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INTERNET: ITS EFFECT AND IMPACT AMONG THE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS: A CASE STUDY IN TWO COLLEGES OF DIBRUGARH DISTRICT

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Abstract
In this paper an attempt has been made to study the primary purposes for using internet by the undergraduate students and demographic factors effecting the uses of internet by the students. To meet the stated objective the researcher collected information from 252 undergraduate students from two colleges of Dibrugarh district. Analysis of the data gives the reflection about the uses of internet by the respondents.

The analysis has been carried out using two-dimensional pie, bar diagrams and ¡ ^{2} - test for independence of attributes.

Keywords: Internet, Rao-software χ^2-test for Independence of Attributes.

1. Introduction

Like food, clothing and shelter internet has become a basic necessity of life in the present era**.** For young people the life is just meaningless without internet, for some it's just like oxygen without which it's impossible for them to survive. Internet may be seen as a global connection of computers that allows sending and receiving of all kinds of information such as text, graphics, video, voice and computer programmed and so Internet addiction is the excessive use of the Internet at the expense of undergraduates other academic engagements. The Internet has the propensity to divert its users' attention [2]. Most times users spend more time on the Internet than they originally planned and may affect their overall productivity in other areas of life. The Internet is known to be addictive, since there are many activities on it that can hold its users spell bound for a long period of time. All these will lead the user to derail from his focus. Internet addiction has been described as a 21st century epidemic with prevalence estimates ranging from 0.3% in the USA to 18.3% in Great Britain (Christakis, 2010)[2].

Internet addiction, as an impulse control disorder that does not involve the use of an intoxicating drug and is very similar to pathological gambling (B. Young, 2006). It is defined as a non-chemical or behavioral addiction that involves human-machine interaction that can be either passive, such as viewing movies or active, such as playing computer games (Widyanto & Griffiths, 2006). Moreover, Internet addiction is defined as a maladaptive use of the Internet that can lead to social and functional impairment (Solomon, 2009) [1].

The concepts of Internet addiction can be viewed from different aspects such as according to Davis, Flett and Besser (2002) and Shapira, Goldsmith, Keck, Khosla and Mcelroy (2000) inability of individuals to control their use of the Internet, which then causes psychological, social, school, and/or work difficulties. Commenting on the Psychological point of view, Kandell (1998) argued that due to increasing tolerance to the effect of being online, increase number of investment of sources on Internet related activities, unpleasant feelings when off-line, and denial of the problematic behaviors are main reasons for dependent on the Internet [1].

The internet has some great positive effects. Some of these include:

- Internet search engines are the best information retrieval system available. They bring any kind of information for internet users, from local restaurants to international news**.**
- The internet makes possible for business and companies to do transactions with their clients and customers.
- Moreover, millions of books, journals and other materials are available through the internet.

After reviewing the literature it is immersed that a survey can be conducted among the college students to have an idea about the uses of internet and its impact. The researcher set the following objectives to carry out the study.

- To study the primary purposes for using Internet by the respondents.
- To study the average time spends on Internet and monthly expenditure on Internet services by the respondents.
- To study the demographic factors influencing the uses of Internet.

2. Methodology

The design of the study is cross sectional and it is based on direct personnel investigation. The primary data have been collected by a questionnaire and interview schedule from a sample of 252 students (respondents) from two colleges of Dibrugarh district of Assam. Undergraduate students who are present during the study period are included in the study. The sample size is determined by Rao soft software [3] and information collected by using stratified sampling method. Based on the responses of the questionnaires data are tabulated, analyzed and interpreted by simple statistical diagrams. Statistical significance is tested using chi-square test for independence of attributes.

Hypotheses

A. Stream vs. Money Spends on Internet per Month by the Respondents

H_0: There is no significant difference between stream and money spends on Internet per month by the respondents.
H_1: There is significant difference between stream and money spend on Internet per month by the respondents.

B. Sex vs. Money Spends on Internet per Month by the Respondents

H_0: There is no significant difference between sex and money spends on Internet per month by the respondents.
H_1: There is significant difference between sex and money spend on Internet per month by the respondents.

C. Locality vs. Money Spends on Internet per Month

H_0: There is no significant difference between locality and money spends on Internet per month by the respondents.
H_1: There is significant difference between locality and money spend on mobile services per month by the respondents.

D. Stream vs. Time Spend on Internet in a Day

H_0: There is no significant difference between stream and time spends on Internet in a day by the respondents.
H_1: There is difference between time spend on Internet in a day by the respondents.

E. Sex vs. Time Spends on Internet in a Day by the Respondents

H_0: There is no significant difference between sex and time spends on Internet in a day by the respondents.
H_1: There is difference between time sex and time spends on Internet in a day by the respondents.

F. Locality vs. Time Spends on Internet in a Day by the Respondents

H_0: There is no significant difference between locality and time spends on Internet in a day by the respondents.
H_1: There is difference between locality and time spends on Internet in a day by the respondents.

3. Key Findings

In the present study, undergraduate students from two colleges of Dibrugarh district, Assam are selected for data collection. A total of 252 respondents enrolled in the study. Information about their demographic characteristics such as sex, age, locality, parent's occupation is collected. Information on time spends on Internet, monthly expenditure on Internet; purposes for using Internet, impact of internet on their studies are also collected. The demographic profile of the respondents is presented in table1.

Table 1: Demographic characteristic of the respondents:

Characteristics	Frequency(Percentage)
Stream	
Science	94(37.3%)
Commerce	91(36.1%)
Arts	67(26.6%)
Total	252(100%)
Age	
19-21 years	129(51.2%)
21 & above	123(48.8%)
Total	252(100%)
Sex	
Male	111(44.0%)
Female	141(56.0%)
Total	252(100%)
Locality	
Rural	109(43.3%)
Urban	143(56.7%)
Total	252(100%)
Parent's occupation	
Farmer & businessmen	97(38.5%)
Govt. Servicemen	155(61.5%)
Total	252(100%)

The present study reveals that majority (59.5%) of the respondents started to use Internet in between 10-17 years of age and 37.3% of the respondents started using Internet after 17years of age while only 3.2% of the respondent started using Internet before 10 years of age. These results are shown by bar-diagram below:

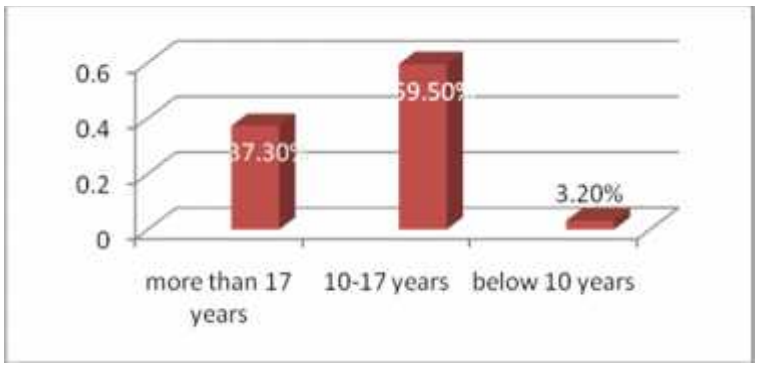

Fig 1: Age of the respondents when started to use Internet

The study reveals that about 84.9% of the respondents use Internet from their Mobile phone and 9.5% of the respondents use Internet from the Internet cafe while only 5.6% of the respondents use Internet from other sources. These results are shown by pier-diagram below:

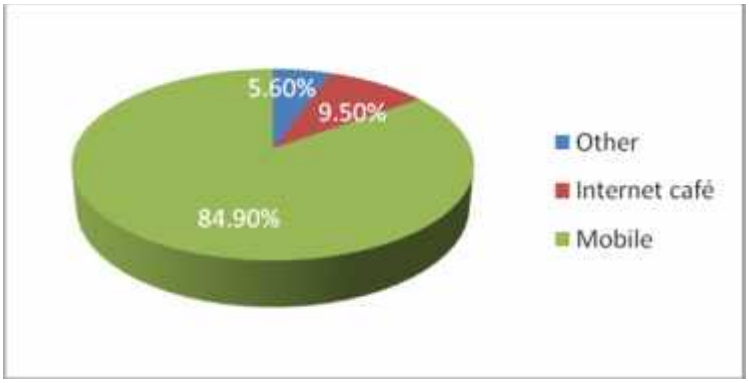

Fig 2: Sources of Internet access of the respondents

From the study, it is seen that majority (53.6%) 0f the respondents use Internet for more than 3 hours in a day while 36.9% of the respondents use Internet for 1-3 hours and only 9.5% of the respondents use Internet for less than one hour in a day. These results are shown by bar-diagram below:

Fig 3: Time spend on Internet in a day by the respondents

The study reveals that about 55.2% of the respondents use Internet for study purposes, 67.5% of the respondents use Internet for social media, 31.7% of the respondents uses Internet for online shopping, 23.8% of the respondents use Internet for playing games while 77.4% of the respondents use Internet for other purposes. These results are shown by pie-diagram below:

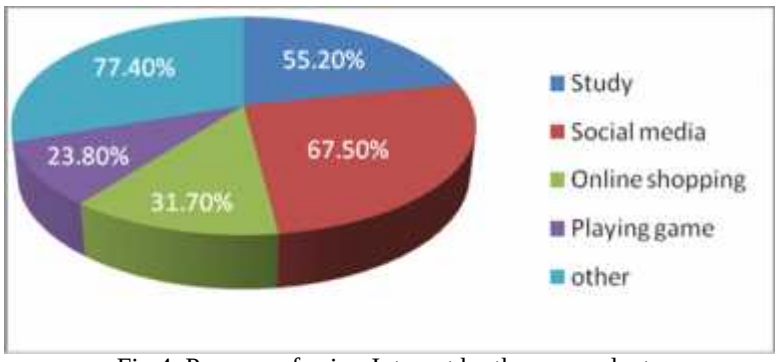

Fig 4. Purpose of using Internet by the respondents

From the study it is seen that about 76.6% of the respondents spend less than 250 rupees on the Internet service per month while 23.4% of the respondents spend 250 rupees and above on the Internet service per month.

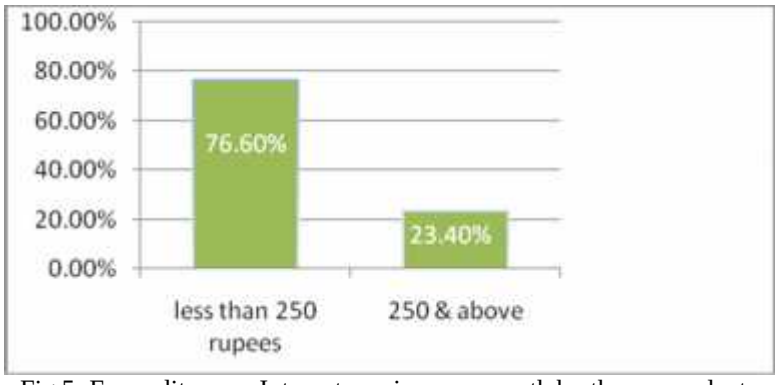

Fig 5: Expenditure on Internet services per month by the respondents

To check the validity of the assumptions made in section 3, chi-square test for independence of attribute is carried out. The results of the test are shown below.

Table 2: Association between demographic factors and expenditure on Internet services per month.

Characteristics	Less than 250 rupees	250 & above rupees	Total	χ^2	p-value
Stream					
Science	73(77.7%)	21(22.3%)	94(100%)		
Commerce	68(74.7%)	23(25.3%)	91(100%)	0.275	0.871
Arts	52(77.6%)	15(22.4%)	67(100%)		
Sex					
Female	117(83.0%)	24(17.0%)	141(100%)	7.203	**0.007**
Male	76(68.6%)	35(31.5%)	111(100%)		
Locality					
Rural	84(77.1%)	25(22.9%)	109(100%)	0.024	0.876
Urban	109(76.2%)	34(23.8%)	143(100%)		

From the above table, it is seen that about 25.3% respondents who are from Commerce stream spend more than 250 rupees for the Internet services per month followed by 22.4% respondents from Arts stream spend more than 250 rupees for Internet services per month. The study reveals that the Commerce students spend much money for Internet services as compared to the other students. But, this result is not statistically significant. It is also seen that about 31.5% male respondents spend more than 250 rupees per month and only 17.0% female respondents spend more than 250 rupees per month for the Internet services. The result is also statistically significant. From the study, it is also seen that about 23.8% respondents who are from the urban areas spend more than 250 rupees per month and about 77.1 % respondents who are from rural areas spend less than 250 rupees per month. This result is not statistically significant.

Table 3: Association between demographic factors and time spend on Internet per day.

Characteristics	More than 3hours	1-3 hours	Less than 1hour	Total	χ^2	p-value
Stream						
Science	49(52.1%)	34(36.2%)	11(11.7%)	94(100%)	7.820	0.098
Commerce	55(60.4%)	33(36.3%)	3(3.3%)	91(100%)		
Arts	31(46.3%)	26(38.8%)	10(14.9%)	67(100%)		
Sex						
Female	64(45.4%)	61(43.3%)	16(11.3%)	141(100%)	8.623	**0.013**
Male	71(64.0%)	32(28.8%)	8(7.2%)	11(100%)		
Locality						
Rural	61(56.0%)	37(33.9%)	11(10.1%)	109(100%)	0.726	0.696
Urban	74(51.7%)	56(39.2%)	13(9.1%)	143(100%)		

From the above table it is seen that about 60.4% respondents who are from Commerce stream spend more than 3hours per day on using Internet and only 46.3% respondents who are from Arts stream spend more than 3hours on using Internet per day. The study reveals that Commerce students spend much time on using Internet as compared to the other students. But, this result is not statistically significant. From the study, it is also seen that about 64.0% male respondents spend more than 3hours on Internet per day and only 45.4% female respondents spend more than 3hours on the Internet per day. It is also seen that only 7.2% male respondent spend less than 1hour on the Internet. The study reveals that male students spend much time on Internet as compared to female respondents. This result is also statistically significant. It is also seen that about 56.0% respondents from rural areas spend more than 3hours on using Internet per day and 51.7% respondents from urban areas spend more than 3hours on using Internet per day. Only 9.1% respondents from urban areas spend less than 1 hour on using Internet. The result is not statistically significant.

From the present study, the following results are observed:

- Majority of the respondents started to use Internet in between 10-17 years.
- Majority of the students use Internet from their own mobile phone.
- Most of the students use Internet more than 3 hours.
- About 55.2% students use Internet for study purposes.
- Male students spend much money for internet as compared to the female students.
- Majority of the Students from Arts stream reported that Internet has negative effects on their studies.

4. Suggestions

Technology immensely helps mankind, but its overuse or misuse may lead to misery. Firstly, problems related to relationships which refer to spending excessive amount of time starting and maintaining online friendships in chat rooms, which replace real life friends and family. Secondly, wasting of money by engaging in compulsively using the internet for gambling online, trading and part taking in online auctions. Third, habitual gaming practices such as computer game playing; including multi-user game may decrease the study habit of the students. Finally, sex addiction of young adults is a massive problem through adult chartrooms, cyber sex or pornography on the Internet. For modern life use of technology is a must but it should not over power us.

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