

Internet Usage among Research Scholars of Pondicherry University: A Survey

Md. Soleman Pharcy*

Abstract

Internet is available in the Pondicherry University campus. The present study is aimed at studying Internet usage among research scholars of Pondicherry University (PU). It is intended to assess Internet awareness of research scholars, the types of Internet users, purpose and frequency of using the Internet, problems in accessing the Internet, search methods used in accessing them, satisfaction with Internet usage, adequacy of Internet, and user training provided by the university library in accessing the Internet. The survey method is adopted in the present study. A sample of 100 research scholars of Pondicherry University were selected by the simple random method, out of 800 full-time research scholars. A well-structured questionnaire was designed, keeping in mind the objectives of the study. Data was collected from the research scholars using the questionnaire tool.

The findings of the study reveal that a majority of research scholars (91%) use the Internet from their respective departments. A majority of them (41%) replied that the use of the Internet improves/refines the quality of their research by 50% to 75%. A majority of research scholars (62%) use the Internet for less than one hour daily for social networking purposes. Most of the research scholars (67%) replied that they never prefer the SGML format to read the information on the Internet. A majority (60%) use the PDF format. A majority (73%) use e-books on the Internet. Most of the research scholars (75%) use Google. A majority (74%) are aware of e-mail services. A majority (85%) face the problem of low speed Internet. A high percentage of research scholars (36%) create new entries. A major problem faced by the research scholars was 'slow Internet connectivity' (70%). The majority of them (70%) replied that Pondicherry University.

Keywords: Internet, Internet Services, Internet Uses, E-mail, E-Books, User Surveys, University Libraries

Introduction

The Internet is a community of networks that includes hundreds of thousands of smaller domestic, instructional, business, and authority's networks. Internet is likewise defined as the global public on-hand community of interconnected PC networks that transmit information through packet switching and the use of the usual Internet Protocol (IP). Internet is the shipping automobile for the data saved in documents or files on every other PC. It contains, collectively, numerous data and offerings, which includes digital mail, on-line chat, record switch, and the interlinked Web pages and different files of the World Wide Web. The Internet itself now no longer comprises only data. It is a moderate misstatement to mention a "record turned into determined at the Internet." It could be greater accurate to mention it turned into determined via or the usage of the Internet. What it turned into determined in (or on) is one of the computer systems connected to the Internet. Every aspect of the daily lifestyle of the citizen is affected by the Internet, whether it is shopping, business, banking, communication, paying bills, social amassing, party, learning, schooling, and so on. The Internet is everywhere, knocking on our doors, making life smoother and less complicated. Moreover, in terms of schooling and studies, the Internet is paving manner for a brilliant jump and certain library and data Centre has no exception. The Internet has made data available at our fingertips. The libraries in developed countries around the world have followed Internet centres to offer rapid and improved library offerings to their customers; however, this is not the case with many of the developing countries (one-third). Open access to journals and books

* Master of Library and Information Science Department, Pondicherry University, Pondicherry, India.
Email: solemanpharcy@gmail.com

are available freely to customers via the Internet. A lot of data is freely to be had from the websites of instructional organisations, business organisations, and establishments via the Internet. Access to subscribed on-line journals are available via the Internet for the research scholars. Hence, it is critical to recognise to what extent students use the Internet, frequency of usage, methods used to gain access to e-assets, search engines used, troubles confronted while using the Internet, and schooling requirements, so that essential steps may be undertaken to enhance Internet centres in college libraries for the use of research scholars. In this context, a study entitled 'Internet utilisation among research scholars of Pondicherry University' has been undertaken.

Internet Services

The librarians and data scientists are essentially worried approximately the way to get matters executed at the Internet in place of how matters paintings the manner they do at the Internet. The simple offerings on the Internet are the e-mail and the WWW. Some of the alternative assets include newsgroups, conferencing, and FTP. Electronic mail or e-mail is a rapid, smooth, and less expensive manner of interacting with different Internet customers across the world. It is one of the simplest and earliest offerings on the Internet, and the most used. WWW is one of the most essential offerings. The WWW is frequently called the Internet. The Internet is part of the net and refers to a device of Internet servers that help hypertext the use of a particular Internet protocol, referred to as HTTP, on an unmarried interface. The net servers keep all of the data on net pages. Search engines that provide information in the modern-day context has turned out to be one of the most essential requirements of man. Nowadays, everyone desires information in a short period of time. For retrieving data speedily from the Internet, one wishes to recognise the source from which the desired data may be obtained, because the Internet in itself is vast. A consumer of the Internet can retrieve the data immediately from the Internet site if the URL is available, or through the search engines. FTP or file transfer protocol refers to an Internet device that allows you to transport a record from one location to another. Chatting on the Internet, chatting is speaking me to different folks who are the usage of the Internet on the identical time you are. Usually, this speak me is the change of typed messages requiring one web website online because the

repository for the messages and a collection of customers who participate from everywhere at the Internet. Telnet, a time period used to intend faraway login, is the capacity to get right of entry to and manipulate every other pc someplace at the Internet. Newsgroups are global dialogue companies that concentrate on a specific subject matter and assist in amassing data on that subject matter. The subjects mentioned include politics, computer systems, technology, and others. Bulletin Board Services or BBS is like newsgroups. It is a miniature on-line board device and is a cost-effective manner of disseminating data in electronic format. They have been painting as a shop and a head technology.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The following are the objectives of the study.

- To have a look at the use of the Internet by the various research scholars of Pondicherry University.
- To recognise the location from which the research scholars access the Internet.
- To examine the cause and frequency of use of the Internet.
- To perceive the troubles confronted by the research scholars in gathering information via the Internet.
- To recognise the impact of Internet advertising on the research scholars.
- To discover the different search engines, like Google, that are utilised by the research scholars.
- To have a look at the Internet offerings.
- To recognise the delight of the research scholars with the Internet centres in the Pondicherry University library.
- To have a look at the bookmarks facilities utilised by the research scholars.
- To recognise the data gathered from the Internet and utilised by the research scholars.
- To recommend approaches and methods for increased use of Internet assets.

Literature Review

Sultana (2015) performed an observation on the use of the Internet through faculties, scholar students, and

college students. According to her, there is scanty online Urdu sources, and additionally, there may be a lack of information among students about the use of Internet sources. To make use of the Urdu Internet sources to the maximum, it is vital to focus on some of the scholars students and teach them about surfing the Internet, in addition to looking for statistics on the Internet and the use of sources. This may be carried out through person orientation/focus programmes. The frequency of Internet use through the respondents suggests that a majority of the schools (88.5%), scholar students (94.1%), and college students (91.2%) use the Internet for one hour a day. Respondents had been requested to talk about the area of the Internet they want to get access to and the responses were ranked primarily based on the common ratings obtained for every option. Respondents ranked Internet accessed from the library as the first (3.37), followed by accessing the Internet from the area of residence (3.11) and from the university department/computer centre (2.82). Hadagali and Kumbar (2011) took a look at the effect of the Internet on the customers of college libraries in the state of Karnataka. Around 604 questionnaires were distributed, and 471 duly filled in questionnaires were obtained, ensuring a response rate of 77.98%. Faculty individuals and scholar students were the goal populace for this study. The questionnaire approach was paired together with commentary and interviews to acquire data for the study. A random sampling method was used. The records accrued via questionnaires were fed to computer systems, with the use of SPSS (Software Package for Social Sciences). Parameshwar and Patil (2009) carried out a study on scholar students and other individuals. There are 39 post-graduate departments in the college; the questionnaires were distributed to departments of technological know-how and technology, trade and management, law, and social technological know-how, with the handiest arts school excluded. Around 305 questionnaires were distributed, 112 to the school and 193 to the students. About 214 legitimate questionnaires were collected from school individuals (67) and scholar students (147). The response rate was 70.16%. Faculty individuals revel in the use of the Internet more than studies. Free Internet access is furnished through the college. Research and schooling are the pinnacle motives for gaining access to the Internet. The use of technical reviews and digital theses and dissertations is restrained because of a lack of expertise of the scholar and college

students. Search engines are the maximum not unusual place manner of getting entry to for extra than 60% of respondents. All respondents browse the search engines, with Google desired by more than 80%. The observations made by Perry Anne Perry and Hosack-Curlin (1998) examine the variations that exist among diverse companies concerning college students' use of the Internet. The survey was performed on 548 college students from three nearby universities, within the southeastern USA. The observers studied 548 college students in 21 lessons at three southeastern universities. At the primary college, 238 college students had been surveyed from nine PC statistics structures lessons. At the second college, 272 students from ten trainer schooling lessons had been surveyed. At the third college, 38 college students from trainer schooling lessons had been surveyed. Mulimani and Gudimani (2008) carried out a survey to take a look at students' utilisation of the Internet and the PC generation, their revel in with generation, and their aptitudes and expectations about assets, making recommendations for development of the services. A questionnaire device is used to accumulate the applicable facts from the students and research scholars. Personal interplay with the scholars and students has found many crucial difficult records and enabled the investigators to make a few important recommendations for the general development of the Internet facility and offerings of the Karnataka University Library. A majority of the respondents were male (62.22%) and 37.78% were female. For this, a well-developed questionnaire was organised and distributed among 100 customers of the library. The customers were requested to reply to every query in conjunction with their opinion towards using the Internet. Out of the 100 customers, 90 answered and returned the duly finished questionnaires. Examiner Madhusudan (2007) worked on discovering the present day tendencies in data searches through the Internet, and the troubles confronted by the students. The gift examine is carried out on a pattern of 51 students of CSL. Around 60 questionnaires were administered. Fifty-one (85%) filled-up questionnaires are lower back. Tools used by the examiner are questionnaires, observations, and casual interviews, employing a stratified approach. Content evaluation is used to investigate open-ended questions. The questionnaire includes 15 essential questions. Many of the primary questions have some subsidiaries. Parameswaran (2013) carried out a study on using e-assets by the scholars and students of the School

of Engineering and Sciences, within the BPS Women University, Khanpur Kalan, Sonipat, and Haryana. Three-hundred and forty questionnaires were distributed to the scholars and students of the School of Engineering and Sciences. Out of which, 250 were received. Results show that a maximum of the respondents (86.40%) use the Internet and 13.60% of them do not use it. Three-fourths of the respondents (75%) use Google, because it was the most favoured search engine. Chandrashekara and Mulla (2011) carried out a study to discover the number of college students involved and their mind-set towards using web-primarily based totally data assets and the Internet, in VK, Mysore. The goal populace was the college students of VK, Mysore. One-hundred and thirty (130) questionnaires were distributed to the respondents for investigation, out of which, 120 questionnaires were received.

Research Methodology

For any type of studies, and basically crucial issue is an in depth technique to perform studies which in the end leads the researcher in bringing out the examiner in a scientific manner. The gift examine is primarily based totally especially at the Primary facts gathered from the studies pupils of Pondicherry college device, sampling technique, pattern populace; statistical equipment used, etc., offers with the approach of facts collection, choice of the pattern, and the statistical strategies used with inside the evaluation, interpretation, and presentation of facts.

Table 1: Distribution According to the Place of using the Internet

<i>Place</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Internet Cafés	4	4
Central Computer Lab	13	13
Department	91	91
P.U. Library	27	27
At Home	31	31
Others	30	30

(Research Scholars n = 100)

It is evident from Table 1 that most of the research scholars (91%) use the Internet from their respective departments. It is also evident that 31% use the Internet from their homes, 27% from the Ananda Rangapillai Library (Pondicherry University library), 13% from the Central Computer Lab, 4% from the Internet cafés, and the remaining 30% from other places.

Table 2: Distribution According to the Extent of Improvement/Refinement of Quality Research using the Internet

<i>Range</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
0-25%	7	7
25-50%	18	18
50-75%	41	41
75-100%	34	34
Total	100	100

Table 3: Distribution According to the Amount of Time Spent on the Internet for Various Purposes

<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Less than 1 Hour</i>	<i>1-2 Hours</i>	<i>2-3 Hours</i>	<i>More than 3 Hours</i>	<i>No Response</i>	<i>Total</i>
Education	11	26	18	45	0	100
Research	14	16	20	50	0	100
Social networking	62	13	4	11	10	100
Online games	52	2	0	0	46	100
Listening to/downloading music	47	15	3	2	23	100
Health/medical information	58	13	6	4	19	100
Online chart	40	12	10	3	35	100
E-mail	60	33	1	6	0	100
Browsing	30	21	16	24	9	100
Other purposes	33	17	2	19	29	100

It is evident from Table 2 that a high percentage of research scholars (41%) replied that the use of the Internet improves/refines the quality of their research by 50% to 75%. It is also evident that 34% replied that the quality was improved/refined by 75% to 100%, 18% replied that the quality was improved/refined by 25% to 50%. A very few research scholars (7%) replied that the quality of research was improved/refined by 0-25%, by using the Internet.

It is evident from Table 3 that a majority of research scholars (62%) use the Internet for less than one hour

daily for social networking purposes. It is also evident that a majority of the research scholars (60%) use the Internet for less than one hour daily for e-mail purposes and half of them (50%) use the Internet for more than three hours daily for research purposes. A high percentage of research scholars (45%) use the Internet for more than three hours daily for educational purposes.

A majority use the Internet for less than one hour on online games (52%) and for gathering health and medical information (58%). All the research scholars spend some time daily on the Internet for education, research, and e-mail purposes.

Table 4: Distribution According to the Format of Preference

<i>Formats</i>	<i>Always</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Usually</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Never</i>	<i>Total</i>
PDF	60	11	22	7	0	100
HTML	9	8	21	41	21	100
SGML	3	7	6	17	67	100
MS WORD	29	29	20	17	5	100

It is evident from Table 4 that a majority of the research scholars (67%) never prefer SGML format to read information on the Internet. A majority of the research scholars (60%) preferred the PDF format, and 41% sometimes prefer the HTML format to read information on the Internet. More than one-fourth of the research scholars prefer MS Word to read information on Internet.

Table 5: Distribution According to the Resources Used on the Internet

<i>Resources</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
E-Journals	61	61
Bibliographical and Textual Databases	34	34
ETDs	9	9
Reference Documents	60	60
E-Books	73	73
Conference Proceedings	31	31
Technical Reports	1	1

It is evident from Table 5 that a majority of the research scholars (73%) use e-books on the Internet. A majority use e-journals (61%) and reference documents (60%). Over a third of the research scholars use ETDs (9%) and technical reports (11%) on the Internet.

Table 6: Distribution According to Various Search Engines Used

<i>Search Engines</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Google	75	75
Alta	5	5
Yahoo	15	15
MSN	5	5

From Table 6 it is evident that most of the research scholars (75%) use Google and a very few of them (15%) use Yahoo. Around 5% of the research scholars use Alta and MSN.

Table 7: Distribution According to their Awareness of Services on the Internet

<i>Services</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Discussion Groups	31	31
Online Chatting	40	40
WhatsApp	39	39
E-mail	74	74
Facebook	68	68
Others	0	0

It is evident from Table 7 that a majority of the research scholars (74%) are aware of e-mail services. A majority

(68%) are aware of Facebook, 65% of online chatting, 39% of WhatsApp, and 31% are aware of discussions groups.

Table 8: Distribution According to the Problems Faced in using the Internet

<i>Problems</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Slow Speed	85	85
Information Overload	9	9
Lack of Training	9	9
Finding Relevant Information	33	33
Downloading Problem	48	48

It is evident from Table 8 that a majority of the research scholars (85%) are facing the problem of low-speed Internet connectivity. Around 48% face the problem of 'downloading', 33% of finding relevant information, 9% of information overload, and the same percentage (9%) face the problem of 'lack of training' in using the Internet.

Table 9: Distribution According to Various Bookmark Activities Performed

<i>Bookmark Activities</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Create a new entry	36	36
Manually rearrange entries	17	17
Create folders of related items	23	23
Create sub-folders within folders	13	13
Change an entry's title	16	16
I do not use favourites bookmark	9	9
Annotate an entry	10	10
Others	0	0

It is evident from Table 9 that a high percentage of research scholars (36%) create new entries. Nearly one-fourth of the research scholars (23%) create folders of related items; 17% manually re-arrange entries; 16% change entries' titles; 13% create sub-folders within folders; 10% annotate entries; and 9% do not use bookmarks.

Findings

The following are the findings of the study:

- All the research scholars of Pondicherry University are aware of Internet usage and all of them use the Internet.

- Most of them (85%) use computers for using the Internet.
- A majority of them (61%) have been using the Internet for more than four years.
- Most of them (97%) use the Internet facilities daily.
- Most of them (91%) use the Internet from their respective departments of the Pondicherry University.
- All the research scholars (100%) replied that the quality of research is improved/refined by using the Internet.
- A high percentage of them (41%) replied that the use of the Internet improves/refines the quality of the research work by 50% to 75%.
- A majority of research scholars use the Internet for less than one hour daily for social networking (62%), e-mail (60%), health and medical information (58%), and online games (52%). Half of them (50%) use the Internet for more than three hours daily for research purposes and 45% use the Internet for more than three hours daily for education purposes.
- A majority of the research scholars (60%) prefer PDF format to read on the Internet. A majority of them (67%) never prefer SGML format to read on the Internet.
- A majority of them use e-books (73%), e-journals (61%), and reference documents (61%) on the Internet.
- Most of the research scholars (95%) use the 'Google' search engine.
- A majority of them (69%) use metasearch engines for gathering the required information from the Internet.
- A majority of research scholars are aware of e-mail services (74%), Facebook (68%), and online chatting (65%).
- Most of the research scholars (85%) face the problem of low-speed Internet. The other major problem faced by the research scholars are 'downloading' (48%) and 'finding the relevant information', while accessing the Internet.
- A high percentage of them (45%) are satisfied with the Internet facilities of the Ananda Rangapillai Library (Pondicherry University library).

- A majority of them (78%) use open access journals.
- A majority of them (85%) use open access books. A high percentage of them (36%) utilise the bookmark activity by creating new entries.
- A high percentage of the research scholars (34%) dislike Internet advertising, whereas 20% like them.
- Most of them (90%) access online news.
- A majority of research scholars (52%) mostly prefer to be in the research scholars' rooms while using the Internet, and half of them (50%) mostly prefer to be in their respective hostel rooms while using the Internet.
- A majority of research scholars (54%) changed their sleeping patterns or lost sleep in order to spend time on the Internet.
- A majority of them (57%) said that their physical activities have gone down since they started using the Internet.
- A majority of the research scholars (81%) replied that they have personal webpages.
- A majority of them (83%) tested the strength of the Wi-Fi signals.
- A high percentage of research scholars (47%) are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the strength of the Wi-Fi signal in Pondicherry University, whereas 37% of them are dissatisfied and only 17% are satisfied.

Suggestions

The following are the suggestions made by the investigator, based on the findings of the study.

- The study shows that bibliographical and textual databases, conference proceedings, ETDs, and technical reports are used less by the research scholars of Pondicherry University. It may be due to unawareness. Hence, awareness is to be created by the university library authorities among the research scholars about the various information sources available on the Internet and the methods of accessing them.
- A majority of the research scholars (69%) are not using metasearch engines. The research scholars should be informed about the usefulness of these engines in user education programmes.
- A majority of the research scholars are not aware of Discussions Groups and WhatsApp. The university library authorities should take necessary steps to create awareness about these services on the Internet, while conducting user education programmes.
- The major problems faced by the research scholars are 'slow speed' (85%) and 'finding the relevant information and downloading' (49%). The university authorities should take necessary steps to enhance the speed of the Internet. The research scholars should be trained about the various search methods to access the required information, while user education programmes are being conducted.
- A lot of information is freely available on the Internet in the form of open access journals and books. The study shows that a considerable percentage of research scholars are not using open access journals (22%) and books (15%). Hence, the research scholars should be informed about these open access resources, their Web addresses, and the ways of accessing them, by the university library authorities.
- Over a third of the research scholars (34%) dislike Internet advertising. A lot of time is wasted due to Internet advertising. Hence, steps are to be undertaken by the authorities concerned to reduce Internet advertising, if feasible.
- Over a third of the research scholars (37%) are dissatisfied with the strength of the Wi-Fi signals. Hence, Pondicherry University authorities should take necessary steps to improve the strength of the Wi-Fi signals.
- For effective utilisation of Internet sources, training is needed for the research scholars. Pondicherry University library authorities should conduct 'user training programmes on Internet skills' for research scholars. In this programme, they should be informed about Internet sources, services, and search methods so that they can utilise Internet facilities efficiently and effectively.
- Internet skills should be imparted among library staff members so that they can train the research scholars in gathering information through the Internet.

Conclusions

The Internet is essential for research. The study shows that all research scholars are aware of and use the Internet. The major problem faced by the research scholars is low-speed Internet. Hence, the Pondicherry University authorities should take necessary steps to enhance the speed of the Internet connectivity. A considerable percentage of research scholars are not accessing open access journals, open access books, and other information sources available on the Internet. Hence, awareness is to be created among the research scholars and information literacy skills are to be imparted by the Pondicherry University library authorities to the scholars for effective utilisation of the Internet. Internet infrastructure should be strengthened by providing adequate computer systems in departments, as well as in the Pondicherry University library.

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