergraduate students make use of search engines in finding the online information. The study revealed that the students face various problems while searching the Internet. Recently, Bhat *et al.*, (2016) discussed the attitude of students towards information technology (IT) in Kashmir valley and reported that students showed a positive attitude towards use of IT and their academic performance improved with the increase in knowledge of IT. A review of the literature reveals that scholars extensively use the Web but aren't experts in online searching.

Hence, research in the area should continue to know their problems for developing best practices and bridging the Web literacy gap between experts and newbies. The Internet is the biggest treasure of information and it is widely used by the researchers for research purposes and its search tools play active role in searching relevant information. However, the scholars need to be acquainted with new skills, tools and techniques for searching the online information.

Research Objectives

The present study focused on online information literacy of the researchers. The study aims to assess the researchers' attitude towards use of Internet and use of online search tools, techniques and resources.

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MATERIALS AND METHODS

Methodology

The present study was conducted in Kashmir valley of J&K State. In this study we use a quantitative approach with survey design. The survey included 150 scholars from different institutions of Kashmir valley using stratified random sampling technique. To collect information a questionnaire was prepared keeping in view the literature available on the topic. The questionnaire developed was pre tested and validated by specialists and experts using appropriate statistical tools. Each participant selected at random was asked to fill out a questionnaire which asked questions about their habitat, education back ground, and time spend in using Internet. The participants who participated in this study were given a verbal explanation regarding the purpose of the present study and were assured that confidentiality would be carried out throughout this study. The subject that was the focus of this study was use of IT by researchers. The data collected were tabulated and analyzed with the help of appropriate statistical tools using MINITAB software.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data presented in Table 1 reveals that majority of the respondents males as well as females use internet to keep themselves upto date followed by accessing of email, searching research material, general awareness and social networking. The results obtained are in agreement with the earlier studies.

Table 1: Purpose of Using Internet Services

Parameters	Keeping upto Date	Accessing of E-Mail	Searching Research Material	For General Awareness	Social Networking
Rank	1	2	3	4	5

The data presented in Table 2 reveals that in case of male respondents 37.33% use internet daily, 28% use internet 2-3 times in a week, 22.67% respondents use internet based on need/mood, 12% respondents use internet 2-3 times in a month. In case of female respondents (41.33%) use internet daily, (24%) use internet 2-3 times in a week, 24% respondents use internet based on need/mood, 14.67% respondents use internet 2-3 times in a month. Statistically, nonsignificant difference between male and female respondents is observed in case of variable time spend in using internet services ($p>0.05$). Further, in case of usage of e-resources there is a nonsignificant difference between male and female respondents with respect to questions asked regarding usage of e-resources. The results obtained in this study are in agreement with the earlier studies (Bhat *et al.*, 2016).

Table 2: Frequency of Using Internet by Scholars

Question Asked	Frequency	Male (n=75)	Female (n=75)	Chisquare	P-value
Use of Internet	Daily	28 (37.33)	31 (41.33)	0.708	>0.05
	2-3 times in a week	21 (28)	18 (24)		
	1-2 times in a month	9 (12)	11 (14.67)		
	Based on Need/Mood	17 (22.67)	15 (20)		
E-Resources Used	Generally Desktop	29 (38.67)	19 (25.33)	3.116	>0.05
	Laptop	20 (26.67)	24 (32)		
	Tablet	8 (10.66)	9 (12)		
	Mobile	18 (24)	23 (30.67)		
	e-Book	0 (0)	0 (0)		

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The data presented in Table 3 shows the awareness and use of different search engines by the scholars under study. It is observed that in general have knowledge about some search engines. Majority of the respondents use Google followed by yahoo search engine. Statistically, there is nonsignificant difference between male and female respondents in case of awareness and use of search engines. The results obtained are in agreement with the studies conducted by Bhat *et al.*, (2016).

Table 3: Awareness and Use of Search Engines

Search Engines	Male		Female		Chisquare	P-Value
	Aware	Use	Aware	Use		
Google	75	75	75	75	3.279	>0.05
Yahoo	72	68	69	65		
Ask	65	57	68	49		
Bing	52	28	48	27		
Dogpile	49	27	43	23		
DuckDuckGo	51	29	47	24		
Baidu	48	26	51	26		
Rediff	63	28	56	29		
MSN	37	20	32	23		
AOL	42	21	41	25		
Others	11	11	9	17		

The data presented in Table 3 shows the awareness and use of different search techniques used by researchers. Statistically, there is nonsignificant difference between male and female respondents in case of awareness and use of search techniques.

Table 4: Awareness and Use of Search Techniques

Search Techniques	Male		Female		Chisquare	P-Value
	Aware	Use	Aware	Use		
Boolean Operators	31	31	24	24	0.372	>0.05
Phrase searching	69	69	65	65		
Keywords searching	35	35	31	31		
Trancation	5	0	4	0		
Field searching	29	29	26	26		
Others	0	0	0	0		

The data presented in Table 5 reveals that majority of the respondents males as well as females use Google frequently followed by Yahoo, followed by Bing then by Rediff search engine. The results obtained are in agreement with the studies of Asemi (2005) and Mi and Nesta (2006).

Table 5: Search Engines Frequently Used

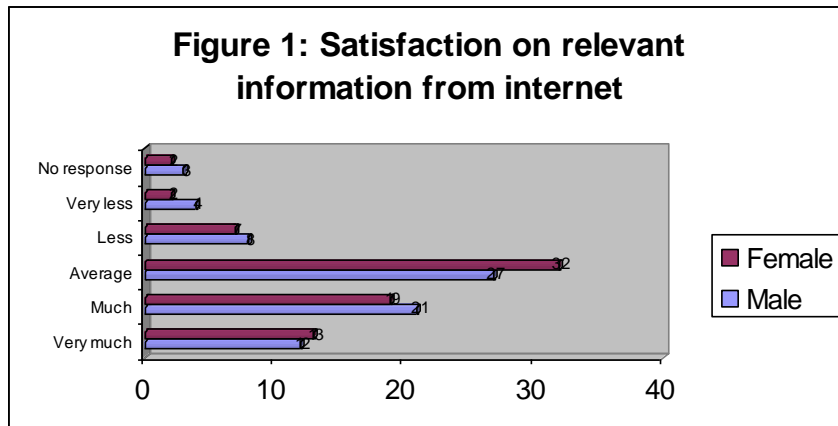
Search Engines	Google	Yahoo	Bing	Rediff	Others
Rank	1	2	3	4	5

The data presented in Table 6 reveals that majority of the respondents males as well as females are satisfied on average from relevant information from internet. Statistically, there is nonsignificant difference between male and female respondents.

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Table 6: Satisfaction on Relevant Information from Internet

Extent of Satisfaction	Male		Female		Chisquare	P-Value
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%		
Very Much	12	16	13	17.33	1.497	>0.05
Much	21	28	19	25.33		
Average	27	36	32	42.67		
Less	08	10.67	07	9.33		
Very Less	04	5.33	02	2.67		
No Response	03	4	02	2.67		



The data presented in Table 7 shows that majority of the respondents males as well as females listed the problems they face in using internet services in Kashmir valley. These are the common problems which every living being in Kashmir faces.

Table 7: Problems Faced by Scholars in the Use of Internet

S. No.	Problems	Rank
1.	Very slow speed	1
2.	Less Facilities available at work place	2
3.	Very few experts available	3
4.	Political disturbance	4

Suggestions

Here are some suggestions to improve working conditions and the use of Internet among the Scholars of Kashmir valley.

- a. There must be enough computers connected with the network.
- b. Speed should be increased in order to provide faster access.
- c. Enough training programs should be organized for the use of Internet.
- d. Trained and IT skilled employees should be employed in institutions so that scholars could get proper guidelines and help from them.
- e. Electricity/back up, printing facilities should be available for 24 hours.
- f. Whole Institute should be Wi-Fi.
- g. World community should help to solve the Kashmir problem peacefully as per wishes of the people of J&K state.

Conclusion

The present study shows that Internet is an important serving tool most of the scholars use Internet as their source of information, if it is available. The scholars under study used Internet to keep themselves

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upto-date, accessing e-mail and social network et but in general they use Internet mainly for academic and research purpose. Scholars working in medical or in any other research field search for job specific information to keep themselves abreast with latest available information and developments in their respective working fields. The present study indicates that scholars on average are satisfied with Internet facilities. However, to utilize the resources of Internet to its maximum, it is essential to make the scholars well-versed in the browsing on the net. The results of our study show that in case of male respondents 37.33% use internet daily, 28% use internet 2-3 times in a week, 22.67% respondents use internet based on need/mood, 12% respondents use internet 2-3 times in a month. In case of female respondents 41.33% use internet daily, 24% use internet 2-3 times in a week, 24% respondents use internet based on need/mood, 14.67% respondents use internet 2-3 times in a month. The study reveals that scholars are trying to use different search engines for locating desired research material. Generally, scholars use Google, Yahoo, Bing and Rediff search engines. The study revealed that scholars are not satisfied with the internet facilities available in their institutions. The reason is low level of connectivity and the high cost of cyber cafe facilities. In view of the huge academic resources available on the Internet and its usefulness for teaching and research; it would be necessary for libraries to provide guaranteed access to the Internet as a way of enhancing their books & journal collections. Quite often scholars realize that to explore electronic resources effectively and retrieve information, they require training which is not provided to them as yet so they do not really get the benefits from the technology. Librarian is an important source of knowledge as agreed by majority of respondents can play a crucial role and can help scholars to a great extent. All scholars under study wanted a peaceful solution of J&K problem/issue as political disturbance affects a lot in research activities of scholars. The results of our study are in agreement with earlier studies e.g., Asemi (2005), Mi and Nesta (2006), Bhat *et al.*, (2016). There are some limitations that need to be acknowledged within this study. In this study the sample size is very less so for future study needs more samples. Gender-wise comparison based on large sample and subject under study should be made.

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