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J O U R N A L S
editor@srujani.in
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Utilization of Internet Resources by Research Scholars of Science Departments at Karnatak University, Dharwad

Dr. Anil B. Talawar

Assistant Professor

Department of Library and Information Science, Karnatak University, Dharwad

Abstract:

This study explores the use of Internet resources by research scholars in the science departments of Karnatak University, Dharwad. The primary objectives were to examine the frequency and purpose of Internet use, the types of information searched, preferred search engines, and the impact of the Internet on academic work. A questionnaire-based survey was conducted with 90 respondents, revealing that most scholars access the Internet daily, primarily for browsing e-journals and conducting research. Google was found to be the most preferred search engine. While scholars generally expressed satisfaction with Internet services, challenges such as slow Internet access, overload of information, and privacy concerns were prevalent. The findings emphasize the importance of the Internet for academic purposes and highlight areas for improvement, such as faster connectivity and better information management, to enhance the research experience.

Keywords: Internet Resources, Research Scholars, Karnatak University, E-journals, Internet Access Challenges.

Introduction

The Internet is a "network of networks" that consists of millions of smaller domestic, academic, business, and government networks. Internet is also described as the worldwide publicly accessible network of interconnected computer networks that transmit data by packet switching using the standard

Internet Protocol (IP). Since last couple of years Internet has become a global source of information resources accessible at any time by anyone from anywhere in the world. It has converted the whole world into a global information society. It has tremendously improved communication and interaction among scientific research

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community and enabled them to access a vast range of latest information. It acts as a powerful supplement to the traditional way of information access. It facilitates electronic and exchange of ideas and collaboration among the scholars all over the world.

Academic libraries have made a significant investment in electronic information resources and computer based technologies in general and the Internet in particular as a need on the part of librarians to provide technology mediated information services to the clientele. In a limited span of time, the Internet has become an integral unit for library and information centers. The present study is conducted to measure and to identify the changing users' attitude, and behavior towards the Internet. It is necessary to examine the Internet facility provided at to university campus and evaluate the use of Internet by the students of different disciplines on the campus and particularly Research scholars of science departments.

Objectives of the Study

The present study is an attempt to collect opinion from the Research Scholars of Science Departments in Karnatak University, Dharwad.

- To examine the purposes for which research scholars in science departments use the Internet.
- To identify the Internet resources frequently accessed by research scholars.

- To evaluate the impact of Internet usage on the research productivity of scholars.
- To determine the primary challenges faced by scholars in accessing Internet resources.
- To analyze the gender-based differences in Internet usage patterns among research scholars.

Methodology

For this study, the questionnaire method was employed to collect data. A well-structured questionnaire was specifically designed for the research scholars of the science departments at Karnatak University, Dharwad, ensuring it covered all the relevant aspects of the study. The questionnaire was developed with the stated objectives in mind, ensuring alignment with the study's goals.

Sample of the study

"The study had a total sample size of 90 respondents, including 58 males and 38 females. Male respondents constituted the majority, indicating a gender disparity in the sample. The data highlights the representation of both genders among the research scholars."

Results and Discussions

Gender Wise Distribution of Scholars

The data presented in **Table 1** reflects the gender-wise distribution of research scholars at Karnatak University, Dharwad. Out of the total sample of 90 respondents, 58 are male (64.44%), while 32 are female (35.56%). The gender distribution reveals

that male respondents make up a significantly larger proportion of the sample, with 64.44% representation. In contrast, female scholars account for 35.56% of the sample, indicating a gender disparity in Internet resource usage among the research scholars in the science departments. This discrepancy could reflect broader societal or institutional factors, such as gender differences in academic participation or access to resources, which may warrant further investigation. Additionally, this gender imbalance may also influence how the Internet is used for research purposes within these departments.

Table 1: Gender Wise Distribution of Scholars

Sex	Respondents	Percentage
Male	58	64.44
Female	32	35.56
Total	90	100.00

Source: Survey

Place of Internet Access

The data in Table 2 shows the various places where research scholars access the Internet. The most common location is the Department Computer Laboratory, where 64.44% (58 respondents) of scholars access the Internet, indicating that departmental facilities are heavily utilized. Home is the second most common place, with 35.56% (32 respondents) using their personal Internet for research, reflecting the importance of personal access to online resources. Additionally, 31.11% (28 respondents) of scholars access the

Internet at Cyber Cafes, suggesting that external locations play a role in bridging the gap in departmental access. The University Computer Laboratory is used by 20% (18 respondents), showing that university-provided resources are also significant but less frequently utilized than departmental facilities. The Central Library is the least popular location, with only 3.33% (3 respondents) using it for Internet access, which could point to limited availability or underutilization of library resources. This distribution of usage suggests that while departmental resources are predominant, many scholars still rely on external locations for Internet access, highlighting potential areas for improving campus-based Internet facilities.

Table 2: Place of Internet Access

Browsing Place	Respondents (N=90)	Percentage
Department Computer Laboratory	58	64.44
University Computer Laboratory	18	20.00
Cyber Cafe	28	31.11
Home	32	35.56
Central Library	03	03.33

Source: Survey

Frequency of Internet Usage

The data from Table 3 reveals that the majority of research scholars use the Internet regularly. 84.44% (76

respondents) reported using the Internet every day, indicating that Internet access is an essential and frequent part of their academic activities. A smaller group, 15.56% (14 respondents), reported using the Internet more than once a day, suggesting that some scholars engage with the Internet multiple times throughout the day, possibly for research and academic purposes. Interestingly, no respondents reported using the Internet once a week, once a month, or less than once a month, which indicates that Internet usage is almost exclusively daily or more frequent. This data highlights the central role of the Internet in the research and academic work of the scholars, underlining the need for reliable and accessible Internet resources to support their regular usage.

Table 3: Frequency of Internet Usage

Internet Usage	Respondents	Percentage
Every Day	76	84.44
More than once a day	14	15.56
Once a week	00	00.00
Once a month	00	00.00
Less than once a month	00	00.00
Total	90	100.00

Source: Survey

Purpose of Using Internet

The data in Table 4 illustrates the various purposes for which research scholars use the Internet. The most common purpose is to browse e-journals, with 70% (63

respondents) indicating that they frequently use the Internet for academic research by accessing online journals. This highlights the importance of digital academic resources in the research process. E-mail usage follows closely, with 48.89% (44 respondents) using the Internet for communication purposes. This suggests that email remains a crucial tool for scholarly communication. General-purpose Internet usage, which includes activities like searching for information or accessing other online resources, was reported by 36.67% (33 respondents). Meanwhile, 24.44% (22 respondents) use the Internet for entertainment, indicating that, although academic use is predominant, some scholars also engage in recreational activities online. This distribution of Internet usage purposes emphasizes the central role of the Internet in academic research while also highlighting the varied ways in which it is utilized by research scholars.

Table 4: Purpose of Using Internet

Purpose	Respondents (N=90)	Percentage
E-mail	44	48.89
Browse E-journals	63	70.00
Entertainment	22	24.44
General purpose	33	36.67

Source: Survey

Types of Information Search through Internet

The data from Table 5 indicates the different types of information that research scholars seek through the Internet. The most common type of information searched is research topic-related content, with 33.33% (30 respondents) using the Internet to explore topics relevant to their academic work. This underscores the critical role of the Internet as a research tool for scholars. General knowledge follows, with 26.67% (24 respondents) searching for information that broadens their understanding of various subjects.

Table 5: Types of information search through Internet

Types of In Formations	Respondents	Percentage
Research Topic Related	30	33.33
General Knowledge	24	26.67
Updating Current Information	23	25.56
Job Related Information	13	14.44
Total	90	100.00

Source: Survey

Updating current information is also significant, with 25.56% (23 respondents) using the Internet to stay informed about recent developments in their fields.

Finally, 14.44% (13 respondents) search for job-related information, indicating that career-related resources are also an important aspect of their Internet usage. This data shows that while the primary focus is academic, research scholars also utilize the Internet for personal and professional development.

Search Engines Preferred

The data in Table 6 reveals the preferred search engines among research scholars for Internet searches. The most popular search engine is Google, with a significant 90% (81 respondents) indicating it as their primary search tool.

Table 6: Search Engines Preferred

Search Engines	Respondents (N=90)	Percentage
Alta Vista	02	02.22
Google	81	90.00
Lycos	01	01.11
MSN search	01	01.11
Yahoo	63	70.00
Any other	-	-

Source: Survey

This suggests that Google is the dominant search engine due to its vast database and user-friendly interface. Yahoo is the second most preferred search engine, with 70% (63 respondents) using it, showing its continued relevance among users. Other search engines like Alta Vista, Lycos, and MSN Search are used by very few scholars, with only 2.22% (2 respondents)

for Alta Vista and 1.11% (1 respondent each) for Lycos and MSN Search. This reflects a clear preference for Google and Yahoo among the scholars, which could be attributed to their comprehensive search capabilities and wide-ranging resources. The dominance of Google, in particular, is a notable trend in research-related Internet usage.

Opinion of users about their Satisfaction with the Internet.

The data from Table 7 presents the respondents' satisfaction levels with the Internet services they use. The majority of scholars, 60% (54 respondents), report being moderately satisfied with their Internet services, indicating a generally acceptable but not exceptional experience. A smaller proportion, 13.33% (12 respondents), are very satisfied, while 14.44% (13 respondents) feel satisfied with the services, suggesting that a small portion of scholars have a positive view of their Internet experience. However, 12.22% (11 respondents) are dissatisfied, which indicates that there is room for improvement in Internet services to meet the needs of all users. This distribution of satisfaction suggests that while the majority of users find the services acceptable, there is a significant opportunity to enhance the quality and reliability of Internet access to increase satisfaction levels.

Table 7: Opinion of Users about their Satisfaction with the Internet Services

Internet Satisfaction	Respondents	Percentage
Very	12	13.33
Satisfied	13	14.44
Moderately	54	60.00
Dissatisfied	11	12.22
Total	90	100.00

Source: Survey

Impact of Internet on Study/ Project Work

The data in Table 8 reflects the opinions of research scholars regarding the impact of the Internet on their study or project work. A significant majority, 72.22% (65 respondents), agree that the Internet positively impacts their academic work. Additionally, 20% (18 respondents) strongly agree, further indicating that the Internet is seen as a valuable tool in the research process. Only 7.78% (7 respondents) remain uncertain about its impact, suggesting that a small portion of scholars may not perceive a direct benefit or may face limitations in accessing or using Internet resources effectively. There were no respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed, highlighting that the Internet is generally regarded as an essential and beneficial resource for academic and research purposes. This data emphasizes the crucial role of the Internet in enhancing the quality and efficiency of scholarly

Table 8 Impact of Internet on Study/ Project Work

Impact of Internet on Study/ Project Work	Respondents N=90	Percent age
Strongly Agree	18	20.00
Agree	65	72.22
Uncertain	07	07.78
Disagree	00	00.00
Strongly Disagree	0	00.00

Source: Survey

Problems Faced by Users to Access the Internet

The data in Table 9 highlights the common problems faced by research scholars when accessing the Internet. The most frequently reported issue is slow internet access, which affects 31.11% (28 respondents), suggesting that connectivity issues are a significant challenge for many scholars. Overload of information on the Internet is the second most common problem, reported by 26.67% (24 respondents), indicating that the vast amount of online content can sometimes overwhelm users and make it difficult to find useful or relevant information. Privacy problems affect 16.67% (15 respondents), showing that concerns about online security are a notable issue for some scholars. Difficulty in finding relevant information is reported by 14.44% (13 respondents), highlighting challenges in navigating and filtering

information efficiently. Long download times are a problem for 11.11% (10 respondents), affecting the timely access to resources needed for research. Interestingly, 0% (0 respondents) reported lack of e-mail facilities as a problem, suggesting that e-mail access is generally not a barrier for the scholars. This data suggests that while the Internet is a valuable resource, connectivity issues, information overload, and privacy concerns are key challenges that need to be addressed to enhance the research experience for scholars.

Table 9 Problems Faced by Users to Access the Internet

Problems	Respondents	Percentage
Slow Internet Access	28	31.11
Overload of information on Internet	24	26.67
Privacy Problem	15	16.67
Difficult on findings relevant information	13	14.44
It take longtime to download information	10	11.11
Lack of E-Mail Facility	00	00.00
Total	90	100.00

Source: Survey

Summary

The study aimed to investigate the use of Internet resources by research scholars in the science departments of Karnatak University, Dharwad. The research focused on various aspects such as the frequency of Internet usage, the purpose of Internet access, the preferred search engines, and the impact of the Internet on research work. The study revealed that the majority of scholars access the Internet daily, with Google being the most popular search engine. Scholars primarily use the Internet for academic purposes, such as browsing e-journals and conducting research. The data showed that Department Computer Laboratories and home are the most common places for Internet access. While the overall satisfaction with Internet services is moderately high, issues like slow Internet access and overload of information were identified as major challenges faced by the scholars.

Conclusion

The findings of the study highlight the critical role of the Internet in the academic and research activities of scholars at Karnatak University. The majority of respondents reported a positive impact of the Internet on their studies and project work, indicating its importance as a research tool. However, challenges like slow connectivity, information overload, and privacy concerns must be addressed to improve the research environment. Although scholars are generally satisfied

with their Internet services, enhancing the quality of Internet access and addressing these issues could further optimize the research experience. Efforts to upgrade infrastructure, offer better guidance on information filtering, and ensure secure browsing environments could lead to more efficient and productive use of Internet resources in academic research.

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