

# Use of Internet by the Students of Social Sciences, Manipur University: A Study

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## Abstract

*In today's information society, Internet has emerged as a powerful and educational tool. It is very important and useful source to fulfill the requirements of the students. The main objective of the present study is to assess the use of Internet by the students of School of Social Sciences, Manipur University. Questionnaire method was adopted to collect data from the students. About 260 questionnaires were distributed to P.G students both from 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> semester. A total of 197 students returned the questionnaire giving a response rate of 76%. The present study indicates that almost all the students use internet to access the sources of information need. The study also indicates that most of the students are satisfied with the information available on internet. To have access to the huge information resources, library have to provide intensive training in searching methods of various internet databases as for the effective utilization of global electronic products and services. Moreover, Library and information professionals should take initiative to prepare list of e-resources and their techniques for retrieving relevant information.*

**Keywords:** Internet, Social Science Students, Manipur University, E-Resources, Library, Digital Resources

## 1. Introduction

The internet has become an integral part of our everyday life and exerts direct impact on people's idea and behavior. It has significantly reduced the gap in information access known as the digital divide between the developed and the developing nations. It has been applauded as one of the most significant technological developments of the twentieth century and it is viewed as poised to impact academic research significantly in the near future. More than any other field, the Internet has had profound influence on the education sector as it is being used for diversified purposes. It has modernized information seeking techniques of lecturers and

students and also the methodology used for learning, teaching and carrying out research and there are opportunities to do research on any topic of interest from several internet resources.

However, no study on internet use by the students of social sciences has been conducted so far. It is imperative that internet use by the students of social sciences is investigated so that the findings of such a study may be taken into consideration in the University plans for effective and efficient use of the internet for research work and simultaneous improvement of electronic information resources of the library.



## 2.0 Objective of the present study

The main objective of the present study is:

- v to know the purpose of using Internet and usage of internet by the socialscience students of Manipur University;
- v to identify the popular sites used by the Social Science students;
- v to find out the social science students awareness in using Internetresources;
- v to ascertain the use of the various services of the Internet;
- v to identify the preference of e-mail services used by the respondents;
- v to determine decrease of library users with the advent of Internet;
- v to know about the rate of e-mail services/ Internet access;
- v to find out frequency and search engines for Internet surfing;
- v to find out problems encountered by the users in surfing Internet
- v to identify the problem face by the students in accessing the internet;and
- v to know the status of the internet facilities provided by the MU Library.

## 3. Scope and Limitation of the Present Study

Manipur University has five Schools of Studies excluding the School of Medical Science and currently 27 departments and 7 different Centres of Studies are attached to the different Schools of Studies. So, in the present study is limited to the P.G.

students(both 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> semester enrolled during 2011-2013) of Social Sciences of Manipur University only. (data is very old. By this time so many changes might have occurred)

## 4. Methodology Adopted for the Study

Keeping in view the objectives of the study a well structured questionnaire was designed and the questionnaire has been employed and distributed to 35 students in Commerce, 35 students in economics, 25 students in history, 28 students in education, 35 students in political science, 20 students in library science, 20 students in adult continuing education, 35 students in MIMS, 27 students in Mass communication. A total of 197 out of 260 respondents returned the questionnaires giving a response rate of 76%.

### 5.1 Distribution of Questionnaire

The total numbers of P.G. students of Social science of Manipur University is 847, (2011-2013), A total number of 260 questionnaires were distributed out of which 197 respondents returned the questionnaires giving response rate of 76%. Among the respondents 27(13.70%) were from Political science, 28(14.21%) were from MIMS, 10(5.07%) were from Adult Education, 21(10.65%) were from Education, 18(9.13%) were from History, 28(14.21%) were from Economics, 27(13.70%) were from Commerce, 17(8.62%) were from Library science, and 21(10.65%) were from Mass communication.

### 5.2 Frequency of Internet use

The study, in respect of frequency of Internet use revealed that majority of the students from all the departments i.e., 92(46.7%) use Internet on daily basis, 45(22.84%) of the students use the Internet

more than once a week, 32(16.24%) of them make use of the internet once in a week, 20(10.15%)

used the internet occasionally, and 8(4.06%) of the students use internet hardly.

**Table: 1 Frequency of Internet use**

Frequency of Internet Use	Pol.Sc.	MIMS	Adult Edu.	Edu.	History	Eco	Com.	Lib.Sc	Mass	Total Com.	%
Daily	4	12	8	13	10	24	16	3	2	92	46.7
Once a week	4	3	1	7	3	1	2	6	5	32	16.24
More than once a week	1	10	8	6	1	3	5	7	4	45	22.84
Occasionally	1	3	2	2	3	2	-	5	2	20	10.15
Hardly	3	-	1	-	1	-	2	-	1	8	4.06
Total	13	28	20	28	18	30	25	21	14	197	100

(Source: Filled in Questionnaire)

### 5.3 Time spend in surfing the Internet

The study revealed that how the students of social sciences uses the Internet. It was found that 47.71% i.e 94 of the students use the internet for 1-3 hours, 39(19.79%) use it for less than 1 hours, 36(18.27%) use for 3-5 hours, 28(14.21%) of them use the internet for more than 5 hours. It is observed that the students are using the internet almost all the time and they are expected to be proficient, comfortable and experience users of the system.

### 5.4 Place of frequent use of Internet

The students were asked to choose some of the places where they browse the internet i.e., whether **at home, at department internet connection, at University Library, at cyber café or at a friend home**. It is learnt that more than most of the students i.e. 68(34.52%) reported that they access the internet mostly in two of their choices of place, while 60(30.46%) of them the internet at three of

the places of their choices .Another 31(15.74%) also use the internet at one place of their choice only, 28(14.21%) of the students also access internet at four of the places of their choices, and only 10(5.07%) of them access the internet at all of the places. This indicates that though the students have their preferences, many of them use multiple access venues, as they find it convenient. The use of internet seems to have become pervasive and not confined to specific place or venue.

### 5.5 Way of browsing Information from Internet

Data revealed that 85.78% (169) of the students use search engines to browse information from the internet and only 14.21% (28) of the them browse internet by typing the web address directly i.e. most of the students use search engines as the easiest means of browsing the information from the internet.

### 5.6 Method of learning internet skill

Students were asked to indicate how they learned internet skill. It was found that majority of them learned how to use the internet from friends or self instructions. A total of 74(37.56%) reported that they learned the use of internet from friends and 71(36.4%) from self instruction, while 37(18.78%) learn from external courses, and 15(7.61%) of them learn internet through trial and error methods. From the table below it is observed that majority of the students learn internet with the help of friends.

### 5.7 Need of help from others to explore the Internet

It is evident, that 88(44.67%) students out of 197 feel the need of help from others to explore the

internet. Whereas 109(55.32%) of them do not require any kind of help from other to explore the internet service. The above table shows that most of the respondents are aware of use of internet.

### 5.8 Difficulty in surfing the Internet

Table 2 shows the difficulty or problems faced by the students in surfing the internet. 47(23.85%) of the students find that important sites in the subject field are not known, and 29(14.72%) opines that they face the problem of difficulty in finding the relevant information from the internet. The majority of the students' i.e., 121 out of 197 do not face difficulty in surfing the internet.

**Table: 2 Difficulty in surfing the Internet**

Difficulty in Surfing the Internet	Pol.Sc.	MIMS	Adult	Edu. Edu.	History	Eco	Com.	Lib.Sc	Mass Com.	Total	%
Important site in the subject field are not known	2	12	4	3	14	5	1	6	-	47	23.85
Difficulty in finding the relevant inform.	3	9	5	1	4	1	2	-	4	29	14.72
Total	5	21	9	4	18	6	3	6	4	76	38.58

(Note: 121 of the respondents do not face any difficulty).

### 5.9 Satisfaction of Information from the Internet

From analysis it is observed that 52(26.40%) of the students had satisfied with the information available on the internet and only 32(16.24%) didn't satisfied at all. And majority of the students i.e. 113(57.36%) satisfied the information to some

extent that are available on the internet. The study revealed that most of the students satisfied the available information on the internet.

### 5.10 Facilities availed from the Internet

Looking at the summary of the percentage of respondents, who use internet for different purposes from the given choices - **e-mail, chatting,**

**e-journals, news, and download multimedia.**

71(36.04%) use the internet for three of the purposes from

the given choices, 49(24.88%) of them use the internet for two of the internet facilities given, 15(7.61%) used the internet for accessing only one internet facilities of their choice, and 15(7.61%) uses the internet for all the given facilities. The study shows that most of the students use the internet for communication purposes and less for education purpose from the given choices.

**5.11 Personal E-mail Account**

Answering to the questions regarding personal e-mail account by P.G. students of Social sciences, a large majority i.e. 181(91.88%) have their e-mail account and the remaining only 16(8.12%) do not have email accounts. Further to the question on

those who have their own e-mail account, most of the respondents 122(61.92%) have their e-mail account in Gmail domain as compare to Yahoo 46(23.35%) and Rediff mail 13(6.59%). No one has their account in Sify. And only 16(8.12%) of the students do not have their personal e-mail accounts.

**5.12 Favorite Search Engine**

Search engines are the medium through which searches are successfully conducted. It acts as a medium of navigation to the ocean of information. So, it is necessary to identify the favorite searches engine (or frequently used search engine). The respondents were provided with multiple choices and were asked to choose from the given choices of search engines as - Google, Yahoo, Alta Vista, Rediff, and AOL. It is highlighted in the table below:

**Table: 3. Frequently use Search Engines**

No. Choices of Used in	Pol. Sc.	MIMS	Adult Edu.	Edu.	History	Eco	Com.	Lib. Sc.	Mass Com.	Total	%
Only one search engine	5	7	3	7	2	7	5	6	7	49	24.88
Two of the search engines	19	21	5	9	11	21	18	8	11	123	62.44
Three of the search engines	3	-	1	4	3	-	3	2	3	19	9.64
Four of the search engines	-	-	1	1	2	-	-	1	-	6	3.04
Five of the search engines	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
All of the search engines	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	27	28	10	21	18	28	27	17	21	197	100

(source: Filled in questionnaire)

The study shows that Google is the most preferred search engine. 62.44% of the students used two of the search engines out of five given in the choices, 24.88% of them used only one search engine, 10% of them used three choices of

their search engines, and only 3.04% of them used four search engines respectively. Other search engines are gaining slowly but Google and Yahoo are reigning in providing the information on Internet.

### 6.13 Position of Library User with the Advent of Internet

When the students asked to indicate their own knowledge about whether the library user

decrease with the advent of internet, more than 50% i.e. 110(55.83%) of them answer "NO" and 87(44.16%) of the students answer "YES". It shows that with the advent of internet library user does not decrease.

**Table: 4 Position of Library User with Advent of Internet**

Library user decrease with the coming of internet	Pol. Sc.	MINIS	Adult Edu.	Edu.	History	Eco.	Com.	Lib. Sc.	Mass Com.	Total	%
Yes	15	12	3	12	14	12	7	8	4	87	44.16
No	12	16	7	9	4	16	20	9	17	110	55.84
Total	27	28	10	21	18	28	27	17	21	197	100

### 5.14 Internet is a substitute for the Library

Students use the internet especially for academic purpose as well as for communication purpose. So the students of Social sciences were asked to state if they thought of Internet is a substitute for the library. More than 50% i.e. 107(54.31%) indicated the answer "NO" and 90(45.69%) of

them answer "YES". It shows that though more than 50% of the respondents thought that internet is not a substitute for a library but a part of a library, some of them feel that it is a substitute for the library with the advancement of internet technologies.

**Table 5: Internet as substitute for Library**

Internet as a substitute for Library	Pol. Sc.	MIMS	Adult Edu.	Edu.	History	Eco	Com.	Lib. Sc.	Mass Com.	Total	%
Yes	15	16	3	6	7	4	15	8	16	90	45.69
No	12	12	1	15	11	24	12	9	5	107	54.31
Total	27	28	10	21	18	28	27	17	21	197	100

(source: Filled in questionnaire)

### 5.15 Impact of Internet in Library

The respondents were asked their perception of what they think about the impact of internet in library. About 50% i.e. 85(43.15%) of the respondents felt development of library,

58(29.44%) users felt that useful, 48(24.36%) of them felt satisfied the information they need, and a few 6(3.05%) of them felt the impact of internet in library which does not mention in the questionnaire.

**Table 6: Impact of Internet in Library**

Impact of Internet in Library	Pol. Sc.	MIMS	Adult Edu.	Edu.	History	Eco	Com.	Lib. Sc.	Mass Com.	Total	%
Useful	5	9	3	12	8	4	-	6	11	58	29.441
Satisfied the Information need	5	7	3	-	10	4	12	3	4	48	24.36
Development of Library	14	9	4	9	-	20	15	8	6	85	43.15
Others	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	3.05
Total	27	28	10	21	18	28	27	17	21	197	100

(source: Filled in questionnaire)

### 5.16 Problem in the use of internet in Manipur University Library

The respondents were asked whether they have problem in the use of internet provided by the Manipur University Library. The respondents revealed that almost all of them 95.94 % (188) have problem while only 4.06% (8) of the respondents indicated that they have no problem at all.

Further, respondents were asked what are the problems they face while the using the internet. 83(42.14%) respondents faced the problem of slow access of internet , 39(19.79%) respondents faced the problems of limitation in the number of computers, followed by lack of uninterrupted power supply 16.75% (33), and 8 (4.06%) respondents reported that they faced the problem of frequent disconnection in any other (please specify) option.

**Table 7: Problem in the use of Internet provided by the Manipur University Library.**

Problems in the use of Internet in the Library	Pol. Sc.	MIMS	Adult Edu.	Edu.	History	Eco	Com.	Lib. Sc.	Mass Com.	Total	%
Lack of uninterrupted power supply	4	7	-	3	1	2	9	1	6	33	16.75
Limited number of computers	4	-	3	6	7	9	5	2	3	39	19.79
Internet speed is very slow	13	19	5	4	7	9	10	7	9	83	42.14
Time lag	4	1	2	5	3	5	1	3	2	26	13.20
Any others (please specify) Frequently 1 disconnect	2	1	-	1	-	-	1	3	-	8	4.06
Total	27	28	10	19	18	25	26	16	20	189	95.94

(Note: Remaining 9 of the respondents does not have any problems)

### 5.17 Users satisfaction with Internet facilities provided by Manipur University Library

Table 7 below shows that only 13.7% of the respondents feel fully satisfied with the service

provided by the M.U. Library, 54.82% that is majority of the respondents are partially satisfied, and 31.47% of the respondent does not satisfied at all.

**Table 8 : Level of satisfaction for Information on Internet**

Satisfaction of Internet facilities	Pol. Sc.	MIMS	Adult Edu.	Edu.	History	Eco	Com.	Lib. Sc.	Mass Com.	Total	%
Fully satisfied	4	5	1	4	3	3	4	2	1	27	13.7
Partially Satisfied	20	20	6	5	8	13	16	4	16	108	54.82
Not satisfactory at all	3	3	3	12	7	12	7	11	4	62	31.47
Total	27	28	10	21	18	28	27	17	21	197	100

(source: Filled in questionnaire)

### 7. Findings of the Study

Some of the important findings of the present study are summarized below:

- v From the study it is observed that almost all the students (both male and female) were aware of the internet browsing and used internet as a useful source of information to satisfy their information needs.
- v A majority of the students' i.e., 46.7% use the internet service daily.
- v The study revealed that majority of the students (47.71%) spent their time in surfing the internet between 1-3 hours.
- v About 85.78% of the students used search engines in browsing the internet for their information needs.
- v Majority of the students are not in favour of the view that internet is a substitute for the library.

- v 43% of the respondents think that internet helps in development of library.
- v The study also show that maximum number of users possess e-mail account and have their account maximum in Gmail, followed by yahoo and rediffmail.
- v 54.82 % of the students revealed that they are satisfied with the Internet service provided by Manipur University Library.
- v The most preferred search engine by the students
- v to search information followed are Google, yahoo and rediff.
- v The most common problems face by the students in surfing
- v the internet in Manipur University Library is slow internet speed.



## 8. Suggestions

Based on the findings of the study, the following suggestions are put forward to improve the use of internet among the students of Social Sciences.

- v The number of computer systems that connected to the internet should be increased.
- v Internet facilities should also be given 24 hours, so that maximum information needs of the students can be availed.
- v Capacity of the server should also be increase.
- v Libraries should subscribe to more e-journals and e-databases.
- v Trained and qualified LIS staff with IT competencies should be appointed to provide guidance to the students and other users about e-resources and internet.
- v Necessary training facilities should be provided to the students to make use of the information resources, appropriate search tools and techniques available on the internet to fulfill information needs.
- v Printing facilities should be provided in the Library internet center so that the users can take print out of important documents at nominal rates.
- v A powerful generator should also be kept in the University Library so that maximum power supply should be ensured to optimize the benefits of internet service.

## 9. Conclusions

Internet has immense potential for the information society. It has proved to be a boon to the academic

institutions. It has boosted up the quality of research, academic activity for faculty and students or entire academic community and enables them to get instant information for their varied purposes. In order to make more beneficial and effective, awareness programme for maximum use of Internet should be undertaken by the Information Technology Institutions, Libraries and Information Centre's of Colleges and Universities. Short Term Training programme should be arranged for spreading the knowledge, tools, services, and products of Internet Information available on Internet should be organized, classified, and indexed by library and information professionals keeping in view about the requirement of their users. Sometimes it is difficult to get information on Internet, as all relevant web sites are not available with the users. Therefore Library and Information professionals should take active role in making web directory of relevant resources available on Internet.

Note: Author(s) may be directly contacted for survey data.

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